

An Unanticipated De-

I ran a series of Luann strips

building up to this sequence in a previous zine -- Ann Eiffel, the ~~Wicked Witch~~ Manager of Borderline Books, in

a reversal of what everyone thought she wanted, fires Luann's friend Bernice's almost-boyfriend Zane and announces to Bernice that she'll be much better off without him,

novement

now that we're all girls together.

Suddenly, what looked like a straightforward case of sexual harassment turns rather kinky-looking for what is nominally a strip for/about teenagers. I wondered how he was going to resolve Eiffel's apparent intentions in the (at most) PG-rated world of the daily comics...

One of the better applications of the god-out-of-the-machine principle i've ever seen...



Redliners

David Drake

An Allegory of Redemption

5 stars

Any veteran of Viet Nam (and i don't mean just combat vets like Drake, i mean REMFs like myself) ought to recognise what this story is about; it's about damnation and about people who don't deserve it who were sent to Hell, and about redemption. It's about something we didn't get.

"I think my country got a little off-track; took 'em twenty-five years to welcome me back..." (Johnny Cash, "Drive On")

It's about the way that people who didn't understand what some of us had been through regarded us... and it's about the only way those people could possibly have been brought to understand that we weren't (quasi-quoting Drake) toxic waste that sometimes explodes without warning; a way that could never actually happen.

It's about letting the veteran prove his worth in his own eyes and in the eyes of others; letting him buy back his pride and

his sense of himself as a man, and not as just a hunted/hunting animal/killer.

It's about admitting that we OWE the people who fight our wars something... if only a little respect.

*"This is your lucky day -- you been back from 'Nam for only six weeks, and I am gonna do for you what it took someone six *months* to do for me when I came back."*

"Really? Thanks, brother -- what is it?"

"Nothin'. Sign here, please." (Robert Blake as an Arizona motorcycle cop, as he tickets a truck driver, in "ElectraGlide in Blue".)

The cover painting for this book -- especially *without* the huge sight-ring that is *not* part of the

original painting; Baen Books has a terrible record with regard to cover art and treatment of same -- is one of the most striking i have ever seen illustrating a war story, either "real" or sf war.

Simply, almost crudely, rendered, showing the combat-fatigued soldier trying to shield the child's body with his own; on his face the expression almost of a suffering Christ, his eyes fixed in the "thousand yard stare"

This is

An Unexpected De- rouement

a zine intended for the

July, 2002, SFPA mailing.

(I say "intended", because there ought to be a zine in this mailing that was intended for the *May* mailing...)

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of what earlier generations called "combat fatigue", still out there on the front, fighting for what he himself may have almost forgotten... Right there, on that anonymous grunt's face and in his actions, is the theme of sacrifice and damnation and redemption that Drake is playing on in his text.

"It don't mean nothin', snake." (David Drake, "Rolling Hot" [reprinted as part of "The Tank Lords"])

This book, at least as i read it, is an attempt to show that that the 'Nam grunts' catchphrase isn't true -- that it **does** mean something and that we **are** worth something.

"You owe us, long and heavy is the score..." (Robert W. Service, "The March of the Dead")

Society owes its soldiers support and gratitude and help.

Sometimes it pays off on those debts.

Sometimes it's easier to just ignore the redliners you create.

"But it's 'Special train for Atkins!' when the trooper's on the tide..." (Kipling, "The Ballad of Tommy Atkins")

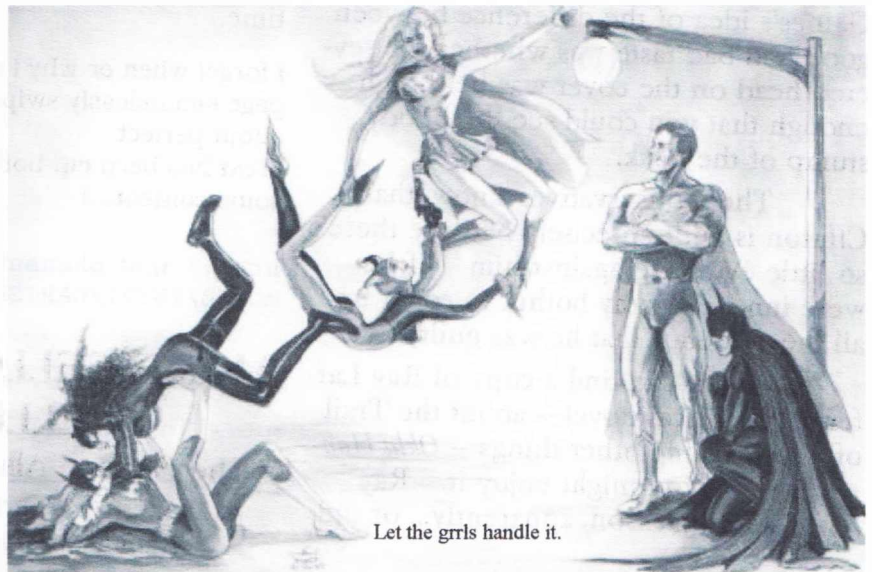
A Mailing Comment: Twyggdrasil & Treehouse Gazette R.Dengrove

We used to have a place here in Atlanta called "S&M Brake and Clutch". Brakes, after all, have slave and master cylinders...

I doubt that the story you mention was in *Astounding* in the late Fifties; it doesn't sound like one Campbell would have bought to me.

Vonnegut wrote some really good shorter stuff in his early days too -- "Report on the Barnhouse Effect" is a nice shaggy dog story about telekinetics.

As a matter of fact, as i recall *The Syndic*, the entire country was run by a sort of co-operative union of gangs -- this was, i



believe, before the Mafia was blamed for all organised crime. And i think the Government-in-Exile was in England.

Hmmm.

The Clones (1968) the first novel with "clone" in the title? I would have sworn that Wilhelm & Thomas's *The Clone* was out by '68, but maybe i was wrong... No; *The Clone* was published in 1965.

I don't quite understand how Bill Gaines was involved in "reining in" Moulton on his *Wonder Woman* scripts, unless Gaines had an early career at DC that i never heard of. Not to mention that Bill Gaines's idea of the difference between good and bad taste was whether the severed head on the cover was held high enough that you could see the bloody stump of the neck.

The Conservatives know that Clinton is guilty precisely because there's so little evidence against him -- if he were innocent, why bother to cover up all the evidence that he was guilty?

If you can find a copy of Ray Laferty's historical novel -- about the Trail of Tears among other things -- *Okla Han-nali*, i think you might enjoy it. Ray hated Andy Jackson, apparently... or did

for as long as he was writing that book, anyway.

Remember -- the Stars and Bars is not the red flag with the blue cross on it.

Actually, since there is almost infinite energy in vacuum, the repulsive force postulated could have been quite strong enough to explain "gravitation".

Thailand? "Bare breasted dancing girls are a way of life" indeed -- likely semi-pubescent more or less enslaved bare-breasted dancing girls... Even Andrew Vachss and Cat Yronwoode can't be wrong all of the time.

I forget when or why i came across the webpage shamelessly swiped below, but it's just about perfect

(Text has been cut both for length and for some content...)

:
<http://www.pheasant.demon.co.uk/MUDGE/ISS21/CARTSEX.HTM>

MORE CELLULOID THAN CELLULITE

The Strange Allure Of Women In Cartoon

Daphne or Velma?



Ah, the great debate. Were you a Daphne kid or a Velma boy? Oh, be honest, you know you were one or the other. When the Scooby Doo gang split up to go to different ends of the spooky mansion, who did you wish found the ghost (well, it was never actually a ghost, it was just an old man in a rubber mask, but still) first and so got the majority of the screen time because, somehow, the sight made you very happy. Whether it was Daphne in those nasty purple tights that seemed to go on for ever or Velma in that strangely tight baggy jumper, you knew that something special was happening in your life.

Let's face it, the issue of cartoon character sex is a very important one and of universal interest, not least of all because it is a significant influence upon the nascent sexuality of many young men around the world. Ah, Ariel's mollusk carapace bikini has been responsible for more first erections than warm bus seats and heard the sound of more wood cracking than the average saw mill manager. They are a mere assemblage of curves and points, female form redux: and that's why we like them. They're always idealized, generally involving some fetish of the animator and are therefore ultimately sexual. And quite cute. Let's just accept this and move on beyond the fact that you, like every other man on the planet, has gone through Who Framed Roger Rabbit on frame by frame advance, just to find the moment when his wife's skirt blows up to high and you can see Paris and you can see France but you can't see her underpants, if you catch my drift.

So now you know that you're not evil, just a normal, malfunctioning male: hey, at least you aren't with your sister, checking out Space Ghost's packet WHICH IS EXACTLY WHAT TEENAGE GIRLS DO AND DON'T LET THEM TELL YOU OTH-

ERWISE, because at least you know that women in cartoons are drawn with all suitable lumps, unlike the ironing board crotches that afflict men of ink. But the great question can now be asked: who is the horniest cartoon character?

Yes, it's a real question. You know you've always wondered, so don't give me that look. You're just glad that someone else is going to work it out for you.

Of course, there's certain women who are automatically exempt from this debate. No animals (we're weird, not sick), so Bugs Bunny in a dress is off-limits. Even if he wasn't discounted for those reasons, the whole transvestite issue is a non-starter for me and the ears would get in the way. Disney heroines are also off-limits because you're probably not supposed to get sexually aroused in a cinema where the average age is under that of consent outside of Alabama, plus it's a given that Esmerelda is a grade one hotty, matched only by the ruddy country girl complexion of Belle and... maybe I'm sharing too much.

So let's just play compare and contrast, shall we?

Name: Judy Jetson

Status: Single and way out of your league, bud.

Tracts of Land: Triangular. Seems to have found the last bra from the 1950s for that Madonna conical effect.

Sexual history: Mid-teens shouldn't really have a sexual history but in reality she's probably ridden the tentacle of every alien love-god this side of Arcturus.

Favorite peccadillo: She's from the future. It probably involves cyborgs and gravity wells. Gross.

Pros: Fresh flesh. No points of comparison, so nothing is a disappointment.

Cons: Jail bait. George Jetson's eldest, darlingest daughter will see you doing five to ten in the Quadrant pen.

Name: Josie McCoy aka Josie of Josie and the Pussycats

Status: She's married to her music, man

Tracts of Land: Bizarrely for the celluloid impaired (nice way of saying animated), they're actually curved. Mind you, read the later Archie comics about Josie and the Pussycats, after the makeover, and it's not just curved. It's positively pulchritudinous.

