



WHAT!?
IT SHRUNK!
WHAT WAS I
SUPPOSED TO DO,
STOP FIGHTING
CRIME?

New Tools, Old Me,

A SFPazine from mike weber, intended for the May mailing

Well, i seem to have SFPA energy left over after making a quick late rush at the deadline -- so here are at least some of the MCs i didn't manage to get into last mailing's zine.

This is

New Tools, Old Me

A SFPA-zine from

mike weber,

receiving mail as of 12 April 2001 at
162 Spring Place,
Dawsonville, GA
30534.

(No, we haven't moved again, but our maildrop box rent is running out, so we're going to begin getting mail at the house instead of over by Kate's office.)
Phone still 706-265-7610; with some luck i'll have voice-mail and fax up and running soon.

New Port//Ned//Interesting cover, there.

Glory Road dedicated to "Amra"? Would that be the zine, or the Conan alias that inspired the zine title?

I dunno about Chalker, but Jack Young was in a wheelchair at River-Con, i'd guess because of his weight or related problems.

Really high-velocity rifle rounds can be deflected by twigs, much less tree branches.

Whether three pairs of pants would stop a bullet would depend on the round, of course -- i'd say prolly no for anything over a thirty-two, maybe for some twenty-twos and probably for most twenty-fives (pistol rounds, that is -- both .22 and .25 rifles would prolly be different). I do

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know that the standard .38 Special round will probably not penetrate ordinary car window glass if it hits flatter than about a 45-degree angle.

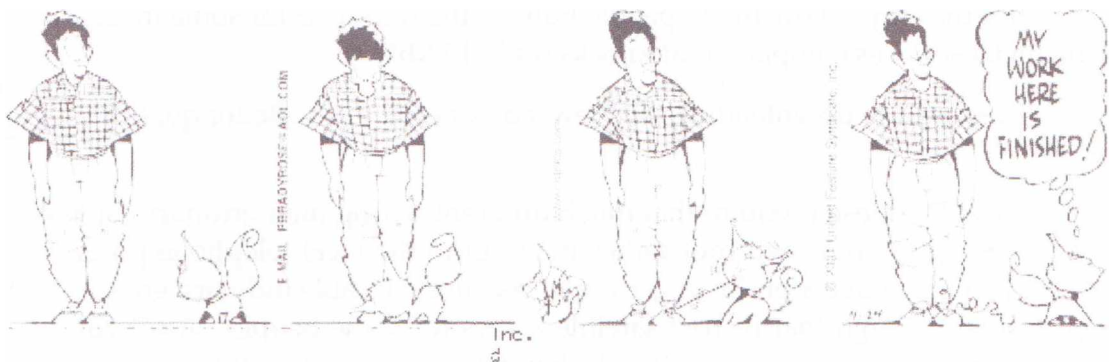
10,000 Maniacs (who used to be Atlanta based, BTW) are more like REM than any other group i could compare them to. (The movie only has 2000 Maniacs; low budget, i guess)

If a credit card is unsigned, it is technically not valid, and merchants do not have to accept it. (I was reading the Post Office policy on credit cards while i waited in line to mail my last SFPazine).

Sounds like you paid too much for your Master Index to Poetry -- the author of "Abdulla Bulbul Ameer" is known -- it was Percy French, for a student production at Oxford, i think... (University, anyway -- might have been Cambridge). I have the info in my MC to Richard Dengrove, last zine.

Spring is officially here! Helen and her friend killed a scorpion in Helen's room last week!

Our hornets look more like Very Large yellowjackets -- about three times the size -- and seem pretty damned aggressive. That powerswatter sounds neat -- where can i get one?



Trivial Pursuits//J.Gelb//Indeed, Diana Wynne Jones's books are deeper than the "Harry Potter" books. Try **Witch Week** or **The Lives of Christopher Chant** or **Charmed Life** (or **The Magicians of Caprona**, the fourth of the "Chrestomanci" books, which is a romp on **Romeo and Juliet**) in that regard. Other books by her i recommend: **Howl's Moving Castle**, which cheerfully

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twists all sorts of cliches into pretzels, Black Maria, a scary story of malevolent witches in a small English town and Fire & Hemlock, which twists Tam Lin and True Thomas with the story of a young woman's coming of age...

The thing about kids who ordinarily don't read reading Harry Potter books is the question of is that all they're reading? I know that when the "Goosebumps" books were so big, a lot of the kids who read them enthusiastically basically read "Goosebumps" and never moved on to other reading matter.

Roger Rabbit was the first film that mixed live action and animation through the entire film AND did it without using a locked camera to simplify the animators' job -- this resulted in it being the only film containing that much animation shot entirely on ones -- absolute full animation, twenty-four frames per second. Most animation -- even Disney features (well, i don't know about Fantasia 2000) {despite Alan Hutchinson's fervent denial a few years back} are shot on twos -- that is, twelve drawings per second, because persistence of vision renders ten or more frames per second into smooth motion, so twelve is sufficient. But, since real life is shot on ones and the animation had to match the moving live-action camera's viewpoint frame by frame, they had to shoot the animation on ones. The only other Disney film i can say i'm fairly sure was animated on ones all the way through was "The Old Mill", which was a short made especially to test the new multi-plane camera system.

(By the way -- how many people noticed the recent ad for some insurance or financial services company that knocks off "Old Mill"?)

I've taken to downloading the New Yorker cartoons... Better quality even yet.

