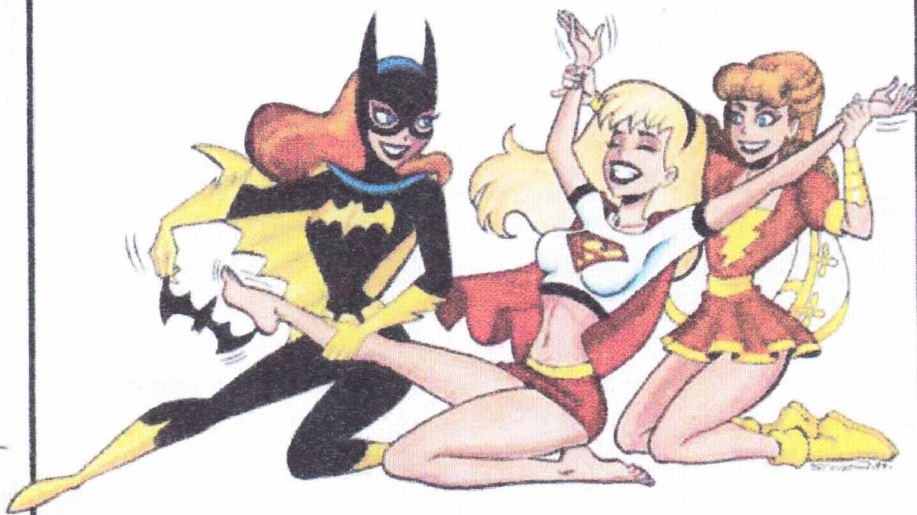


Ticklish Situation Indeed



A Ticklish Situation, Indeed

is a SFPazine from

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And, since i don't have any particular natter to drop in here --
though i may well be discoursing on divers subjects eventually -- i
believe i'll just begin with

Mailing Comments

Peter Pan and Merry // D.Schlosser // I would
tend to say that batteries based on sea water and producing
the amount of power needed to power the Nautilus are still
"very theoretical".

And, beside the matter of intent in "kiddie porn" -- which seems
to be any representation of a nude child, these days -- and whether it
"always" involves "child abuse", i cite the material that is drawn or com-
puter-produced and involves no real children at all, but is still specifically
defined as "kiddie porn". In fact, anything that is sexual in nature and
"appears" to represent persons of less than 18 years of age is specifically
defined as "child pornography" by US law, even if it's cartoons or com-



I wonder if this artist is aware of the late Edd Cartier, and if so, is consciously incorporating elements of Cartier's style into his own art?

puter imagery.

"Consumed" in the context of a battery is rather a misleading term, as the reaction is, as you say, usually reversible.

Eliminating the Supreme Court:
"Congress could

initiate an amendment to that effect but I wouldn't bet on its chances..." especially since the Amendment might well be subject to judicial review.

And i believe that there have been at least a few court rulings that Constitutional guarantees apply to everyone on US territory, citizen or alien, legal or otherwise, except under certain highly specific circumstances.

Speaking of 60s/70s soft porn, i have checked several online book search sites, and none of them have even heard of Chester (Butterfly Kid) Anderson's hilarious sex novel *The Pink Palace*. (Or Mel Lazarus's parody of the Marvel Bullpen [combined with other elements of the industry], *The Boss is Crazy, Too*, for that matter.)

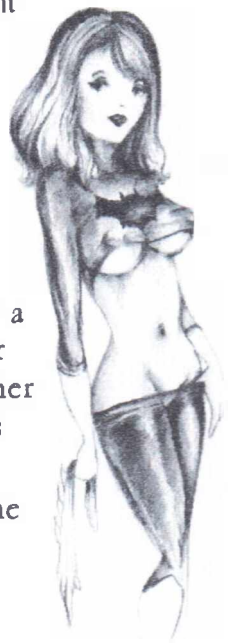
"There's more [puns] where those came from"? Leave 'em there.

And Sherman's March did work. Remember, after Lee's surrender, there were still a large number of Confederate forces who were not subject to it -- Lee could surrender only the troops under his command -- who could have dragged the War on for a Long Time; "The New Yorker" did a multi-part article on it some years back. Sherman's March demonstrated that the North had the capability and the will to fight a

running war under that sort of conditions.

My Dad, while he developed a more-or-less permanent list to port in his last years due to back problems dating back to his teens, was still mobile enough that he put in a vegetable garden in my sister's back yard, and was cultivating it when he had the incident that took him.