Sexual history: Redhead. Feisty. Raaoooooww. Plus there's little doubt that Josie and the other two Pussycats have experimented with what used to be called alternative lifestyles whilst on the road.

Favorite peccadillo: Probably demands that she gets to wear that cat costume in the bedroom. Oh, please, Lord, make her demand that and I'll be good from that day on, I swear.

Cons: She's in a band. She'd just roll into town, use you for sex and then roll back out again. No letter, no phone call, nothing. How demeaning.

Pros: She's in a band. She'd just roll into town, use you for sex and then roll back out again. No letter, no phone call, nothing. Fabulous.

Name: Daphne

Status: Groovy.

Tracts of Land: Who cares, check out those pins.

Sexual history: It was always assumed that there was something hot and heavy going on in the Mystery Machine between her and Fred but then she did get the sidekick gig when Shaggy became above the title talent and Blondie was naught but a peroxide

memory. Anyway, Fred was gay. Oh, c'mon, that cravat and those pants in the 1970s and you're really telling me that he, as Jay and Silent Bob would put it, were all about the clam? Yeah, and Quentin Crisp was a linebacker.

Favorite peccadillo: It's easy to assume that a contributing factor to the break-up with Nazi poster boy Fred was some perverse BDSM issues that floated his boat a little to much, so one assumes that the ultra-passive Shaggy is now on the receiving end of some revenge mistress bitch action. In fact, it's far too easy to assume that. So we will.

Pros: From Aryan Nation to Get On The Bus, she's not choosy and willing to experiment.

Cons: How many cows would have to die to make one pair of thigh length boots for her?

Name: Velma

Status: As single as they get.

Tracts of Land: Have you ever noticed how many yards away from the front of that jumper her head is, and it can't all be toilet roll.

Sexual history: : Be honest, she has none. Favorite peccadillo: Bookworm girl has read about lots of things but tried none, so she's doodled acts on the margin of her diary that even Anne Rice porno characters wouldn't risk.

Pros: Let's be honest again. Gratitude.

Cons: If she starts exclaiming "jinkies", it could really spoil the moment.

Name: Betty Boop

Status: Slut! Slut! And she knows it and she loves it.

Tracts of Land: Virtually popping out of that mini-bustier into which she's been

painted.

Sexual history: I don't think that I'm ruining any childhood fantasies by saying that Betty Boop goes like a train. As if flapper dancer isn't an euphemism. In fact, take off the dancer bit and we're pretty much on the money.

Pros: Experience and all those stretching exercises from dance class. What a combination.

Cons: Contraception in the 20s was a mixed blessing, so you'd best have the number of a good STD clinic. Plus she hangs out a lot with that creepy clown fella. What's that about?

Name: Daria Morgendorfer

Status: Sartre Jr

Tracts of Land: Concave, but could fill out later.

Sexual history: You jest, right?

Favorite peccadillo: Doesn't approve of them.

Pros: Low infection risk.

Cons: You'd better learn to nod sympathetically and agree a lot. Scarcely a rocket ride to Mattressville.

Name: Jane Lane

Status: Tortured artist

Tracts of Land: Jogs, so there's that sports bra rigidity issue.

Sexual history: Daria pretty successfully puts the kaibosh on that with her spirit of gloom routine.

Favorite peccadillo: Hangs out in Goth clubs and from there it is but a sort step to dominatrix.



Pros: Glad of the change of company.

Cons: Daria will be giving you filthy looks and that's the wrong kind of filthy.

Name: Luanne Platter

Status: God-bothering trailer trash.

Tracts of Land: Always sports a cut-off tank-top, so she does want you to know that it's there.

Sexual history: Aw, she's probably given it away to make rent before.

Favorite peccadillo: Having you call her the next day.

Pros: She lives in the garage, so it's not like you'll get disturbed.

Cons: Ever since her momma stabbed her poppa with a fork and she was forced to move into her uncle's work room. She'll have her bags packed, on your front porch and be re-arranging your video collection before you've had a chance to say that you've got an early meeting, so if she needs a lift home it'll have to be now and not in the morning.

AND THE WINNER IS.....

You do know that these women aren't real, don't you?

A Mailing Comment:

Spiritus Mundi

ghliii

Regarding being brilliant and being unable to exercise that brilliance -- Stuart Palmer, author of the "Hildegard Withers" detective stories, spent several years Not Writing and allowing earlier books to fall out of print intentionally because his ex-wife, whom he apparently hated, had essentially gotten all or most of his royalties, apparently in perpetuity.

Similarly, John Fogerty spent like ten years after the breakup of Creedence Clearwater Revival doing nothing under his own name (cf. "Blue Ridge Rangers"), because of the stupid contract he'd signed, giving all the royalties to Saul Zaentz.

After Fogerty's contract with Zaentz expired, we were treated to such little expressions of their mutual esteem as Fogerty's song "Vanz Kant Dance" on Centerfield -- "Zaentz can't dance, but he'll steal your money... Watch him or he'll rob you blind..." (later changed to "Vanz Kant Dance" after Zaentz sued for defamation of character), and Zaentz's lawsuit against Fogerty, claiming that "Old Man Down the Road" infringed the copyright of "Run Through the Jungle", which Zaentz owned, which had been written by one John Fogerty...

The question of an "archive" site refusing to remove material from public access is what has Harlan all riled up, leading to Janice's experiences with him and his minions as she recounts this mailing.

We have more or less -- well, hell, more, given recent events -- a four-month-old female fox terrier pup who showed up at our back door. The kids named her "Captain Jack" when we at first thought that she was male and took her to the vet to be de-ticked -- something like 32 of the little nasties on her -- and get her shots.

So we're feeding the dog, and she's happily living outside our back door, when i suddenly realise that Oz, my cat, isn't showing up demanding to be let in, any more... and then see the puppy enthusiastically defending the house from Oz. This annoyed me -- but another thing that she did annoyed (and frightened) me even more -- she would chase the car or my truck as i drove down the driveway, cutting right in front, right under the wheels, where i couldn't see her. I was afraid i was going to hit her...

And then one of the kids did -- it was obvious they'd clipped her, but she didn't seem too badly

injured, so they waited till the next day to take her to the vet.

And it turned out that she was hurt more than we'd thought -- her right hip joint was, essentially, destroyed. All i can figure was the the wheel pinned her leg and then twisted it, popping the joint and breaking the actual ball part of the ball-and-socket hip-joint. Several hours of surgery were indicated, in which the broken bone part was removed -- the vet says that scar tissue will basically replace and she's supposed to regain most of the use of that leg, if we can get her to actually use the leg as it heals and afterward.

((My mother's dog, Zeke, was a stray she adopted out of the parking lot at the place where she was teaching school at the time; he has a bent front leg and he will *never* go into the road unless dragged...))

"Is this the standard we want for selecting our Chief Executive -- cynicism, chicanery, voter fraud?" you say. Why not? It's always worked fine up till now...

You say that Bradbury is still the only "popularly accepted sf writer" -- what about Aldiss, Lem, and PKDick, to name just a few? (we're having a discussion of a similar point on rec.arts.sf.fandom as i type this)

"Goldfinger-like catastrophes" when aircraft hulls are penetrated are, like exploding automobiles, pretty much creations of Hollywood directors looking for dynamic visuals, and have little or no basis in fact.

I have to guess at The Word In the Tundra, myself, as what i quoted was all that i had. Personally, my vote is for a word beginning with "F".

Ten years for Doenitz was a lot better than what the prosecution went for originally -- death for the "war crime" of "unlimited submarine warfare" in the Atlantic. It was his US Pacific-theatre equivalents who basically said "If he's guilty of war crimes in the Atlantic, then we are, too, in the Pacific..." and got him off **that**, at least.

In case i have run this before, i apologise. I can't lay hands on my old zines, and i only hve the computer files back to January, due to recent HDD crash(es) {Long, embarrassing story}

A man and his dog were walking along a road. The man was enjoying the scenery, when it suddenly occurred to him that he was dead. He remembered dying, and that the dog had been dead for years. He wondered where the road was leading them. After a while, they came to a high, white stone wall along one side of the road. It looked like fine marble. At the top of a long hill, it was broken by a tall arch that glowed in the sunlight. When he was standing before it, he saw a magnificent gate in the arch that looked like mother of pearl, and the street that led to the gate looked like pure gold.

He and the dog walked toward the gate, and as he got closer, he saw a man at a desk to one side. When he was close enough, he called out,

"Excuse me, where are we?"

"This is Heaven, sir," the man answered.

"Wow! Would you happen to have some water?" the man asked.

"Of course, sir. Come right in, and I'll have some ice water brought right up." The man gestured, and the gate began to open.

"Can my friend," gesturing toward his dog, "come in, too?" the traveler asked.

"I'm sorry, sir, but we don't accept pets."

The man thought a moment and then turned back toward the road and continued the way he had been going.

After another long walk, and at the top of another long hill, he came to a dirt road which led through a farm gate that looked as if it had never been closed. There was no fence. As he approached the gate, he saw a man inside, leaning against a tree and reading a book.

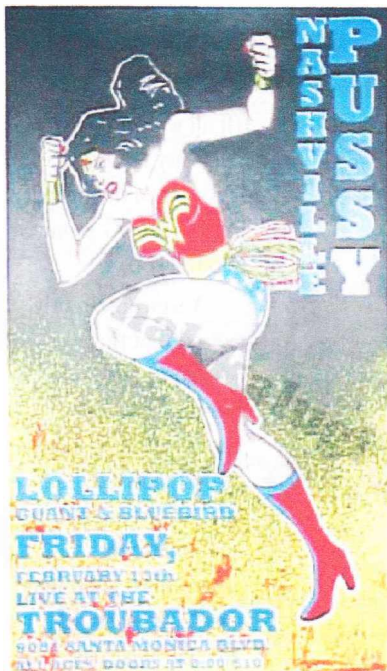
"Excuse me!" he called to the reader. "Do you have any water?"

"Yeah, sure, there's a pump over there" The man pointed to a place that couldn't be seen from outside the gate. "Come on in."

"How about my friend here?" the traveler gestured to the dog.

"There should be a bowl by the pump."

They went through the gate, and sure enough, there was an old fashioned hand pump with a bowl beside it. The traveler filled the bowl and took



a long drink himself, then he gave some to the dog.

When they were full, he and the dog walked back toward the man who was standing by the tree waiting for them.

"What do you call this place?" the traveler asked.

"This is Heaven," was the answer.