DirecTV doesn't require that much different wiring than ordinary cable -- it just goes up to your own roof rather than out to the local telephone poles. OTOH, you may have a problem getting it, because the cable industry got some regs pushed through that restrict satellite access for some people. Also, you *may* be able to get your local network channels on the satellite (plus a generic PBS feed, not your local PBS station) -- but, for instance, we can't get the WB here on the bird, and we can't get it on antenna to any quality, which means we *still* can't see Buffy.

Gabba Gabba Bye Bye



Joey Ramone died at age 49, of lymphoma, on Easter Sunday, 15 April 2001.

As an article i found online points out, the only US Gold Record Joey ever received was for a compilation album when the early Ramones albums weren't available on CD.

Two Ramones albums actually made the Top 50.

The Ramones were considered and written about as no-talent jokes in a lot of publications that made most of their money by publishing barely-rewritten press releases about the newest cookie-cutter boy band and as many pics of Britney Spears' underage bod in tight leather as they could get.

This, of course, is one reason why i stopped buying those publications.

Because, as you know Ed, Joey and Johnny and Markie and Tommy and Richie and CJ saved rock'n'roll As We Know It Today.

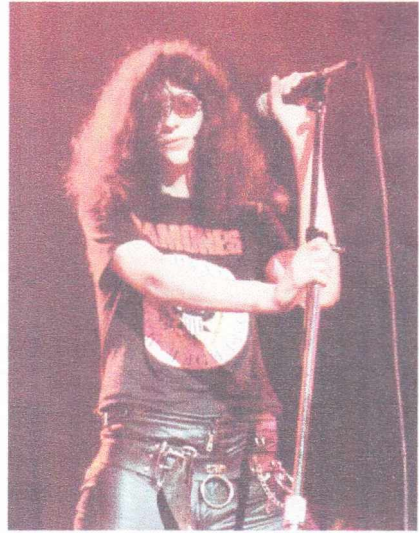
It's a truism that a prophet is not respected in his own country (When asked how come Bela Abzug had carried her Congressional District handily but lost her own home precinct, Ed Koch replied "Bela's neighbors know her.") And that certainly applied to Da Bruddahs.

On December 30th, Joey was hospitalized after he fell while walking down the street in New York. He was released for a few days in February, then readmitted. Joey never went home again.

But he never stopped being a Ramone or believing that in rock & roll he had been given an eternal, unbeatable life -- and that he had a responsibility to share it with everyone he knew.

There weren't too many avenues for Joey to be a hero," says Fields. "He wasn't going to be a fighter pilot or a trial lawyer or a senator. He found rock & roll and it found him his heroism."

<http://www.rollingstone.com/news/newarticle.asp?afl=0001&nid=13756>



Everyone remembers the people that the Ramones influenced. The Sex Pistols, the Damned, the Clash, the other BritPunks – Blondie, Joan Jett, any number of bands on This Side Of The Pond... But no-one much seems to remember that they were influenced by the Ramones.

John Cale said, of the Velvet Underground/Nico "Banana" album, that only like 5000 people bought it "...but they all started bands". So let it be with Joey.

The Ramones did a national tour in England, beginning on the US Bicentennial, for whatever perverse reason, and punk bands apparently sprouted like flowers in a field full of manure after a good rain.

Certainly, the Sex Pistols and the Damned are said to have been heavily inspired by that tour, and if they were, there were others.

"He was the most important person of the punk scene," X singer Exene Cervenka said. "More than those other bands, he was the most important person. And he was the symbol, he was definitely the symbol of the punk thing."

The Ramones changed popular culture tremendously, Cervenka said, and have the best legacy of any punk band.

"The best thing about them was that they didn't mean to do it," Cervenka said. "The Ramones were just a band, playing music and having fun, and [yet] it was so important."

<http://www.sonicnet.com/news/archive/story.jhtml?id=1442865>

Joey and his bruddahs came on the scene in a time when rock was heading rather too far in two directions, both of which lead eventually to total wankerhood – "Art Rock/Progressive Rock" and (shudder) "Disco".

On the one hand you had great thumping monolithic albums with maybe six songs per album (or, for that matter, just one, in the case of one of my favourite albums of all time) with huge, semi-coherent concepts and stories, pompous lyrics, incredibly sterile extended noodling-I-mean-solos by all concerned and not one damned tune you could actually *dance* to, much less convince some grrl to let you maybe put your hands where she oughtn't, which everyone knows is the principal purpose of rock'n'roll... (Some of it was wonderful to listen to – especially when consciousness-altered – but it sure wasn't what we'd meant when we said "rock'n'roll" even as recently as ten years earlier...)



And on the other hand, you had thumping, grinding totally content-less music which was good for nothing *but* dancing to; most disco was the aural analog of cotton candy – pretty and sweet and served its purpose, but there really wasn't anything you could sink your teeth in. And it wasn't good for much *except* dancing or screwing to, 'cos there sure wasn't anything there to *listen* to. Disco was so mechanistic and formulaic that the "performers" were irrelevant – the most important name on the sleeve or label was the producer's, and the next two most important bits of info were the beats per

minute and the running time.

...one can see

We need change and we need it fast --

Before rock's just part of the past

'Cos lately it all sounds the same to me ...

-- NEW TOOLS. OL'D GDE --

"Rock 'n' Roll Radio", Ramones 1980

And then there was this *noise* -- coming mainly from New York and mostly from a joint called CBGB.