And, of course, in re: Pat Gibbs's strawman in the Elian Gonzales case, i remember reading a few months later that -- with no particular publicity here -- the Cuban Government, finding itself in a similar case with a kid who was in Cuba and whose preferred parent was in another, "free", country, simply sent the kid to be with said parent. No argument, no fuss. Of course, people who take Pat's position have to ignore this sort of thing.



ADVENTURES IN
GRAPHIC DESIGN //
S.HUGHES // My mother has a
stereoscope and several cards for
it; i may take this card down to her
place next time i head down that way. It looks
good.

Have fun ~~storming the castle~~ running the
convention.

Frequent Flyer // T.Peller // Are the
Elgin Marbles still in the British Museum? I thought they
had been/were to be returned to Athens.

I used to try to get to DisClave over Memorial Day and (if it
was possible to do two out-of-region cons so close together in a
single year) BaltiCon over Easter weekend. But it's been years
since i could afford either, much less both.

Daredevil, in my opinion, came off as Big City Smartass,
not particularly in any way what i would have called black-
sounding.

I cannot recall the Holmes story "The Resident Patient"... hmmm. Okay, there it is. I must have read it, but...

That's not a Big Chicken. That's a Sort Of Large Chicken. The One True Big Chicken is in Marietta GA on US 41. Locals give directions that begin "Go about a mile past the Big Chicken." Outsiders go "Huh?" and the locals reply "Trust me." I'll try to get a picture soon. (Found some online). Note that



the bill opens/closes and the eyes roll. The Big Chicken was the subject of literally a nationwide preservation campaign a few years back when KFC were going to tear it down because its structure had deteriorated to the point where it was getting dangerous

We be too poor to go to cons. Sigh.

I really hate missing the tribute to **MFill**.

The thought of letting the pilots have handguns in cockpits brings out a certain sardonic strain in me; especially since the pilot I first heard proposing it was a Delta pilot. These are the guys who couldn't even find the right major-city airports even with electronic navigation equipment to help them, and we're going to give them guns?

Oh, take my word for it, the ***Matt Helm "Movies"*** were parodies. Whichever it was that features Sharon Tate has a sequence in a nightclub, the band on stage is Dino Desi & Billy, fronted, as you doubtless know, by Dean's son. As they walk past the bandstand, Dino jr leans over and announces "The joint's jumpin' Dad!" Dean looks confused. Tate explains "He calls **every-one** 'Dad'." Dino sr looks back and asks "What? He don't know?"

Tyndallite // N.Metcalf // As i recall.

"Sidewise in Time" is told as if describing a movie made up from one frame taken from each alternate universe; all show the same exact instant, but, like a time-lapse film, the scene changes and flows as the viewpoint gets further away from the base timeline.

My problem with the "Retro Hugos" is that we only remember, in general, the material from the period that consensus has judged best. It's the same sort of effect that leads people to look back and sigh "They made better movies back then." They made good and bad movies Back Then; we only tend to remember the Good Ones. Thus, no matter how well we might recreate in ourselves the mind-set of the day, we will only be judging material from a small part of the field.

OBLIO // G.Brown // Baseball seems so messed up in general that almost any changes would have to be for the better. I have a **Tank MacNamara** here that seems to the point -- i'll see if i can find it.

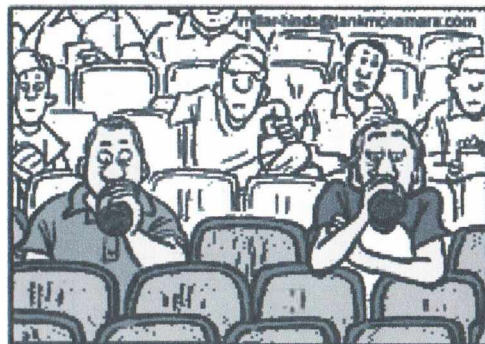
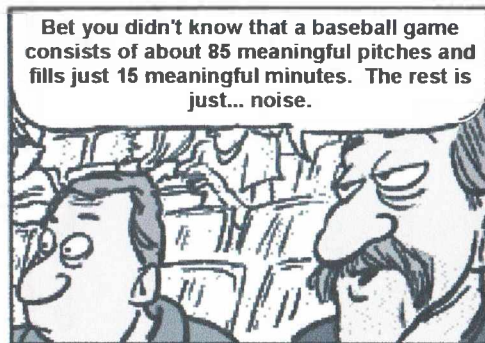
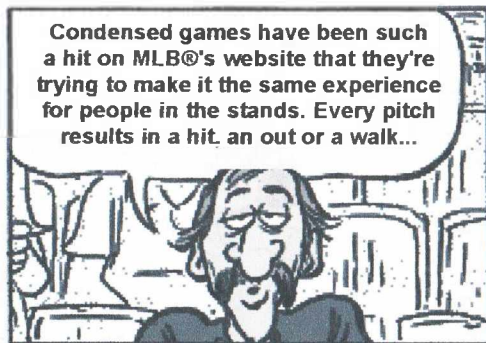
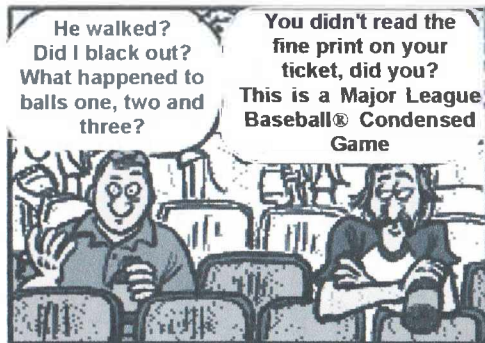
You sound really truly unhappy with MLB. And, from the standpoint of someone who occasionally listens to a game and sort-of follows what's going on, i can't say as i blame you.