"Well, that's confusing," the traveler said. "The man down the road said that was Heaven, too."

"Oh, you mean the place with the gold street and pearly gates? Nope. That's Hell." "Doesn't it make you mad for them to use your name like that?"

"No. I can see how you might think so, but we're just happy that they screen out the folks who'll leave their best friends behind."

A Mailing Comment:

The New Port News

N.Brooks

Dealing first with Jules Verne's scientific accuracy; you mentioned having calculated the length of the needed barrel for the cannon, and i thought the numbers you quoted seemed low, so i did some math (does anyone see anything wrong with these numbers [aside from the fact that they prove Verne was making it up as he went along if they're correct, that is]?):

Okay -- let's say we want a muzzle velocity of seven miles/sec, that is, escape velocity, which is -- what --

$$5280 \text{ ft/mi} * 7 \text{ mi/sec} = 3.7 * 10^4 \text{ ft/sec.}$$

To obtain this velocity with a sustained acceleration of 10G (320 ft/sec^2) (chosen because i'm pretty sure it's survivable for relatively short periods) requires $3.7 * 10^4 \text{ ft} / 320 \text{ ft/sec}^2 = 115.6 \text{ seconds.}$

Time to distance (call it "L" for "length") equals 1/2 the acceleration times the square of time, so the above gives us a tube length of

$$L = (320 \text{ ft/sec}^2) / 2 * (115.6 \text{ sec})^2$$

which in turn gives

$$L = 160 \text{ ft/sec}^2 * 1.33 * 10^4 \text{ sec}^2$$

which is

$$L = 2.13 * 10^6 \text{ ft}$$

or

$$L = 405 \text{ miles.}$$

That's one hell of a deep hole to dig to put the gun-barrel in.

Of course, a barrel that long is going to need the support of the ground around it, anyway.

Come to think, casting it in situ and getting the casting to cool uniformly without cracking or warping might be interesting, too.

((If all we want is orbital velocity -- about 5 MPS -- then the barrel length for 10G is only 206 miles.))

Verne apparently realised that this was ridiculous, and so he inserted mumbo-jumbo about a shock-absorbing system using, as i recall, multiple collapsing water-filled chambers inside the shell. If that is a correct



memory, i am suddenly struck by the question as to where the water goes, as i would assume it was forced outward as the false floors collapsed downward. OTOH, it could be that the passenger portion of the projectile was a smaller cylinder moving freely in the larger and longer main projectile, initially floating at the top, and that the damping mechanism involved the water being forced through the restricted space between the inner and outer projectile walls as the projectile was accelerated. I also wonder how much propellant would be required, given that the entire delta-vee is supplied by the propellant in an all-burnt-at-launch manner, and that the first stage of the Saturn V (the only one i know more-or-less specifics for) burnt fifteen tons of H₂/O₂ fuel/oxidiser per second, and the guncotton used wouldn't give as high a specific impulse, i suspect.

In fact, it wouldn't all burn at once, and there would be a varying impulse, which would require either a longer gun tube or else result in a spike in acceleration rather past 10G near the end and/or beginning of the burn..

Actually, in the Very Technical sense (i.e., proper terminology), a trolley or other electrically-powered device for moving people or cargo or pulling trains is not a "locomotive", but a "motor". This is because "locomotive" is short for "locomotive engine", and, in engineering terms, an "engine" generates power to perform work, a "motor" converts power supplied from an external source to perform work/

As to battery-powered railroad motors in Verne's day, i doubt that they had much practical usage in the Real World, because i doubt that there were any batteries with the power density to make them practical. I mean, electric cars, requiring much less power density to make them practical, are only now making an entry as battery technology improves. ((A railroad motor planning to do anything beyond move maybe one car at a time Very Slowly requires several hundred to thousands of horsepower; a car intended for city use can get by on a *lot* less -- my '69 Sprite was rated at 60-something

HP and that was probably exaggerated by a bit, and it would cheerfully run 90+ MPH.

Also, given battery voltages, and the concomitant currents needed to get reasonable power to the motor, the cables needed to transmit power from the batteries to the traction motors -- and the controller elements to handle it, given that all they would have had was some sort of rheostat -- would be Amazingly Large. ((Battery voltages proly wouldn't be able to exceed 48 or so volts; trolley systems, traction railways and diesel-electric engines use voltages from 600V upward -- often in the thousands -- which allows reduced current-levels.))

Fahrenheit set his 0 degrees at the lowest temperature he could controllably and reproducibly achieve. And you don't actually have to have something colder than temp X to achieve temp X, you just have to have a way of moving heat out of the place where you want to achieve temp X. Consider the ice cream freezer -- it uses ordinary ice at 32 degrees to cool the freezer can **below** 32 degrees in order to freeze the ice cream hard. It achieves this by forcing the ice to melt faster than it would normally melt under normal conditions -- by use of rock salt, which lowers the melting point of the ice -- which causes the melting ice to absorb heat more quickly from its environment than it otherwise would, the majority of which comes by conduction from the ice cream can, freezing the ice cream hard.

The major hazard of aluminum wiring is, according to some electricians i know, "creep" -- the aluminum expands and contracts enough to loosen the terminal connections and the loose terminals can do Bad Things, including allowing corrosion to build up between wire and terminal. It's only really dangerous if you don't check and re-tighten the terminals periodically.

"Kiddie porn involves aggravated child abuse quite independently of how it was recorded or distributed," huh? "Aggravated child abuse" is involved how in fictional verbal or written descriptions of sex with or between children)*or* drawn/painted or computer-created depictions of such *or* photos of per-

sons older than age 18 who are so made up, dressed and photographed to appear younger? I ask this, because the current law defines all of those things -- including comic-style stories in which the characters *appear* to be under age 18 -- as "kiddie porn" with the harsh sentences thereunto appertaining.

I believe that fuel cells are also reversible, but i might be wrong. So far as i know, any chemical reaction which produces electricity can be reversed by feeding electricity back in. ((With some things, say, alkaline batteries, it may be tricky or dangerous, due to the high internal resistance of a depleted alkaline cell, but it can be done.))

The problem is that, by comparison with grain-fed beef, grass-fed is relatively dry and tough.

Cloth insulation goes back to the time before they were able to make plastic insulation for wires or stable rubber insulation.

I believe that the towers in Malaysia have "unusable floors" which are not so much "floors" as just space in the parts of the towers that were included to make them the tallest buildings in the world. Did you know that those towers do not sit on bedrock, just on soil?

As i said in response to someone else, the WORD in question sounds as if it were the "F" word.

I *think* it was Jack Chalker who told me the Campbell/"Brain Stealers"/"Who Goes There" story.



Lessee -- we own **Iron Giant**, **Battle Beyond the Stars**, a couple of Jackie Chan films, **All You Need is Cash**, **Runaway Train**, **Suicide Kings** and one volume of **Avengers** episodes on DVD. Also we regularly rent by mail from NetFlix -- you pay \$20/month, you make an online wantlist of up to fifteen titles from their catalog (which is pretty big but missing some things i *know* are out on DVD) and they send you the first three titles off our wantlist that are available; you keep them as long as you want, and when you return them, they send you the next three available. ((<http://www.netflix.com>)) Which reminds me, i have three i need to return now that we finally watched them -- just as soon as i copy one or two of them.

If you can't play your PAL DVD directly, let me have it and i'll see if i can tape it for you (we have the copyguard shut off on our player), since our APEX player is specifically designed to deal with that problem. Unless it's anamorphic format, in which case it might not work out too good.

Speaking about what churches might look like if f different means of execution had been used -- cf. John Boyd's **Last Starship from Earth**.

Today (30 June), we went and saw **Lilo and Stitch**.

Every so often DisneyCo hauls off and tries its hand at more or less straight SF. And when it does, i usually like it fairly well.

The last time i can recall for sure was **The Navigator**, which, i thought, lived at least 80% up to its intentions. (We won't discuss **The Black Hole** -- which i did like, to some extent, i must admit.) And, before that, **TRON**, for all its silliness, was still a fun movie.

This is the best, though.

If someone who understood actual emotions had made ET, may-

be, we would have gotten something like this.

As it is, this seems to have been pretty much one man's vision -- story idea and co-director credits go to one Chris Saunders, and He Done Good.

The characters ring true -- all of them, including the aliens and the action, given the characters, is logical and well-paced.

As has been pointed out, this is about the first Disney film anyone can remember which featured primary (human) characters who were not conventionally good-looking; Lilo and her big sister, Nani and their cousin Dave are realistically-rendered (in cartoon terms) polynesian. Certainly Nani is a pretty girl, but her wide, short-bridged nose and rather round face are not what is considered "beautiful" by classical standards -- and her hands, feet, legs and ankles are (relatively) realistically-proportioned, unlike the unrealistically slender and small appendages of most cartoon heroines, and her body is not the slender, model-girl type that Disney heroines usually get -- her hips are sort of broad, and her thighs are a bit chunky by movie standards.

Poor Lilo is almost as broad as she is tall, though looking at Nani, one figures she'll grow out of that.

The aliens are relatively believable, though one skinny type with one eye, two tongues and three legs was A Bit Much. (I did like the byplay as the one-eyed alien handed a six-eyed alien a ViewMaster stereo viewer so he could see what Earth-people looked like.

Someone on rec.arts.sf.fandom said he has one word to word to describe Stitch and the film -- "mogwai". At risk of a semi-spoiler (though the advertising and any reviews you might see proly give it away), i like that -- except in reverse.

Another reference point for me is that this film and **Iron Giant** both explore somewhat the same moral issues, but from different directions. **Iron Giant's** production team set themselves the task of answering the question "What if a gun had a soul? What if a gun didn't *have* to be a gun?" Chris Saunders set himself the question "What if something intelligent, designed only for destructive purposes, found itself in a situation where it had nothing to destroy, and was surrounded by people who loved (or at least tolerated) it?"

One of my favourite lines is very near the beginning, when the Head of the Galactic Council (or whatever she is) condemns Stitch's creator to prison and calls him something like a "stupid, irresponsible scientist". In a lovely Boris Badenov-ian accent provided by David Ogden Stiers, he replies "I prefer 'Evil Genius'."

I think i'll be looking into buying the DVD when it comes out.

One or More Further Mailing Comments Trivial Pursuits

J. Gelb

I swear, Luckovich's art gets uglier and more ill-proportioned every time i see it. I think that the only reason the AJC hired him was that, if you squint and turn the page edgeways, his art *sort* of looks like Scrawls' brilliant stuff (and they ran Marlette off after they stabbed him in the back).