The Ramones were terrific live, and they had lots of witty, catchy songs, but plenty of bands fit that description. The reason they're important is that they were a generation's teachers: the Master Demystifiers of pop music. Their first four albums -- Ramones, Leave Home, Rocket to Russia, and Road to Ruin -- comprise the easiest great rock era (if even one guitar the Complete Ramones and realize you can already play virtually their entire repertoire) in the mid-70s, when rock was the province of sterile virtuosity, the Ramones were a gentle corrective -- delivered at freight-train speed and thunderous volume, but gentle all the same.



when rock was the virtuosity, the Ra-

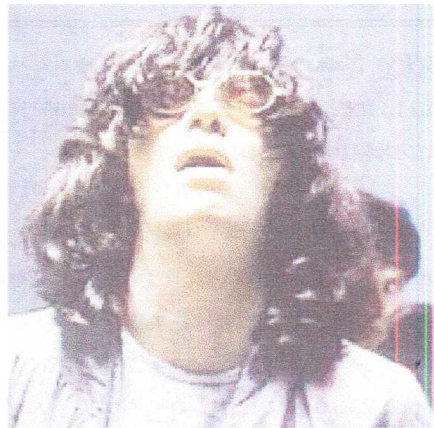
http://slate.msn.com/culturebox/entries/01-04-17_104580.asp

We weren't ready for it yet, here in the US. So the Ramones went to England, and Blondie went to England (Blondie's breakthrough here in the US with "Heart of Glass" was from their third album, and the first two, well received Over There were virtually unknown here until "Heart Changed All That; like Hendrix before them and the Stray Cats afterward, they had to go elsewhere to get their start.)

And the kids Over there, full of bottled-up rage that pop music was less and less acting as a safety valve for, looked upon the Ramones and realised two things -- (1) This was as Loud and Fast and as full of energy as a trainwreck and (2) Anybody Could Do It!

-- NEW TOOLS. OL' O ME --

And suddenly "punk" bands were springing up everywhere -- much more political than the Ramones, whose main message was that Carbona was preferable to glue as an inhalant -- and playing shows full of screaming anger and mediocre-to-non-existent musicianship in tiny clubs and dives all over the place and the kids were showing up and dancing themselves silly and releasing the energy that mainstream rock hadn't been touching for so long... And, best of all, the songs were short and had lyrics that might or might not *mean* anything but that you could actually hear and listen to other than as just another rhythmic element of the dance groove.



But, and this is what set Joey apart from everyone who's imitated him over the last quarter-century, he never, ever sneered. When he sang about punks and cretins and pinheads, he celebrated them. Even the tone of "Bonzo Goes to Bitburg," about Ronald Reagan's visit to a Nazi storm trooper cemetery, isn't contemptuous, just confused and angry. Joey was an outcast from the get-go, but his gangly arms were long enough to wrap around everyone. The punk generation he created is still learning to follow his example.

http://slate.msn.com/culturebox/entries/01-04-17_104580.asp

But the Ramones never really got the media appreciation such a seminal band should have -- they were dismissed, as I said, as a one-trick pony, or a one-joke act that hadn't realized that the joke wasn't funny anymore.

But, ya know -- out here in the Real World, the Ramones were appreciated for what they were just great, straight-forward rock'n'roll; no Deep Messages.

Except for one. And that one was that the first and the greatest of rock'n'roll Commandments, and it is "Make the Music for everyone, let my people dance and sing and be happy."

And the second was like unto it: "It's only rock'n'roll, but we like it!"

And somewhere in there is "F**k 'em if they can't take a joke."

-- NEW TOOLS. OL' O ME --

JOEY RAMONE WAS BURIED UNDER A STEEL-GRAY SKY ON TUESDAY (4/17/08) AFTERNOON, AT HILLSIDE CEMETERY IN LYNDAURST, NEW JERSEY, WITH THE SPIRES OF MANHATTAN RISING IN THE DISTANCE.

"AT LEAST HE HAS A GOOD VIEW," SAID A VISIBLY DISTRAUGHT DEBORAH HARRY, OF BLONDIE, WHO ONCE CAVORTED WITH JOEY IN THE PHOTO PAGES OF PUNK MAGAZINE. ALSO AMONG THE DOZENS OF WEEPING FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS ON HAND AS A RABBI READ KADDISH AT THE RAMONES SINGER'S GRAVESIDE WERE BLONDIE GUITARIST CHRIS STEIN, SINGER JOAN JETT, ORIGINAL RAMONES DRUMMER TOMMY ERDELYI AND NEW YORK DJs VIN SCIELSA AND DENNIS McNAMARA.
<http://www.sonicnet.com/news/story.jhtml?id=1442887>

Fred leBlanc of Cowboy Mouth, opening the show recorded on CM's "All You Need is Live" album, says "I don't give a damn about yesterday, and I don't care very much about tomorrow, all that matters is here and now."

Joey Ramone knew that that was all that really mattered, too.

(Wun-too-tee-fwah!)

Hey Ho -- Let's GO! Hey Ho -- Let's GO!

Hey Ho -- Let's GO! Hey Ho -- Let's GO!

Well, the kids are all hopped up and ready to go

(They're ready to go now)

They got their surfboards and they're goin' to those disco-
theques a go-go

But she just couldn't stay -- she had to get away --

New York City really has it all (oh yea, oh yea)

Sheena is a punk rocker, Sheena is a punk rocker, Sheena is a
punk rocker,

Sheena is a punk rocker now!