The bit about DC tracking sales and noting that gorillas on the covers increased sales, and that it's sort of a surprise, but it's an indubitable fact, put me in mind of Chuck Jones's comment that they discovered by experimentation that there is a Golden Length (as it were) for the coyote's fall -- he gets smaller and smaller in the frame for exactly "X" frames before he disappears, then there's a hold of "Y" frames and then there's the puff of dust as he hits, lasting "Z" frames. If they varied any of these parts of the fall by more than one or two frames running length, the laugh wasn't nearly as big.

The Helm novels have a wry humour, true, but they have a certain hard-edged-ness about them. Helm is quite ca-

TANK MCNAMARA

BY JEFF MILLAR & BILL HINDS



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pable of not only kicking a man in the face when he's down to get his partner to get angry and come into reach -- he's fully capable of doing it *knowing* that both of the men he's fighting are fellow US agents (from another agency). Also there's at least one case where Helm knowingly guns down a US agent. (Of course, the US agent in question was part of a setup in which Helm was supposed to be killed...) Let's put it this way. If Matt Helm and James Bond came up against each other at cross-purposes, the odds would be so far against Bond that it'd make the Big Game look easily-winnable.

Re the blue-pencil mark on the swimsuit ad, remember the penis drawn on the yellow plate of a Batman reprint relatively recently? And, in Mel Lazarus's "The Boss is Crazy Too", there's an account of a joke pulled on an incompetent Production Manager involving a doctored cover...



As i think i mentioned in a comment to Janice re: knitting needles, sharpened kinitting needles make nasty and deadly weapons of preference among a certain type of assassin.

All the Mailing Comments That Fit In Print // J.Copeland // And we delve straight into

POSSIBLE SPOILER WARNINGS FOR BOOK and/or MOVIE

Question -- in the book of "Sum of All Fears", all the terrorists achieve is a squib reaction that doesn't even fully destroy the stadium it's right next to, much less a city. Do they do better/worse in the movie?

END POSSIBLE SPOILER SECTION.

Someone, somewhere, said that Bourne Identity and Lilo & Stitch are essentially the same story. I haven't seen BL, yet, but i may.

Really liked Lilo & Stitch, though; rumour hath it that "L&S" is conventioanl animation's last chance at Disney.

MIB II is one of those films i sorta wanna see some-time when i get around to putting it on the NetFlix list. I don't wanna pay theatre-ticket prices for it.

It's not necessary to compare to originals to see how bad microfilm often is; any microfilm which contains graphic matter as well as text demonstrates just how lousy the reproduction is.

Actually, the best definition of "terrorism" i recall having encountered is actions that target civilian targets for the specific purpose of destroying the public's faith in the ability of the government to protect them. I would not clas-sify Hiroshima as such as a terrorist act; Coventry probably, London past the point where the Germans had any plausi-ble hope of invasion definitely as one, and the British part of Dresden (mostly incendiaries and mostly aimed at the civilian parts of the city) definitely as one, but the US part of Dresden (mostly HE and mostly aimed at the railyards) as pretty much legitimate military action.

How is "civil twilight" defined? I don't believe i've heard the term before, but it sounds interesting.

An important public service from MIT, indeed, to list websites that frequently get censored, so that we can avoid them, at <http://www.mit.edu:8001/activities/safe/notsee.html>. [And a lot of the links are broken, which means that those evile sites have been successfully routed.] What i love is that websites in/about our neigh-bouring county -- Forsyth -- often get blocked by nanny-ware programs, because the county seat is Cumming.