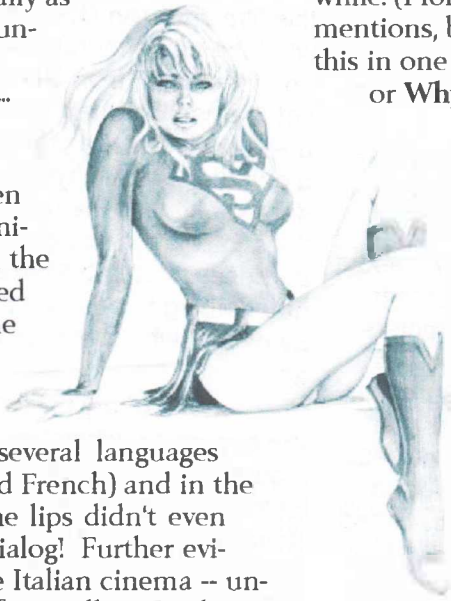
One of my few -- and pleasant -- memories of George was the happy expression that broke over his face when he realised -- after ten minutes or so of three-sided conversation in the lobby of the first Coast-Con hotel -- that you weren't with me, as he

had apparently originally assumed when he encountered the two of us having a conversation...

Whether or not lipsynch actually matters is and has been a controversy in the animation world. I recall the revelation i experienced at Bill Ritch's place one time when he and friends had an anime day and had episodes dubbed in several languages (including Spanish and French) and in the original Japanese. The lips didn't even match the Japanese dialog! Further evidence comes from the Italian cinema -- until at least the 80's (if i recall correctly, certainly until the 70's) Italian films were shot almost 100% with silent cameras and completely post-dubbed, even into Italian. Often actors would simply recite numbers to provide lip movement while allowing them to concentrate on the action of the scene. (There's an allusion to this in **Nuit Americaine** [which i have probably just misspelled horribly] when the older actress is having trouble with a scene, and says "I could say numbers, like I did with Federico...").

Mercedes taxis were reparations? Reparations when and to whom? Taxis all over Europe are likely to be Mercedes. Cab drivers like and buy them because they are reliable, durable and last a long time. (Like Checker used to be, here in the US.)

Knitting needles are or at least were favoured assassin's weapons; you can do real damage with one and the wound left is small and not immediately obvious -- like an icepick, but even longer. In fact, if it's sharp enough, the victim may not really realise what's happened and may not die for a



while. (I forget the actual historical case she mentions, but Georgette Heyer alludes to this in one of her mysteries -- **Envious Casca** or **Why Kill a Butler?**, i think.)

Surprised that 'Hallelujah' was by Cohen? Why? It sounds Just Like a Leonard Cohen song to me. (At Blind Willy's once, the late [sigh] Dave van Ronk once introduced his song 'Final Call' [the one that Block took the title 'The Sacred Ginmill Closes' from] by mentioning that he went out drinking one night with Joni Mitchell and Leonard Cohen and, the next day, found 'Final Call' in his pocket notebook in a handwriting that didn't really match any of theirs. He says Mitchell and Cohen said "It's in your notebook, so **you** have to be responsible for it..." It does sort of sound like a Mitchell tune to van Ronk words with Cohen concepts...)

I can't imagine myself owning a Mercedes. The few times i've driven one, i always felt as if instead of where i wanted to go, IT was about to drag me off to go invade Austria. (I do not, in fact, particularly like any German or current Scandinavian cars.)

"As for cricket, Stephen has promised to explain it to me during my time in Australia." Isn't there a six-month limit on how long you can stay without a resident permit?

Variations on a Theme
#i'm-not-sure-which
R.Lynch

(I don't know which because i typed this MC a week ago and didn't record the

number)

You mention that you can't recall exactly when was the the last time that you spoke to Bruce Pelz; i hadn't spoken to Bruce in years, but just recently (as such things go) he photocopied and mailed me the entire Walt Kelly book *The Glob*, after i mentioned it on-line.

Thinking of others who are gone, the only one of whom i can definitely say "This was the last time we spoke" is Karl Wagner, encountered outside the convention center in Boston in '89...

Pop songs using classical tunes? "Whiter Shade of Pale", using the "Air on a G String", which earlier was also used by (i think) Marvin Gaye.

"Lover's Concerto" which has been so long ago (about 1967) that i can't recall what classical piece was the basis.

Various of ELO's repertoire, though that's not exactly fair.

"Nutrocker" by Kim Fowley (who was also involved [depending on whose version one accepts] to a greater or lesser extent in giving us the Runaways and, hence, Joan Jet), which was something of a hit for ELP, who also did well with the "Fanfare for the Common Man".

"Pop Corn" (Moog instrumental) by Gershon Kingsley (also released as by "Hot Butter"), which derived from and quoted "Fur Elisse".

A lot of Zappa's stuff involved quotes from and allusions to Satie.

There's more that i can't recall at the moment; any i do recall before i finalise the format on this zine i'll add in.

How about, if you want to rate by comparisons, "...Shrek' isn't even as good as 'The Aristocats', but it's better than 'An American Tale'..."?

OBLIO G. BROWN

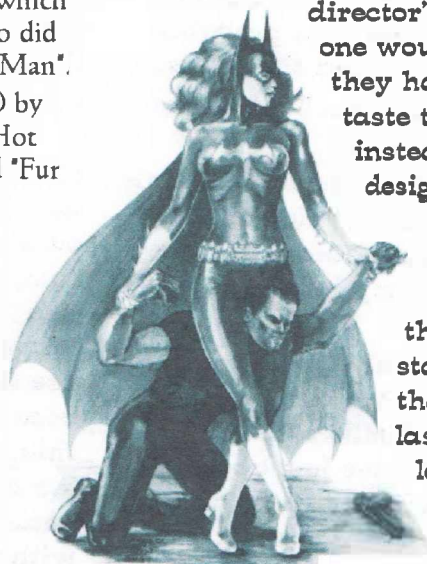
While i very much liked the *Spider-Man* film overall, there were a few things i had problems with (and, like you, i trace my Spider-reading to *Amazing Adult 15*, though i didn't buy any of the early issues...)

And the main thing i didn't like seems to have been the main thing you didn't like. That damned mask.

I'm pretty sure it must have been the designer's idea, as i wouldn't think that the rubber mask would be any real problem to do with CGI and makeup -- hell, they just about already *did* it for *The Mask*, when you think about it... ((One of the [many] things wrong with the "remake" *Gone in 60 Seconds* is that the car that's supposed to be the mcguffin not only **isn't** a real *Shelby GT500* -- it doesn't even *look* like

one; it looks like the art director's idea of what one would look like if they had had the good taste to consult him instead of the Ford design studios...))

I was glad to see Stan on-screen at all -- though i understand he had lines that got cut at the last minute. At least he didn't disappear completely like



poor Kirk Alyn in the first Superman film.

Personally, i think i would have loved to cast Stan as the wrestling announcer, who is, after all, the guy who -- in a fit of pure Stan-the-Manian hyperbole -- christens our webslinger "The Amazing Spider-Man"...

Just seeing that bridge tower in the coming attractions gave me a shiver.

I have to say that i think they make Spidey rather too strong -- and not just in terms of "how much can he pick up?" but also in terms of "how much can he hold without getting damaged by the stress?" -- rather like 6 Million Dollar Man, when he would brace his bionic legs, get a good grip with his bionic hand, and use the power of his bionic arm to rip a floor-safe out of solid concrete, ignoring the fact that there was standard human flesh blood and bone in between his hips and his shoulder that probably wouldn't be able to stand the stresses.

I had not heard that Tom Sutton died. Another one gone.

I use the one-hour service at Wal-Mart; about the same price as the overnight service at K-Mart and they know how to print my half-frame negatives.

Most of my family that i have any contact with is in the South, mostly within about a 150-mile radius of Atlanta, actually. I have just about totally lost touch with my Dad's side of the family in the Chicago area.

Bob Kane came in more as a

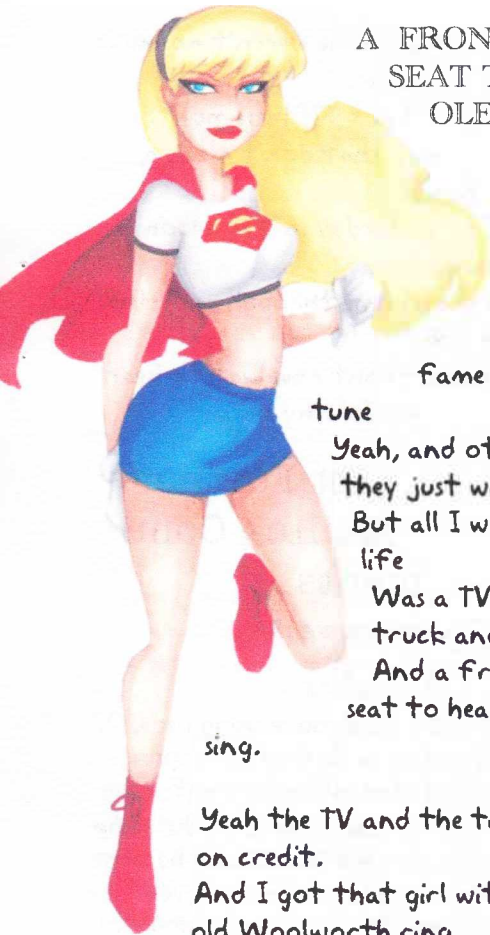
producer/packager than an artist/creator -- as a shop like Eisner & Iger, in other words -- ; he could afford to deal a little more tightly than people like Siegel and Schuster could. (BTW -- i forget where i encountered this little tidbit, so maybe you already know -- the "Schuster' half of Ed Sullivan regulars "Wayne & Schuster" was a cousin of the the Superman Schuster...)

The O Brother soundtrack sold, i understand, five million.

Which reminds me -- for those who are unaware, there is a new Thirtieth Anniversary release of the Will the Circle be Unbroken album, with new tracks and new digital mstering. ((see my review of the original release and my comments on the re-release at <http://electronictiger.com>))

I know the name Eddie Haskell. I know what Leave it to Beaver was. I know the catchphrase. Other than that, i have no idea about anything that happened on the show, which i considered too stupid to bother with.

"Alternative" is a label that the record companies use to promote product. It used to be a useful term in discussing music (before the record companies discovered it). Now it's just like "heavy metal" or "punk" or "New Wave"... a noise that record companies use to describe product they *do* control because it's vaguely similar to something they didn't control that got popular despite the fact that it had to actually be good to do it on its own, without promotion...