-- NEW TOOLS. OLO ME --

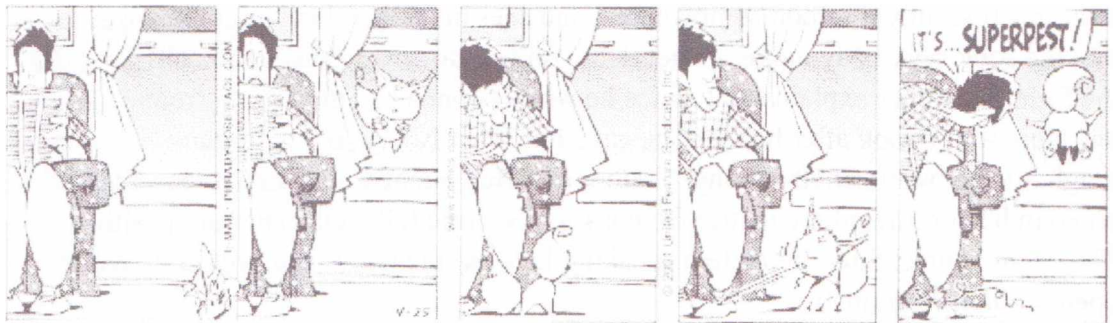
Oblivion//G.Brown//Your slighting reference to the "Old Dogs" CD is undeserved -- read my review on my new website at

http://electronictiger.com/reviews/old_dogs.htm.

If that doesn't work, go to Amazon at:

www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B00000FYH0/mikewebersweberw

However, just a quick once-over -- "Old Dogs" features three of country's classic voices -- Waylon Jennings, Jerry Reed and Mel Tillis plus Bobby Bare, who's also had a hit or two. These guys, like so many others of their genera-



tion, of whom it can be said that they made country music what it is today (and that, as Aslan says about descent from Adam And Eve, is enough to ennoble the meanest beggar and humble the greatest king) and who still have the pipes and talent, for the most part can't even, as the old line goes, get arrested in Nashville anymore. ((Well, George Jones can get arrested, anyway.)) All of the songs are by Shel Silverstein -- including his wonderful romp "Still Gonna Die" and "(Nashville is) Hard on the Livin' (But Really Speaks Well of the Dead)", which is a joyous joint chomp at the hand that used to feed them... Really an excellent album...

"Benny Goodman Story starring Jimmy Stewart"? I need a copy of that. And while you're at it, get me one of Everybody Goes to Rick's with that Rea-

-- NEW TOOLS. OL' O ME --

gan feller (fairly promising actor at one time; seemed like a nice guy even if he wasn't too bright -- whatever happened to him?)

In my universe -- just confirmed via the IMDB -- Steve Allen (who looked a little like him) plays Benny Goodman in that film. Stewart starred in the Glenn Miller Story...

Avatar Press//R.Cleary// "My name is Sue..." refers to the song -- written by Shel Silverstein and Carl Perkins, sung by Johnny Cash -- "A Boy Named Sue"; The narrator, named "Sue" by a father who subsequently disappears, grows up in childhood hell, grows up tough and mean...and, finally, wanders into a joint in a boomtown saloon somewhere... and sees his father dealing at the poker table; the song says: "My name is Sue! How do you do? Now you gonna DIE!" After the fight, his father explains that, since he wasn't gonna be able to stay 'round and teach his son to look after himself, he gave him That Name so's he'd *have* to grow up tough. ((Shel wrote another song, "Father of a Boy Named Sue" about ten years ater, wherein he considered the matter from a slightly more (allegedly) mature position. This is, of course, Shel Silverstein speaking here, so the word "mature" is probably open to interpretation.))

I have another, slightly ruder, Supergirl cartoon i got offline -- when it was done it referred to the animated Supergirl, but now that Peter David & Co have transformed the main-universe Supergirl and put her in the same costume as the animated one, using stuff from a t-shirt shop, it's even more apt -- it involves cheap t-shirts that shrink... ((And it's on the cover, which I hadn't decided on at the time I typed the foregoing) The original is very pretty in colour, but I can't affors to print that.)

Roger Ebert, reviewing "Freddy Got Fingered," a movie that is evidently reducing critics everywhere to a kind of gibbering stupor:

"This movie doesn't scrape the bottom of the barrel. This movie isn't the bottom of the barrel. This movie isn't below the bottom of the barrel. This movie doesn't deserve to be mentioned in the same sentence with barrels."

YNGVI//TK.FOO//“Charlotte's Web” -- I was about to say

that it's Astaire, i'm pretty sure, who dances with the hat rack, but that i can't recall the film; maybe it's *Royal Wedding* -- but now I suspect that what I'm remembering about Astaire is him dancing with a broom -- they computer-modified it a few years back for a vaccuum cleaner commercial. I think it was Kelly with the hatrack; maybe the same film he danced with Jerry Mouse?

Splicing together a dance routine from several small clips is quite legitimate, for a dramatic or comedy film, where appearance is more important than fact. Anything you do in making a movie -- so long as it looks right on the screen -- is perfectly all right [except see comment about the car “stunt” in the new *Gone in 60 Seconds*, be-



low]. A similar process is often used for records/CDs -- Linda Tompson was beginning to suffer from hysterical dysphonia, a condition that closes the throat to lock up after singing only a few notes at a time, as she and Richard were recording the album *Shoot Out The Lights*, and Joe Boyd, the producer, had to splice together entire songs from literally dozens of takes -- but you can't hear it, and the album is killer.