I still question that the Constitution grants no rights to foreigners -- foreigners in foreign parts, well, yeah. But any person standing on the soil of the US should have virtu-ally all Constitutional Rights (except such as must obvi-ously be reserved to citizens, such as the vote). I'm going to have to research this a bit; i don't have a copy of the Consti-

tution handy at the moment.

To arrest someone on conspiracy charges you need to have accused three or more people (ISTR) of intent to commit a crime. And to convict them, you don't need to convict everyone or prove the crime, you merely have to convince the jury that the person in question plotted with the other two to commit what might be a crime...

Navigating by roadsign in Rural Georgia is often difficult or impossible, to the extent of signage being actually misleading; i really think my fellow Georgians are of the opinion that if you don't know how to get there, you don't need to be going there.

Consider that at about the same time that Rex Stout was creating Nero Wolfe, Lester Dent was creating Doc Savage, and making him six feet tall, which made him tower over everyone. (As Doc's adventures continued, in order for him to still tower over the average citizen, he became taller and taller as the average height increased, finally winding up at six-four. He'd prolly be six-eight or taller if new stories were being written today.) If Wolfe is less than six feet -- particularly if he has relatively long legs, 266 pounds could be quite heavy. I am six feet (with abnormally short legs for my height) and very few people ever guess how much i weigh. They guess that i'm well overweight, but not how shamefully far over i am...



Looking at our HP920C's setup screens, it can do both banner and poster printing, up to 4 X 4 sheets to make up a poster... that would be 34" x 56" (or a bit less, allowing for overlaps) using legal-size paper.

Actually, it's amazing the number of things that might make plausible terrorist targets -- for a month or so after 9/11 people in our area suffered some inconvenience because Buford Dam Road was closed to traffic. Buford Dam Road runs across -- surprise -- Buford Dam. Buford Dam is, Kate tells me, the largest free-standing man-made earthen dam in the world. Look at a map of Georgia. Locate Atlanta. Locate Lake Lanier. Note that Buford Dam forms Lake Lanier. Visualise the possible effect of a small van packed tightly with fertiliser detonated on the road halfway across the dam...



Well, our Post Office is in better shape than some other nations'. However, our rail service is a disgrace -- or, rather, the way it's treated and funded is a disgrace.

I happen to *like* Phantom of the Paradise. It's one of two of his films that are worth watching. (The other is The Untouchables, which is shamelessly stolen stylistically and often content-wise from Sergio Leone).

If *Guy* wants to lift a cartoon for Challenger, he'd better make sure he's not violating copyrights. An apazine can get away with it; a widely-distributed and no-

ticeable Hugo-level genzine might well get nailed.

Given my own interpretation of the last two episodes of The Prisoner, that the whole thing is a (somewhat self-pitying) allegory of the way in which society co-opts the surface elements of and claims to honour extraordinary genius while actually making tawdry trash out of its creations, i still think the last two episodes hold up rather well, especially the final shot and the end-credit shots of the three main characters.

Re: movie theatres -- "sound up to rock-concert lev-

els"; is the theatre THX-certified (or certified for the latest Dolby equivalent)? The newer sound systems actually assume much louder base sound levels than might once have been the case, both because they were developed to make action films sound good and because the public in general expects louder sound in everything, it seems. (And, the cynic in me offers, to be heard over the number of people who seem to think that they are in their own living rooms as they discuss and summarise the plot for each other...)



If the offer is still on and you haven't yet bought the August release of Lord of the Rings, go to your KIA dealer, do a test drive, get a coupon for a free copy. Then also buy the November re-release (which will be four discs vs the current two). The reason for this is that, apparently, there is material on the current release that will not be on the later, bigger release.

We have twelve DVDs so far -- we tend to have three from Netflix in the place as well, at any given moment, though right now we're between sets from them. One of them arrived unexpectedly yesterday in the mail from our own *Ned Brooks*. It's a Region 0 PAL disc from the British Film Institute of Nigel Kneale's 1972 ghost story, The Stone Tape. Ned can't play it on either of his players; one gives a rolling picture, the other says "Can't play thid disc, boss" or words to that effect. In return for running it to VHS for him, he says i can keep it. Haven't watched it myself, though i've done the copying already, but i anticipate enjoying it immensely.

Among the others are Iron Giant, which i promised myself would be the first DVD i bought (and it was), and Battle Beyond the Stars, which is even more fun now than in 1980. Still need to get Rock 'n' Roll High School and Road to El Dorado and a few others i could mention -- like the entire run of "The Avengers". Nw if someone would just put out "The Goodies" on DVD, i'd be ecstatic.

I think we're going to give Buffy a little more rope -- and the comic is pretty good. And i *really* want the "Bunny-Suit Anya" action figure they're bringing out...