A FRONT ROW
SEAT TO HEAR
OLE JOHNNY
SING

(She's Silverstein)

Now you
know some
fellahs,
they want
fame and for-

tune
Yeah, and other fellahs
they just wanna swing
But all I wanted all my
life
Was a TV set and a
truck and a wife
And a front row
seat to hear ole Johnny

sing.

Yeah the TV and the truck I got
on credit.

And I got that girl with a little
old Woolworth ring

And life was warm and life was

sweet

But still, it was kinda incomplete
Without a front row seat to hear ole
Johnny sing.

chorus:

Hey, John you walk the line,
Do "Deelia" one more time
And when you do them Cottonfields
You warm this heart of mine.

So, one day I thought, Hey, I'm gonna do

it!

(That's what I said)

So, I mortgaged the farm and pawned her
wedding ring.

I sold the gold tooth out of my mouth
And jumped in the pickup and headed
South.

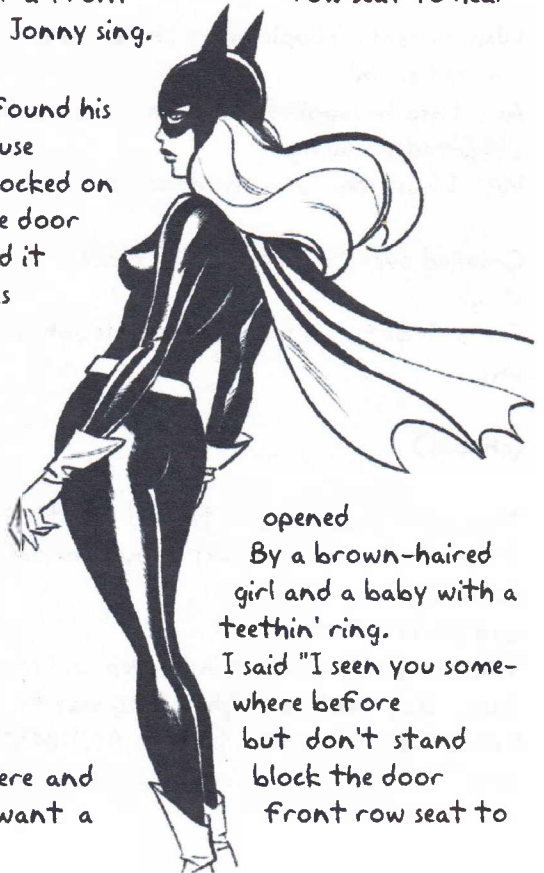
For a front row seat to hear ole Johnny
sing.

I hit Nashville cold and wet and hungry.

I said, "I'm here, bring him on let him do his
thing."

But they told me down at the Old Pit Grill
I'd have to go all the way to Andersonville
For a front row seat to hear
ole Jonny sing.

I found his
house
knocked on
the door
and it
was



opened

By a brown-haired
girl and a baby with a
teethin' ring.

I said "I seen you some-
where before

but don't stand

block the door

front row seat to

there and
I want a

hear ole Johnny sing."

(chorus)

She said I'd have to go down
to The Opry
And the feller there said I'd
have to wait till Spring.
He said, "We've been sold
out for months and
months
And this poor insane fellah
wants
A front row seat to hear ole
Johnny sing."

Well, he said a couple more things, and I
started cryin'
And then he laughed at me and that's when
I started to swing.
Well I bust through the doors in a roaring
rage,
Crawled over the crowd till I reached the
stage
For a front row seat to hear ole Johnny
sing.

(chrous)

Then some crazy guard started shootin'
I shot back, and the next thing I know I
was winged
and on the floor
When a guy in a voice kinda deep and low
Says, "Boy that's a mighty long way to go
For a front row seat to hear **ANYBODY**
sing."



And I guess that judge, he weren't no music
lover.

I got fifteen months
but that don't mean a
thing.

Cos' yesterday in the prison
yard
A show come through and HAR!
de HAR!

I had a front row seat to hear
ole Johnny sing.

Yet Further Mailing Com- ments

Comments

S.Hughes

Do the pellet guns you're using use CO2
or are they pumped up or do they use a spring-
loaded piston? And what calibre are they?

I'd guess your zines take about the same
time from Ellijay as they did from Atlanta because
they don't go thru any additional sorts -- your
local station (in either place) sorts everything and
sends all of the out-of-town stuff on to Hapeville
with no other steps in between.

Whether the connectors are designed for
aluminum wiring or not, there is a danger of
"creep" with aluminum if you don't check the
connections every few years.

When you were at Niagara, did you take
the walk *behind* the Falls (i think it's Niagara,
anyway), where you can reach out and touch the
back of the Falls? (Maybe it's not Niagara, come
to think, given the fact that Niagara is actively
retreating...)

'Robur', not 'Robert', the Conqueror, i
believe.

I used a standard laundry pen -- a

"Sharpie" to write on a CD many years ago, specifically as an experiment. (it was a CD that had one good song on it and i really didn't care if i ever heard that one again, as a matter of fact) Last i saw it -- more than five years after i marked its back up with the Sharpie and with a commercial gold-paint pen, it still played fine.

Anyway -- if it's alcohol or (as is actually used in most marker-pens) acetone, if it doesn't do damage immediately, it evaporates too quickly to do any long-term damage.

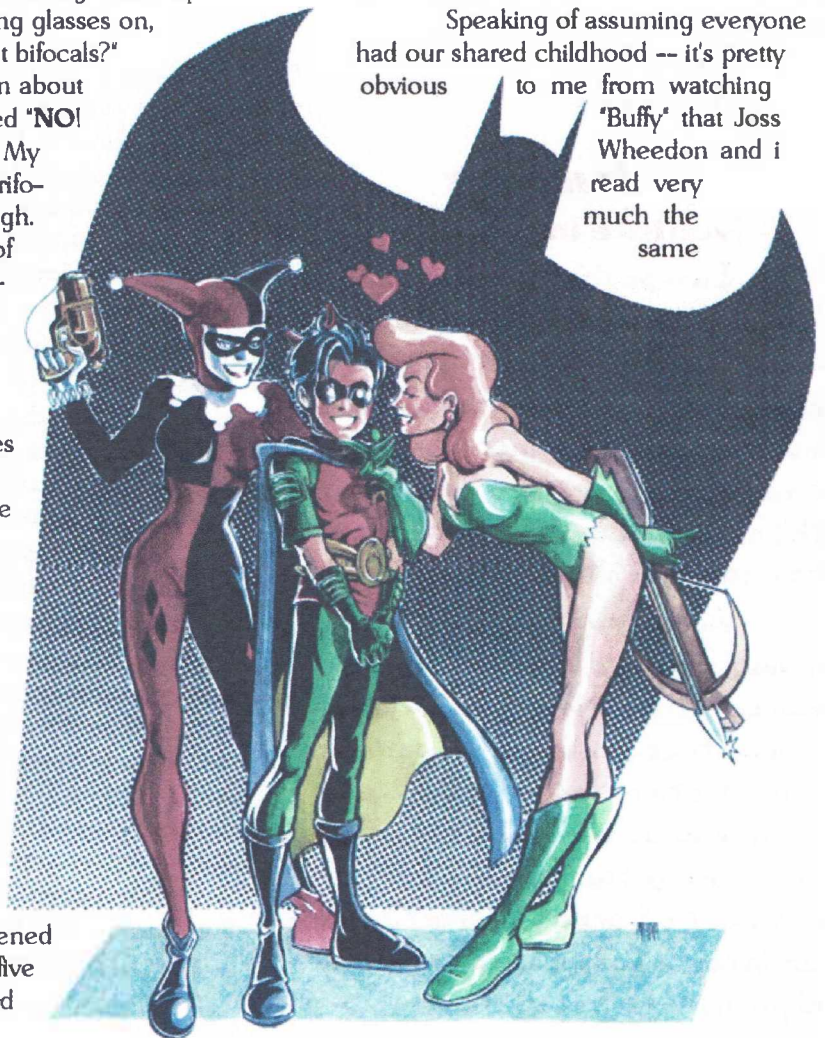
Twenty years ago, watching Celko try to play pinball with his reading glasses on, i said "Joe, why don't you get bifocals?" Celko, who would have been about thirty five at the time, snapped "NO! Bifocals are for *old* people!" My current glasses are actually trifocals -- they're line-less, though. ((They're about \$300 worth of glasses, gotten free for me -- without my prior knowledge, actually -- by my cousin who works for an ophthalmologist; they have really neat custom sunglasses attachments that lock on by means of little magnets at the hinge area on each side...))

The thing about not being responsible 'cos you took drugs reminds me of the Cajun who got roaring drunk and took off for several hours of driving at over 100 MPH in his new Mustang GT and was eventually killed when a tire let go. His family got a a judgment (initially at least, dunno what ultimately happened on appeals) against Ford for five million. The reasoning? Ford

had built a car capable of sustained speeds over 100 MPH but had fitted it with tires rated for only 80 MPH sustained operation. This almost sounds rational, until you consider that the then National Maximum Speed Limit was 55 MPH, and to destroy a tire in the damage regime this argument rested on, he had to operate the car at speeds a minimum of two times what was legal for a sustained period of time...

And, just a few years ago, it was *assumed* that any public area would be a smoking-allowed area...

Speaking of assuming everyone had our shared childhood -- it's pretty obvious to me from watching "Buffy" that Joss Wheedon and i read very much the same



comics and saw pretty much the same movies and teevee shows as we grew up...

No, you won't be seeing me again in the Kangaroo store -- i quit today (6/22). It took AMI over a year to burn me out to the extent that Kangaroo managed in two months. We had five managers at that store in the two months i was there. In that timespan, I got two days off -- and they tried to call me back from one of those. After two months there, i was the senior employee. (The following Friday, when i collected my paycheck for the previous week, it was for 74 hours.

In one weekl.
Horrible place.

Janice's Adventure in Webderland

I am particularly amused by Harlan's comment that the eight-hour time difference between California and London means a phonecall must necessarily be inconveniently timed for one or the other, citing this as one reason he didn't attempt to resolve the situation on the phone.

According to what i recall as having regarded as fairly reliable sources at the time, when Marvel Comics tried publishing a digest-sized weird-fiction text magazine and badly misprinted Harlan's story in the first issue (either pages missing or pages out of order, i forget), Harlan intentionally waited until midnight his time to call the New York

editor (Roy Thomas, i think), personally, at home.