On the other hand, they faked the final stunt using CGI in the new *Gone in 60 Seconds*; couldn't possibly have done it live, which was obvious... and

didn't even really have a chase, which was the only real reason the first film was *made* after all, for Ford's sake -- four or five unrelated car stunts not in any real narrative sequence is not a car-chase.

RE *Toni's* final response to *Harry Warner's* LOC: I have the problem that i'm getting old enough that it's good odds that anyone i know has heard most of my best stories...

-- NEW TOOLS. OL'D ME --

Presidency of Dunces

One hundred days in office and what does George Bush have to show for it?

It is a sorry record for America

Special report: George Bush's America
Jonathan Freedland

Wednesday April 25, 2001
The Guardian

Is this real life or is it cruel satire? The scene is the Oval Office. The time is early April 2001. The United States and China are locked in a stand-off with 24 American aircrew held captive, their spy plane downed. Behind the desk is President George W Bush, grilling his aides on this complex diplomatic confrontation. Just as John F Kennedy interrogated his advisers during the Cuban missile crisis, so it falls to Bush to put the single question that might get to the heart of this superpower showdown.

So what does Bush ask? "Do the members of the crew have Bibles? Why don't they have Bibles? Can we get them Bibles? Would they like Bibles?" Then the president remembers a strategic factor even more crucial. "Are they getting any exercise?" Do the captive US personnel have access to exercise equipment? Is there a Stairmaster on Hainan Island?

OK, maybe the last bit is an embellishment but the rest is George W Bush in his own words, helpfully provided by the White House as proof of his deep engagement in the

China crisis. You and I may think this transcript has the reverse effect - confirming the satirists' caricature of Bush as a know-nothing, fundamentalist fitness freak - but the Bushies released it to prove how presidential their man has become. "He's very curious, and so he asked a lot of questions," gushed an irony-proof Karen Hughes, Bush's press secretary.

There'll be more boasting this week as Bush the Younger heads towards his 100th day in office on Sunday. Ever since Franklin D Roosevelt used his first 100 days to rush through the New Deal, this Napoleonic marker has been the occasion for an interim report on the new president.

So what should we make of the new man -



and is there a lesson there for us?

Yes, he has proved as verbally challenged as we expected. The list of Bushisms grows daily, a classic added after the president refused to answer reporters' questions at the Quebec Summit of the Americas, "Neither in French nor in English nor in Mexican."

But the key expectation has proved spectacularly false. The savants told us there was little to choose between Gore, a Clintonite New Democrat, and Bush, a self-styled "compassionate conservative". Both were huddling in the soft centre: Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Whoever won, little would change.

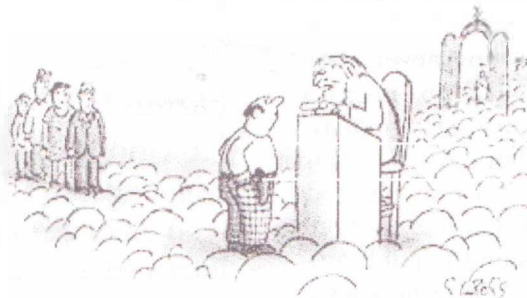
Well, no one's saying that now. For the promise that this would be a Republican Lite administration has proved naive, if not positively deceitful. Instead, in 100 short days, we have seen the Bush regime establish itself as the most brazenly rightwing of modern times. As the ecstatic head of the ultra-conservative Heritage Foundation enthuses, the new crowd are "more Reaganite than the Reagan administration".

At least you cannot fault their energy. In little over three months they have notched up a roll-call of policy atrocities that will keep US pressure groups busy for years. Pick your subject. Women's rights? Bush used the very first day of his presidency to block aid to any international group that promotes or offers abortion, even in developing countries where that help is vital. Children? He proposed saving money by slashing programmes designed to fight child abuse.

But let's not forget the area where Bush has made his strongest mark: the environment. Since January he has trashed the Kyoto protocol, broken his promise to reduce carbon emissions, proposed drilling in America's last wilderness, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, called for more nuclear power plants and "delayed" a demand that the utilities reduce the amount of arsenic in drinking water. The Bushies are backpedalling now, but their message could not have been clearer: the planet is not safe in their hands.

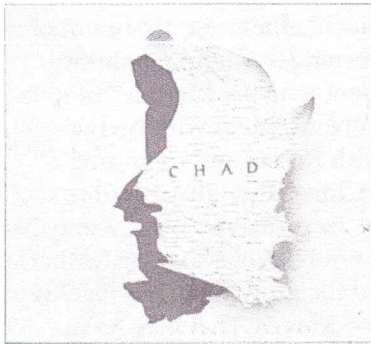
In international affairs, a retro brand of hawkery has become the defining philosophy of a president who promised a "humble foreign policy". Not content with reviving the cold war with Russia and triggering a new one with China (though yesterday's compromise on arms sales to Taiwan may be enough to prevent relations souring further), Bush scuppered the growing reconciliation between the two Koreas. That way he can still cite the "rogue state" of North Korea as the excuse for his ludicrous Son of Star Wars scheme.

Meanwhile, the closest thing we have to a policy crusade is Bush's drive for a \$1.6 trillion tax cut - 43% of which will go to the richest 1% in America: billionaires who don't need, and don't even want, the cash.



Trust me. It's not a God-given right.

It is an appalling record, assembled in less than 14 weeks. What it amounts to is the wish list of the wealth wing of the Republican party, granted in full. Big business does not just have influence over this administration - it is this administration. Look at the multimillionaires around the cabinet table. Scan the resumes: chief of staff Andrew Card is the former top lobbyist of General Motors; national security adviser Condoleezza Rice has a Chevron oil tanker named after her. It's no surprise this lot are making life easier for corporate power. Despite the window-dressing, which allowed compassionate W to present his cabinet as a "diverse" mix from across America, this is the boardroom presidency.



Is there a lesson from this three-month, crash course in Bushism? You bet. First, the right are se-

rious about power. Many expected Bush to clip his wings, to govern from the centre, in deference to his lack of a national mandate. But that's not how the right works. It thinks power belongs to it, as a law of nature - and when its got power, it uses it. It's only the centre-left that is scared of its own shadow, too frightened to act even when it's won by a landslide.

Second, progressives must never again be deluded into thinking there is no difference between us and our enemy. The right may pretend it has changed, but it will be just that: a pretence. "Forgive me, Al Gore," pleaded one liberal US columnist, recanting her previous line that Democrats and Republicans were as bad as each other. She's now seen that Democrats may be bad - but Republicans are worse.

So what might be a practical response? How about the left resolve to pursue power as deliberately as our adversaries? In the United States, that would mean no repeat of the 2000 split which saw Ralph Nader win votes that might otherwise have gone to Gore. Third parties make sense in parliamentary systems - and Nader's Greens should compete for congressional seats - but not in presidential races, where there is but a single prize at stake. There can be only one president: next time the left have to unite behind one candidate.

In Britain, unity may well take the opposite form. Progressives lost four successive elections here because the anti-Tory vote was split between Labour and Lib Dems. Tactical voting in 1997 finally found a way around the problem, with supporters of the two parties effectively swapping their votes. Now there are moves, led by Billy Bragg and others, to formalise that process. Good luck to them. Should there be any doubt about motive, we need only cast a glance across the Atlantic. For that is what happens when the left forgets its enemy.

jonathan.freedland@guardian.co.uk

**Home With The Armadillo//
L.Copeland//**i recommend either scanning the cartoons and then asting them in or else copying them to an intermediate master sheet -- you could play with the machine's "Contrast" or "Darkness" settings in order to lose the BG tone that the newsprint gives in contrast to the whiter paper you used for page masters.

In the Luann comic strip, Luann's father was smart enough to recruit her older brother (and his battered bomber of a car) to teach Luann to drive.

Cub Scouts earn badges -- Wolf (Baden-Powell's original spin-off from the original Boy Scouts was the Wolf

Cub Scouts), Bear, Lion, etc. as they progress through levels of achievement and them, theoretically, pass on to become Boy Scouts.

Kate and i went through the whole run of Evanovich in a short span - i'm afraid that i at least may have overdosed on them.

Variations//R.Lynch// i interpret "classical" as any type of music written for what i would call "classical" instrumentation -- with exceptions for things like some rock-with-wymphony-orchestra stuff. OTOH, a lot of Zappa's stuff that could be considered "rock" could also, i think, be considered "classical" under my definition, with its firm bases in things like Satie and so forth.

For silliness, sheer musicianship, and admiration of someone who must have been raving nuts to try it, Rampal's CD of Joplin rags on flute (with piano and other accompaniment {including a train whistle on one cut}, i hasten to point out) is quite nice.

I've seen a club card from the Maple Leaf Club, and it said that Joplin wrote "The Entertainer" as motif music for himself and three other regulars there -- there are four themes and they each represent Joplin and one of his friends. Marvin Hamlisch (for *The Sting*) dropped one or two of the themes entirely and then changed the arrangement of what was left.

Zits is new? I must be thinking of some other strip; the one i thought of when you said "*Zits*" has been running for at least five years, i think...

Ummm, (Regarding *Galaxyquest*) if you think "Trekkies at their worst aren't the parodies these fans were shown as" you obviously haven't been meeting the same Trekkies i have over the years. I doubt that anything not part of the main SF storyline that happens at that convention is actually Made Up -- actually, the arch-fanboy's parents are the truly offensive caricatures in the film, to me.

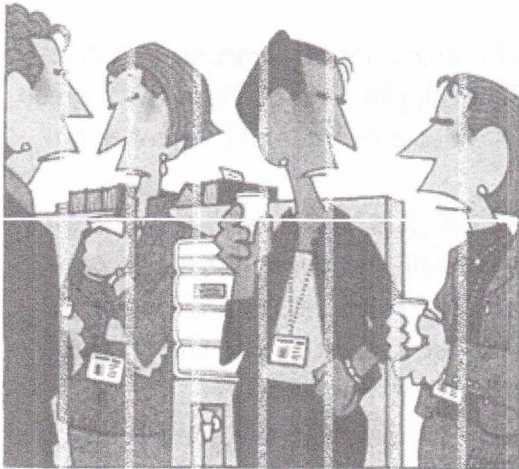
OTOH, had i voted for the Hugo, *Iron Giant* would have been my #1 vote, fer shure.

The DeKalb Sheriif assasination thing, as you know, keeps getting weirder -- we had a shoot-out on the lawn of a former deputy, who wound up in jail without bond for "tampering with the evidence"...

Twyg R. Dengrove BTW: Your index lists my MC as Page 23
-- it's on 24. This seems to happen every so often, i've noticed.

If i had some ailment that required daily shots that i had to give myself, i'd just have to seriously consider dieing. I once passed out from knowing that i'd had a shot that i didn't feel in the slightest.