We've had run-ins with the Ellison Webderland types on rasff before, i seem to recall.

And then there was the IguanacOn incident.

Reverant

S. Strickland

Used to be that i made it down for JazzFest every year -- usually staying with either Dennis Dolbear or Stacy Shaw (up in Folsom) -- about every year from '87 to '97. Since '97, i've been down just once -- must have been 2000, since it was Helen's 16th birthday that weekend and Fred said happy birthday from the stage...

Hoping to make it down for at least one weekend next year.

Thak;s for the heads-up on "Evangeline Made" -- i'll have to look out for that one. Sounds like a nice complement to Michelle Shocked's "Arkansas Traveler" disc.

Re; "Death Should Take a Holiday": and today we lost John Entwistle. It's been a Very Bad Year, and it's only half over.

Depending on what kind of cabling your cable company has in place, it may very well be that higher-number channels would be of lower quality than lower numbers -- the higher numbers use higher carrier frequencies, which are attenuated more quickly by line losses and connector losses.

What i printed about the Word On The Prairie was all i had. I'm pretty sure it probably began with an "F", though.

Further Mailing Comments Even Yet

Confessions of a Consistent Liar

A. Hiavaty

Talking about the Novel Hugo: "...the winner was a chunk of mass-market Product." Certainly, it was produced and merchandised that way, and the number of votes it got reflect that marketing, but i honestly think that Rowling was absolutely sincere (at least at the beginning) and writing honestly, rather than with an eye to the market, unlike, say, some "Star Trek" novelisers (like, oh, "L.A.Graf", which, i hear, stands for "Let's All Get Rich And Famous").

Your comments about Eudora and its warnings remind me that access to In-references to the county over (Forsyth County) by most nanny-its county seat is ternet next from us ty) is blocked ware, because "Cumming."

(I also have Eudora, though i don't use it much anymore and i also have been fascinated by the things it finds to warn me about.)

Offline Reader

I. Koch

Actually, i believe, in fact, an ap-NOT Civil could

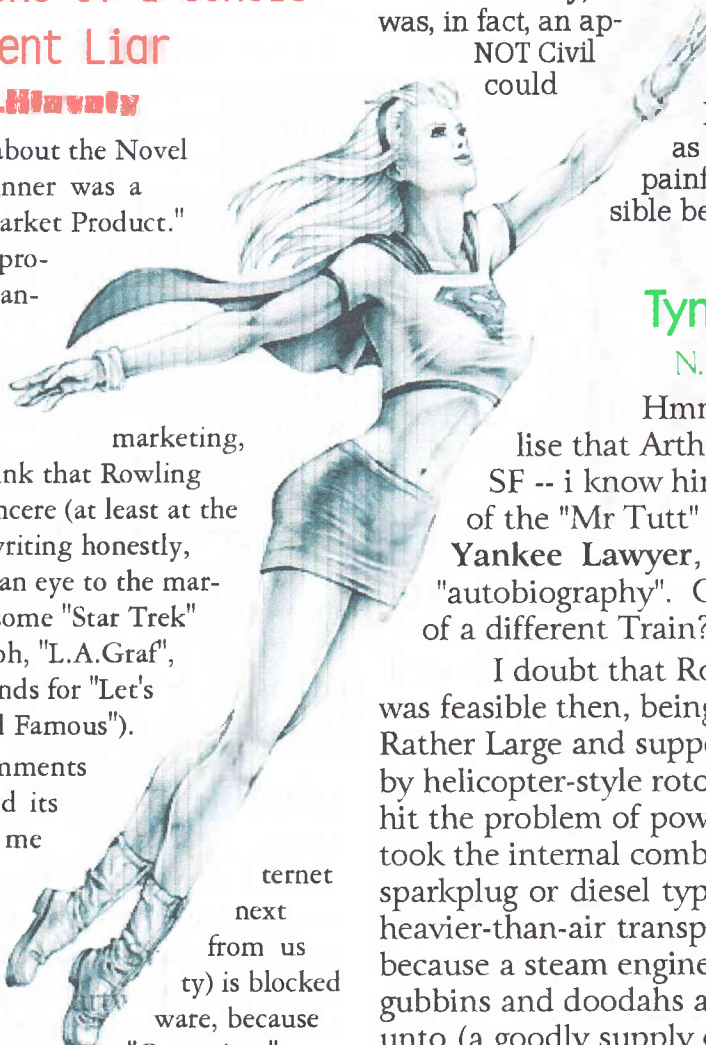
lieve that Tripp pointee, and Service. But i be wrong; i have tried to put as many of the painful details as possible behind me.

Tyndallite

N. Deccaf

Hmmm. Didn't realise that Arthur Train wrote SF -- i know him as the author of the "Mr Tutt" stories and of **Yankee Lawyer**, Tutt's "autobiography". Or am i thinking of a different Train?

I doubt that Robur's aircraft was feasible then, being, apparently, Rather Large and supported entirely by helicopter-style rotors. Again, we hit the problem of power density -- it took the internal combustion engine -- sparkplug or diesel type -- to make heavier-than-air transport a reality, because a steam engine and all of the gubbins and doodahs ancillary thereunto (a goodly supply of working fluid being not the lightest by far) weighed too much for the amount of power it produced. Actually, the diesel, for the power produced, is a bit on the heavy side also (though more recent automotive diesels are lighter), as well as being





a bit more of a low-RPM engine compared to the gasoline engine (especially the two-stroke). I doubt that anything short of some form of nuclear power generation and electric

motor drive for the rotors could be both powerful enough and light enough to allow the construction of such a craft.

No, GUY doesn't want to "expand the definition of science fiction" to include movies; he simply uses the definition of science fiction that has become the accepted definition, in the manner that the meanings of a number of words have shifted due to popular usage. You or i may dislike, even decry, this tendency in some cases (i personally am annoyed by the continuing erosion/reversal of the meanings of "presently" and "momentarily", and the tendency to more and more use the superlative and the comparative interchangeably), but

it is a fact of language -- for instance, the meaning of "lynch law" has been almost 180 degrees reversed in the years since Judge Lynch hanged the convicted man (some say his own son) that the mob was trying to free.

As i recall, sodium batteries require molten sodium -- or that may be just one type of them.

The thing is that, based on what i have read in various commentaries, wherever Verne gives actual numbers -- as opposed to vague handwaving -- or describes something that can be calculated, he is at least as likely to be wrong as right. ((See my calculations of the required length of gun barrel to launch a projectile containing humans to the moon in my MC to NED.))

The problem with batteries of the voltaic pile type is that they produce roughly 1.5 volt per cell, and the cell has to be Very Big to get anything like a useable current out of them.

That's Sharon Lee and Steve Miller; it might be filed under either name.

I don't doubt that battery-powered locomotives (but they are not properly called "locomotives" if they are electric, they are properly "motors", whether powered by third rail, overhead collection [either trolley or pantograph] or battery) existed when you say that they did. However, they were not -- and still are not -- useful for much of anything except terminal switching, because of power density

limitations. And the batteries available in those days would have needed frequent recharging. Fireless steam locomotives also existed in the same time frame (three were still operating at a steel plant in Illinois into at least the 70s) and were probably just about as good -- or better -- than battery motors and cheaper to build. Battery powered locomotives will not be useful for over-the-road service (freight or passenger) until battery power density goes up by an order of magnitude or more; over-the-road electric designs are all externally energized. Steam is more likely to replace or supplement diesel in real train service before battery power does -- initial designs and feasibility studies for building a modern steam locomotive that would be as cheap as or cheaper per ton-mile to run than a diesel and NOT dependent on (foreign) oil as fuel exist -- anyone interested can go online to

<http://www.trainweb.org/tusput.html>

for descriptive material, or to

<http://www.awod.com/gallery/rwav/whodom/ace.html>

for

**Text of ACE 3000 Technical Paper
ASME No. 82-RT-2**

Originally published by:

**the American Society of Mechanical
Engineers (ASME)**

Rail Transportation Division,

a dead-serious paper analysing the design, as recently as 1982.

As I say, fireless steam locomotives,

which get their power by means of live steam carried in big insulated high-pressure tanks located where a conventional steamer has its boiler, and provided (periodically, as they exhaust the steam) by the main boilers at an industrial site, are actually more practical than battery motors would be, for several reasons.

Your list of people who built battery railroad motors -- apparently just one in the case of the consortium of corporations you mention -- rather reminds me of the "Four Aces" (so called because it was numbered "1111") built by Timken Roller Bearing and a number of other companies to promote their roller bearings (and other technical advances of the day) -- and they only built that one and wound up selling it at a loss after it toured railroads in its promotional mode. It was just too expensive for the increased functionality it offered.

**ALL THE STARS IN THE
SKY**

J. Copeland

Bruce Pelz. He Will Be Missed.

The networks' objection to loss of "branding" due to DVR ought to be somewhat assuaged by the demonstration by the BBC in co-operation with one of the DVR suppliers that they could cause your system to come on and record a program you hadn't

set it to record. They said that (A) it recorded on a section of the disk reserved for such things that doesn't count against your available space and (B) that it won't override your settings if you were planning to record something else at that time.

We rented **Bandits** -- i swear that Willis was being Bill Murray and Thornton was being Dean Jones for most of the film. There were definitely some amusing moments, though.

Sending copies of programs over the net almost certainly IS a violation of the terms of the Sony/Disney court decision. On the other hand, looking at the cartoons that grace this zine, who am i to quibble about copyright violations?

K-Pax was pretty good, i agree, but i found it a bit over-long.

I really need to see **Spy Game**. I need to remember to put it on the Net-Flix waiting list.

I entitled my Amazon review of **Heist** "Why Some People Are Stars and You and I Aren't".

This Ebert comment on **Spice World** sounds like Quinn and Brittany (we're watching the **Daria** Marathon at the moment).

The Fahrenheit set its 100 degree point

what he thought to be the normal human body temperature, i believe.

"...the notion of Xena on **X-Files** makes me want to see the show again..." Leather bustier, sword and all?

Biology had been invented when **Ned** was in school -- it's **Hank** who had to wait until they had discovered biology in order to learn it...

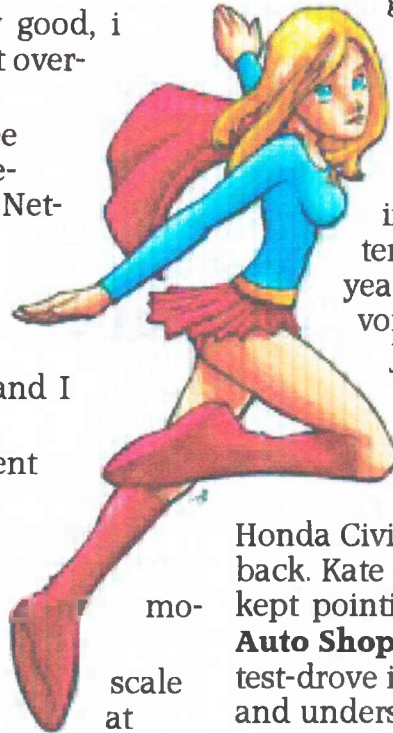
You ask if, if the armadillos won't eat fire ants, could they at least eat kudzu. I'm halfway afraid that the kudzu would capture them and tie them down for the fire ants to pick clean.

The Estate's problem with **Wind Done Gone** is not that it was plagiarism -- it isn't -- but that it is an unauthorised derivative work and thus in violation of the copyrights.

Actually, Disney (in particular) had been crafting their animated characters after the voice talent for years -- consider that Ed Wynn voiced the Mad Hatter and Jerry Colona was the March Hare, for instance.

We need a new stereo for our new (old) car. We bought a 1990

Honda Civic wagon a couple months back. Kate didn't understand why i kept pointing out Civic wagons in **Auto Shopper** and so on; then she test-drove it when we went to look at it and understood.



mo-
scale
at

In **The Syndic**, it's not so much the Mafia as a confederation of assorted gangs who run the government out of the country.

Krispy Kreme -- ICK!!!

I seem to recall from Bill Brickle's experience that setting the amount of disk space Explorer can use to zero doesn't really help; even after he had done the "Set to Zero/Clear Cache" routine, there would still be megs of files left on the disk we'd have to hunt down and kill by hand.

The "Helm" movies with Martin "...[bear] exactly no relation to the books with the same characters"? Less than that.

The frame rate differs between NTSC and PAL -- NTSC is 30 FPS and PAL is 25. The claim that was worrying me was that the two were actually differently encoded on the DVD. Whether they are or not, our player puts out a rocksteady NTSC signal, even on material clearly marked PAL.

Now, the problem i'm afraid we actually may have trouble with is anamorphic PAL discs -- apparently the APEX player can handle either a PAL-to-NTSC conversion, or an anamorphic-to-letterbox one, but not both at once. If we get a wide-screen teevee with a 16 x 9 screen, then we wouldn't have any problems with them.

Actually, the "throwing up in the morning" was, as i recall it from both Gill's book and Thurber's about his years at the **New Yorker**, a discussion between founder Harold Ross, who, despite his desire to publish an

Incredibly Sophisticated Magazine was still, to a great extent, an Iowa (i think) farm boy, and Dorothy Parker, comparing their daily routines. Parker said "I get up, I go to the bathroom and throw up..." and the rest is as you have it.

Parker wrote the New Yorker's weekly nightlife column; as i recall, her deadline was early Tuesday afternoon. She'd come wandering into the office Tuesday morning, still in her evening gown, go into the ladies' room and throw up, then sit at her desk, knock out the column, and go home.

Speaking of Dorothy Parker -- at my darkest moments, when i was considering the Obvious Solution, i would recall:

Résumé

**Razors pain you;
Rivers are damp;
Acids stain you;
And drugs cause cramp.
Guns aren't lawful;
Nooses give;
Gas smells awful;
You might as well live.**

Allie's crack about the coolest band, this week, reminds me of the time Paige Fox got into trouble shoplifting a CD -- Paige made some remark about "This is one of the problems about loving this-minute bands..."



THE SPHERE

D. Markstein

Actually, Willy & Joe came rather later than 1940; in 1940, "Joe" was an American Indian (the 45th Division had a large Amerind component, and "Willy" didn't yet exist. When "Willy" was introduced, he was originally the one with the small nose, the straight man.

Somewhere along the way they swapped names and Willy became Caucasian, albeit retaining the hatchet-beak he'd had when he was a Plains Indian.

Among other post-war appearances of Willy & Joe, aside from the ones you mention -- in an editorial cartoon, a bomber pilot worrying over a headline that says "Manned Bombers Obsolete?" is consoled by the WW2 Willy -- "Don't let it bug ya, pal -- I been obsolete for thirty years!"

Several Willy and Joe cartoons appeared as illustrations for an article on "the New Army" in Life (i think), about 1970.

You mention he wrote some stories -- one was a story about Willy & Joe that appeared in Boy's Life, of all places.

I wonder how much "shooting and getting shot at" Mauldin actually did, since he was on the staff of the "45th Division News" before they left for Europe -- which is not to say that i believe he had *no* combat experience, or that i think he was a coward or shirker; in no way would i impute that.

Are you aware that he briefly wound up as a TV correspondent in Viet Nam? As i recall, he was on a PR tour that the Army or Marines (whichever) were running, visiting his son's unit to get a feel for the New War (i think he may have been working on a documentary for one of the networks), and there was a big attack (it may have been Tet, since this was before i was over there) -- Mauldin was already connected with one of the networks, and they had or could get a cameraman in there, but not one of their regular correspondents, so they pushed through correspondent credentials for Mauldin, and he filed daily reports for a while.

I am willing to accept that John Albano wrote the initial "Jonah Hex" story,

but i seem to recall that Fleischer and DC at some point got cranky with each other over the character, with Fleischer claiming to own all non-comic rights. Or was it another character?

As to the Lansdale/Truman abhominations -- lets go back to the 21st Century and see the character well-done, please.

Likely, the person who had registered "uncadonald.com" was a squatter, who figured that someday Disney might want it and he could charge them Money to let it go.

I remember when i was stationed in Sicily, i was in the chow line when a guy came up and asked for thirds on the chicken. "What chicken?" the server asked. "That chicken right there," he replied. Obviously he was not the first to ask for "more chicken", and the messcook was having a great time... "That's not chicken," he said. "That's RABBIT." You could see the guy realising that he had eaten three helpings of Cute Little Bunny Rabbit.

Newsprint can be preserved fairly well if you de-acidify it, but that's not Really Easy.

"If I could shove an icepick into the phone and have a reasonable expectation of piercing a phone solicitor's temple..." Have you considered keeping a police whistle by the phone?

Hmmm. I was thinking that someone had remarked, responding in an MC or something to my having said i simply used Google's image search to find all these risque and otherwise cartoon images on line, that they tried it and they hadn't found all that much -- but i also was thinking i'd marked it to respond to, and i don't see it. May have misplaced the zine or missed my mark, i guess.

One thing you have to do is go into the "Advanced Image Search" menu and shut off filtering -- by default it's set at "Use Moderate Filtering"...

Also, another source is eBay -- where people who are just begging to be busted offer original art of various comic and teevee characters. As an example, i went thru eBay the other day, first searching on "Supergirl" and then on "Batgirl", and i found thirteen images, including one of



Britney Spears as Supergirl. A couple of them were somewhat risqué.

One frightening thing i found with Google was a page of drawings of the characters from "Dria" as the various WB superheroes, which included Daria's pain-in-the-butt kid sister Quinn as Poison Ivy and cheerleader Brittany (weird coincidence) as Supergirl...

YNGVI IS A LOUSKI
TKFWR

If VH-1 shot the programs you're talking about on film, for every song that they used more than a certain amount of, they would owe *everyone* who originally performed on that song either union scale for a recording session or whatever they got for the original session, whichever is more. If they shot exclusively on tape, however, they would owe only the same "mechanical" royalty that you have to pay to play the song on the radio.

Did i point out that, at one point in Road to Ed Do-rado, in a tribute to the original Road pictures (in the party scenes, i believe) there is a bit where the faces of the heroes (either as seen in wa-

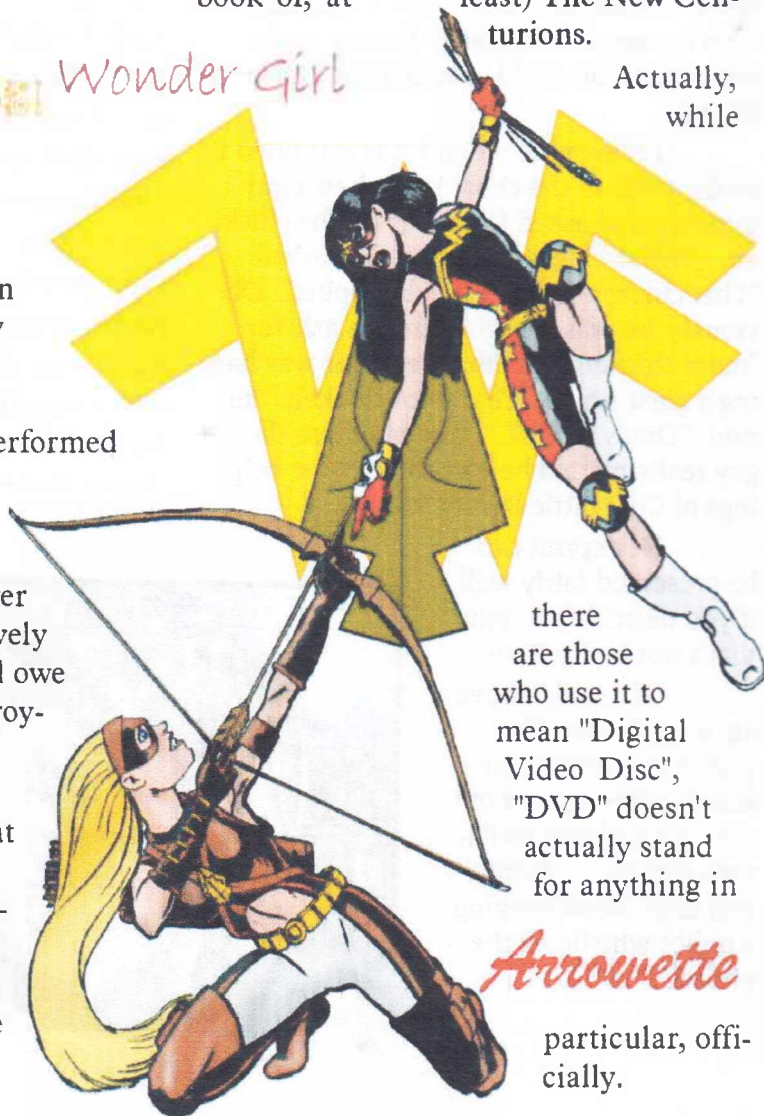
ter or in a surreal sequence) are briefly twisted and morphed into the faces of Hope & Crosby?