My own feeling that Campbell might be Completely Losing His Touch as an editor came later than the early 60's, though even then i was beginning to be convinced that



I'd love to join you in saying horrible things about men, but I used to be one myself.

more and more writers were selling him stories that pushed his buttons, rather than on literary quality. And even when i suspected it might be Campbell, i was also willing to suspect that there might be an overall decline in the field as a whole.

Again, i never got the feeling that Cambell was particularly trying to get people to think in order to get them to agree with him; he was trying to get people to think so that they'd think.

Lewis Carroll wrote "The Hunting of the Snark" beginning with the last

line -- "For the Snark was a Boojum, you see." -- then he wrote a stanza ending in that, then he wrote the Ninth Fit ending in that stanza (The full title is "The Hunting of the Snark', an Agony in Nine Fits"), and so on.

Mystery writers do not necessarily write the ending first -- some merely populate the book with a large number of suspects with motives and opportunities, and then decide which one dunnit. (The Futurians used a similar technique in writing SF novels quickly).

"Craig Rice" left a half-completed novel when she died (not a John J. Malone mystery, one from the other series i never could stand to read any of) -- the setup, introduction of characters, the actual murder, and the very beginning of the investigation. But she left absolutely no clue as to who the murderer was -- the first half was practically ready to publish, the second didn't even exist in notes, much less a draft.

Her publisher went to "Ed McBain", asking him to finish it. He took on the challenge, and eventually did so, even though it meant he had to solve the mystery himself before he could write it -- the publisher wouldn't let him re-write what there was to make the job easier, either...

* * * * *

*"God made an idiot for practise. Then He made a School Board."
Mark Twain*

* * * * *

Speaking of Pest Control -- we saw our first scorpion of the Spring in the house the other day -- or rather, Helen and her friend Cat did, in Helen's bedroom. The scorpion's day was not improved by being spotted by two teen-aged girls.

"Books in Minutes" -- a fancy combination of multiple laser printers and automatic binding machinery -- already exists. I think it's less than ten minutes to produce a paperback essentially indistinguishable from one printed by the conventional means, and hardbacks take only a little longer. B&N and Border's are both said to be interested in the idea -- any store could "carry" books that sell only a copy or two a month but sell steadily over the years.

No, it was a joke about why does a member of the municipal squadron of anti-conflagrationists wear red garters...

Actually, the increased mass (not weight) under Einsteinian conditions would be imperceptible to the person actually travelling at a reasonable fraction of light speed.

An unsigned credit card is not valid.

I believe the Dean Device exhibited an apparent decrease in weight when tested on a spring balance, but not when tested on a beam balance -- i.e., it played games with inertia and damping coefficients.

About "Abdul Bulbul Ameer":

"This song was written in 1877 by Percy French at Trinity College for a college concert. His original title was "Abdulla Bulbul Ameer". He sold it to a publisher for five pounds. It was published without credit to him and he never received royalties for its later success. Many sources still list the author as anonymous.

"According to the *Book of Navy Songs*, "This song is representative of the non-nautical and non-naval songs that frequently become a favorite of the wardrooms in the fleet. An English correspondent writes that originally it was a ballad of the Russo-Turkish Wars."

"Given the date and author, the Crimean War (1853-1856) is more likely the setting than the earlier Russo-Turkish Wars."

Percy French bio: <http://www.contemplator.com/history/pfrench.html>

Songs whose author is more or less easily determined being listed as "Anon" or "Trad" is amazingly common -- the most wonderful case that I can think of was "Dark as the Dungeon", Merle Travis's marvelous and wistful meditation on coalmining.



YES, SIR, CARICATURES CAN BE VERY REVEALING. BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M DOING.

Travis wrote it and recorded it. Three years later, one of the more prestigious folk-music publications -- possibly Sing Out!; anyway, a publication considered a Highly Authoritative Source -- published it, listing it as "Traditional, Author Unknown".

Tom Paxton has had the dubious honor of having at least two of his original songs pass in the public consciousness into "genuine folk music" -- "Bottle of Wine" and "The Last Thing on My Mind". One time when I saw him live, he mentioned that he was visiting his daughter at Yale and he was introduced to a young lady there who was part of a folk music group. "That's nice," he said. She explained that, while they all loved the songs that he wrote and other folk-singers like him wrote, her group was dedicated to doing only "true" folk music -- not music someone had recently written in the "folk tradition". "What are some of the songs you do?" he asked. "Well, 'Bottle of Wine', and 'Greenback Dollar...'"

Hoyt Axton wrote "Greenback Dollar" when he was sixteen. He sold the rights to it for something like \$38. Some years later, a lawyer told him that he had a good chance of getting the rights back if he sued (apparently there was something a little shifty in the original sale terms). The way i heard the story, he considered it, then said "Naw -- how'd I look suing for the rights and royalties on a song that says 'I don't give a damn 'bout a greenback dollar?'"

**Well, that seems to conclude the
MCs on the PREVIOUS Mailing.
Lessee if i can get more or less
caught up...**

DC comics recently published a very well-written and (considering it's Garth Ennis on the writing) almost restrained two-issue miniseries entitled "War in Heaven", featuring Hans von Hammer, their World War One "Enemy Ace" character. For those not familiar with the title, von Hammer is von Richtoffen on steroids. He had over a hundred confirmed kills in World War One. He was the personification of the "Knight of the Air" mythos -- he would not attack an enemy whose guns were jammed or empty, more than once he endangered himself in making sure that a particularly brave enemy pilot made it back to his own lines alive.