Someday i am going to get to another convention.

Charlotte's Web: I need to see L.A. Confidential, i think. This description makes it sound rather like (like the book of, at least) The New Centurions.

Actually, while

Wonder Girl



there are those who use it to mean "Digital Video Disc", "DVD" doesn't actually stand for anything in

Arrowette

particular, officially.

"Special Features" according to a couple of articles i read, may be enjoying their heyday and zenith; people are apparently starting to want to get paid rather more than it's worth to do them. Which is sad; George Romero, Tom Savini and one of the other actors (and Romero's wife, whose name i've forgotten, who's also in the film and wandered in for part of the recording session) did an absolutely hilarious and very informative commentary to *Knightriders*, for instance.

There was no job designated "Music Supervisor" until Lucas invented it." And it wasn't necessary until Hollywood discovered the marketing value of "soundtrack" albums consisting of every lousy pop song that they manage to torture the plot enough to insert three bars of on a radio in the background of a scene.

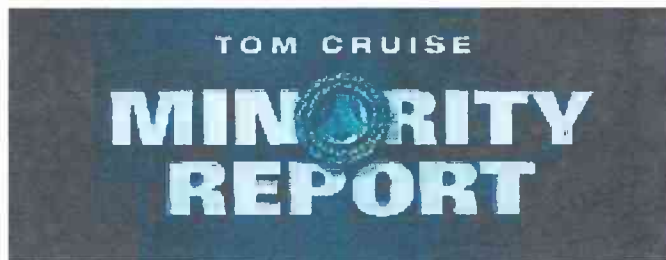
Remember the original Batman? Tim Burton was happy with a soundtrack consisting of instrumental music by Danny Elfman, with a number of tributes to music from Hitchcock films. The studio, wanting to make a little extra money on soundtrack sales on a project that they probably didn't have a lot of pre-release faith in making much money on, commissioned three Prince songs -- which, of course, had no relevance to the film -- and made Burton use them. The only one of Prince's things that gets any real prominent play in the film is the one

that plays on the Joker's boombox, sort of as "Music to Desecrate Art By". I wonder if Burton was making a comment?)

So far, my vote for Best Special Features has been something i didn't get to watch -- *The Big Sleep* has two completely different versions of the film, which was re-edited extensively before release. Unfortunately, the local library (whence i got the disc) had glued anti-theft-trigger strips to Side Two of the disc, apparently not realising that it was two-sided.

The brute-force way to find Easter Eggs is to explore the "Title" and "Chapter" menus.

I also recall Sandy Parris from SFPA, as well as from conventions.



Minority Report

WARNING!

**Possible Spoilers -- Possible Spoilers --
Possible Spoilers**

ARNING!

Well, What with Kate and Helen being in Alabama, i have a lot of time on my hands this weekend, so i've been getting the SF-

PAzine finished (as of this point i'm committed to 32 pages due to the format i'm using) and basically goofing off, getting the webpage up to date (more or less -- the revisions are done, but the revision **list** isn't up to date), buying cheap DVDs -- **Support Your Local Sheriff** and **Silverado** for \$9.44 each and **Stay Tuned** for \$5.66 -- drafting a couple of Amazon reviews (141 posted so far, reviewer rank #379)... and going to see **Minority Report**.

It's based on a story by Philip K. Dick, and it's a lot more successful about capturing the atmosphere and gestalt of his fiction than any other film i've seen that claimed to be based on his fiction -- and, yes, i am looking at **Bladerunner** when i say that. (**Total Recall** we will not even consider.)

Interestingly enough, Ron Shusett, who was behind **Total Recall**, is listed in the credits to this film as Executive Producer. He must have some sort of connection to the Dick estate.

This the third Spielberg film that i have really liked even after i had time to think about it (the other two being **Duel** and **Jaws**; **Raiders** comes close, but i was annoyed by the sloppiness that Spielberg's obsession with getting it in ahead of schedule and under budget caused in some scenes), and i think that's because there are very few if any places where Spielberg subordinates character or

story consistency to plot demands (which he does blatantly in both **Close Encounters** and **ET**) and few if any where he manipulates us for emotional responses he hasn't really earned (the little girl in the red coat in **Schindler's List** comes to mind here).



A number of people have commented in various places on the generally believable look and feel of the future of 2054 in this film -- the extrapolated tech is nice (though i really could have done without the arm-waving symphonic-conductor GUI for the main computer..), though the "flying hairdryer" (as someone called it) that the cops fly to the scenes of murders-about-to-happen in is a bit much -- not so much the ship itself, as the "cops on a reel" method by which they dismount. On the other hand, the mechanised means by which they "mount up" had me suspecting that Spielberg might be a fan of the Supermarionation show **Thunderbirds**.

There's some mumbo-jumbo "explaining" why a complex machine exists that carves rough wooden blanks into polished and lacquered wooden balls engraved with the names of the victim(s) and killer to signal upcoming cases, but it didn't satisfy me; on the other hand, it is, somehow, a very PKDish concept, so i can live with it. The scene in which Anderton leaps from car to

car on the vertical freeway seems almost to have been included as much to provide a scene in a possible video game as to advance the plot, but it's short enough and has enough sensawundai can live with it.

Another scene -- the mall scene -- reminded me almost irresistibly of playing a computer text adventure game following a "walk-through", as pre-cog Agatha tells Anderton exactly where to stand and when to stand still and when to move to avoid being spotted by a whole squadron of police, most if not all of whom know him personally.

There are some good icks in the eye-replacement sequence...

The fascinating thing about the plot is the way that, in spite of -- sometimes **because** of -- Anderton's efforts to prevent his own predicted crime, he is drawn inexorably to it.

There is a very Hitchcockian feeling to this film, as well as the PKDish atmosphere -- with a couple of more or less direct references, including one to **Strangers on a Train** and one to **Spellbound**, not to mention a sort of free-floating feeling of kinship to **The Man Who Knew Too Much** and **Vertigo**.

The "Temple" -- the chamber where the pre-cogs are kept -- rather resembles SHIELD's "ESP Division", as visualised by Jim Steranko in his **Agent of SHIELD** comics stories.

A greenhouse full of carnivorous plants -- some real, some not -- is effectively creepy, as you never know which plants are going to reach out and try to grab you as you pass.

And, in the end, much of the plot boils down to what amounts to a locked-room murder and a political power grab. (Some excellent red herrings here.)

Excellent film. I didn't regret seeing it for one minute.

[Someone on rec.arts.sf.fandom remarked that he sometimes felt as if PKD approached certain stories with a mood of "Mundanes are too easy. Let's see if we can weird out the SF fans." That might explain a lot.]

Swallows & Amazons

5 stars

A Book to Last a Lifetime; or, The Forever Holidays

When I was eight or nine -- and that's a long long time ago, o best beloved -- my mother led me to a shelf in the "J" section of the Greenville (SC) Public Library, pulled a book off the shelf, and handed it to me.

"You might like this," she said. "I did, when I was your age."

What she didn't know was that, when she was my age, there were two or three books in the series; by the year I was born (the same year that the last book was published) there were twelve or thirteen books.

I liked it. You could say that.

You could say that Paul Bunyan chopped down one or two trees in his life, too.

It was incredible. Kids my own age -- sailing their own boats on a lake the size of an inland sea, it seemed, camping out by themselves on their own island, meeting pirates real and imaginary, fighting ferocious "wars" among themselves and with Captain Flint (the "pirate" in the houseboat), and more besides.

When I took it back, I began looking for the other volumes in the series, thus beginning a literally lifelong obsession (I was in my thirties before I got my hands on the last volume I hadn't yet read).

And, aside from the fact that my love of these books prompted me to read (though I really didn't need much prompting for that, actually), I can credit my lifelong interest in England and its culture and people to these books as well -- and, indeed, I think, my interest in almost all not-my-own cultures and places. Because here, I saw were children who, while very like me in their basic interests and drives,

were very unlike me in their everyday life. Consciously and unconsciously, i began to absorb images and details of Other Places.

(By the time i was eleven, i discovered Leslie Charteris's dapper and o-so-English "Modern Robin Hood", the Saint. But by that time, from these books and some others, i already knew how to count English money [decimalisation was still quite a way in the future] and had some idea how riding an English 'bus or train was different from the same sort of thing here in the States.)

As i discovered other volumes in the series, i devoured them. I rode the rudimentary iceboat on its wild career up the lake with Dick and Dot. I rescued a shipwrecked kitten in the middle of the North Sea with the Swallows. I danced in a "cannibal corroboree" with Nancy and Peggy. I dowsed for water with Titty and i discovered gold with Roger.

I attacked the houseboat, and i ran chemical analyses in its main cabin. With Tom Dudgeon, i set adrift the motoryacht that blocked the bird's nest, and i photographed the rare birds in the Scottish islands with Dick.

I went on so many adventures with my friends, John, Susan, Titty, and Roger (and sometimes Bridget) Walker and Nancy (because Amazon pirates are Ruthless) and Peggy Blackett and with Dick & Dorothea Callum that i sometimes have trouble remembering them all...

And sometimes i remember adventures that Arthur Ransome never bothered to write down, because, for me as for so many others, worldwide, the Swallows and the Amazons and the D's and the Coot Club are real people --living in an eternal nine-



teen-thirties, sailing and gold-mining and exploring and catching thieves and vandals and protecting birds and all of the other things that they or i can think of to do on our holidays.

And, when i remember, when i wander among those memories, i am again nine or ten or thirteen. running barefoot to push the "Sawlow" off, set the sail, and catch the wind on a broad reach to some new adventure, or back to an adventure i loved or just to soak up the warm sun and wait for something to happen.

If you know a bright child who reads well[1], then you might try him (or her; if anything, the female characters here -- especially Captain Nancy -- are more strongly drawn than the males) on "Swallows & Amazons", or skip a few ahead and try "We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea", an incredible story with as much action as the average "action" film but no violence.

If they click with the books, then they will have literary friends for life (I am in my fifties and still reread these books occasionally), and certainly will begin to appreciate that the world is wider and richer than our everyday lives.

[1]These are, after all, books intended for British children in the 1930s, and they are written at a somewhat higher level than, most US books for seven and nine year olds and contain terms and narrative/cultural assumptions some USAn children might have trouble with)



When i submitted it, Amazon did not post this review. When i e-mailed and asked why, i received a reply that basically said my review was too much about me and not enough about the book. Oh, well, i put i on my own website...