On leave, to relieve his tensions, he would hunt. And as soon as he entered the forest, a huge black wolf would join him; they would hunt together. When von Hammer left the forest, the wolf would disappear back into the trees.

A year or so ago, some cheerful loonie at DC revived von Hammer as a soldier of fortune type, teamed him up with Bat Lash (probably in his seventies, but still a fast gun dead shot), Slam Bradley and Chop Chop (not yet a member of the Blackhawks) and put them up against Vandal Savage, Chiang Kai Chekh, Mao and dinosaurs in the Orient between World Wars. That was fun.

Ennis is not trying to have fun here -- at least not that sort of Doc Savage/Love a Mystery fun.

Our story opens in May 1942, as one of von Hammer's old subordinates comes to him at the castle where he has been living in solitude; the Luftwaffe needs experienced pilots, men who can teach the green kids the old tricks, men who can survive in the deadly sky.

Von Hammer accepts.

In July 1942, he arrives in Russia - Novgorod, fifty miles from Leningrad.

And it's the story of the Germans in Russia -- not so bad for the Luftwaffe as for the Wehrmacht, but not that much better.

The first volume of War in Heaven carries through to February 1943 -- the German surrender at Stalingrad -- and shows up von Hammer's growing discontent with the way the war is being waged and with the whole Nazi

regime; he crashes in Leningrad, and barely makes it out alive, what he sees there leaves him soul-shaken and doubting.

Volume two takes us to March 1945; von Hammer is leading a fighter equipped with the Me262 jet fighter. If Hitler hadn't been so enamoured of the "Schnellbomber" concept and ordered the majority of early 262 production into bomber versions, this is the aircraft that might have been able to turn the tide, or at least delayed the inevitable a bit longer.

Von Hammer is by now almost completely disaffected with the Nazi regime, but he continues to fight for Germany and for the German people.

And then he goes down -- not behind enemy lines this time, but in a little place not far from Munich.

A little place called Dachau.

And he sees.

What he sees is a shock to him; it is less so to his wingman. Von Hammer spent the Thirties in a castle in the mountains; he didn't see what happened. "He turned some of us into his curs and got the rest to look the other way. Oh God, we're guilty. We'll always be guilty. And yet..." And yet -- neither he nor von Hammer can bring themselves to stop fighting as long as the German people suffer; as long as the war continues.

And as the end draws near, von Hammer still has to wrestle with his conscience...

* * * * *

This is what war comics often weren't, but ought to be. These are not quite so squeaky-clean as the older, Comics Code-approved war comics were -- one would be advised not to read Volume One, particularly, right before lunch, nor yet too soon after -- but they are not so graphic as some PG-rated movies I've seen, either. Without being pornographically graphic about the blood and guts and the horrors of war, these two volumes tell their story cleanly and clearly -- give us some feel for what it must have been like, show us that the people on both sides of the line are real and

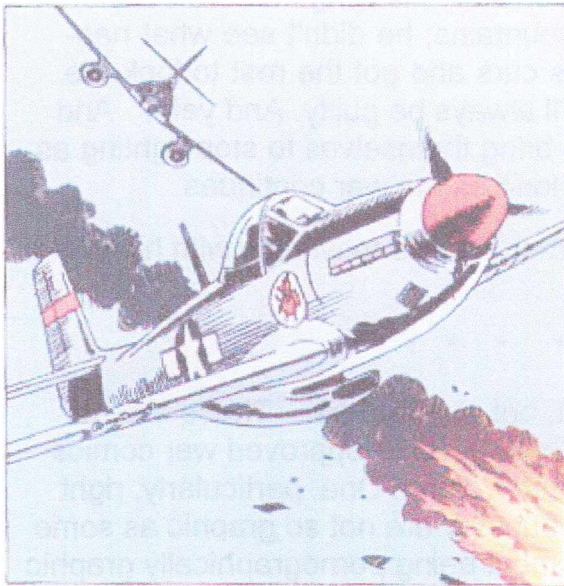
have feelings and, like as not, are fighting for love of their countries, not for any high-flown political rhetoric.

Von Hammer is a fantasy figure, but the emotions and motivations that drive him are real and undeniable. To slightly misquote Robert A. Heinlein -- "Men fight to protect their homes and families"; for a solitary like von Hammer, the German People are his family.

*"MANY YEARS HAVE PASSED --
AND STILL I WONDER WHY --
THE WORST OF MEN MUST FIGHT,
AND THE BEST OF MEN MUST DIE."*

*** * * * * * * * * *

An amusing throwaway touch -- Volume Two has art by Russ Heath [one of the Big Three of DC war comics, along with Kubert and Glanzman], in one sequence, one of von Hammer's men is having engine trouble in his 262,



and an American P-51 manages to catch him and bring him down (The Spitfire and the P-51 Mustang were almost as fast as the 262 and a bit more maneuverable; if a German pilot lost a fraction of his speed advantage, he could be in big trouble.) Von Hammer, in turn, knocks down the P-51, whose pilot parachutes to safety.

I don't know what level this little visual gag came from, whether it was Ennis's idea, or someone in editorial, or just something Heath slipped in for his own amusement, and nothing is made of it in any

other way, but in one panel, if you look closely, you can see the "Flying Cloud" personal insignia of Maj. Johnny Cloud, the Navajo Ace, another long-running DC war character..