Anyone less likely to play well in a remake of a Capra film than Sandler? Well, maybe not worse, (and not Capra, now that i check, but along the same lines) but, umm, Warren Beatty in Heaven Can Wait?

I picked up that Jones tribute cartoon as well, as you've doubtless noticed. The current (came out last week, 8/7/02) issue of Looney Tunes comics has a really nice Jones tribute featuring Wile E. and the Roadrunner and a story recapping Bugs & Elmer's relationship from the beginning.

But, i also liked the Jones tribute that someone posted on rasff, quoting a single line from Marvin the Martian: "What happened to the kaboom? There was supposed to be an earth-shattering kaboom!"

On the other hand, George was capable of writing material that he could not perform -- witness "While Eric Clapton's Guitar Gently Weeps" on the White Album. (A sidenote: the Bobs do a deadly a capella version of Cream's "White Room" on one of their albums, including singing an Eric Clapton solo. Of course, it's the Eric Clapton solo from "Gently Weeps"...)

CNN just did a thing on "what dead entertainers made the most money last year" -- Elvis was first, Charles Schulz was second, Lennon was fourth, Dr Suess was fifth and George was sixth...

OTOH, i remember Paul and Yoko doing a joint appeal to Michael Jackson to release the Northern Songs catalog, on the basis that the rigfhts should belong to the composers (or their heirs). This position was, of course, greatly enhanced by the way in which Sir Paul has given the Buddy Holly rights back to Buddy's family.

Re:ct:janice about the special Security Clearance for travellers to eneble them to bypass security lines: "I don't buy the argument that this ID would be completely voluntary." Of course not -- it wouldn't be voluntary at all. As security delays get worse and worse, people who have to be

Absolutely Certain of making flights will be forced to get this "voluntary ID".

OTOH, if you can't produce ID on demand to satisfy the police, the Court(s) have no problem with them hauling you down to the *juzgado* on suspicion of vagrancy.

Ummm. "Why is Boy George Like a Lamb Chop?" Ummm. I really don't remember, unless it's because they both have frilly panties on...

Incidentally thanks for introducing me to 9 Chickweed Lane a couple mailings ago. Wonderful edge-of-surreality stuff. It is now one of the seven strips i collect online daily. (Another, as people here might be able to guess, is Luann.)

Sphere // D.Markstein // Yah, people who hook into your graphics instead of copying them to their own sites (which is another legal/moral quagmire) and boost your bandwidth usage are annoying.

One possibility i've seen is to use GIF files for all your graphics, which you then set against a white or black background, making white or black (as appropriate) in the graphic transparent. On your site, it looks fine. On their site, whatever their site's background is shows thru. I've noticed that the sort of sites that seem likely to swipe other peoples' bandwidth that way are also likely to



have other than white or black backgrounds -- imagine a comic cover with paisley showing thru wherever the original is black or white...



Speaking of "earth-shattering importance" vs "is it remembered ten years later", i need to do some research for an article on the first DC-Marvel crossover, which most people don't even know happened.

I don't have nearly the web traffic you do, but i seem to be referring several people a day to Amazon and they seem to be buying stuff -- for some reason, the most popular item sold thru my site is a Lake Charles (LA) Junior League cookbook -- and they seem to be getting some good out of it. I may look toward putting out a begging bowl, too. I also am looking into signing up for affiliate status with Opera.

As you say, the basic "point" of publishing any comics story -- or anything else, for that matter -- is that someone wanted to/was willing to write it and someone (whether that's the same someone or not) is willing/wants to publish it, which is about all the "point" i can see to doing this retcon on Captain America's origin. Not that it matters to me -- the proposed change is something to which i am totally indifferent in the long run. Especially as the only Marvel i've been reading regularly for years (*Spider-Girl*) just breathed its last. (If i notice when this one comes out, though, i might try to make a point to read it...)

Ya know, i'm a lot less sure than you are that the guy you're heaping scorn on -- the one who thinks the times will

roll back to where his Neanderthaloid views become the majority again -- is wrong.

I don't really know for sure whether Al Capp shifted political positions or not -- i'm inclined to more or less generally agree with the "everybody else moved" theory, though not entirely; i think there was some shift in Capp's own positions -- i will say that i feel as if his later satirical pieces exhibited a different underlying attitude toward those who took positions that disagreed with his, no matter who or what. I feel as if the latter pieces were a bit more vituperous, though this is mostly based on memory and i might change my mind if i re-read a long run of the strip.

There's a semi-troll semi-regular over on rec.arts.sf.fandom who loves to answer almost any charge against the Right and the current Bush Insurgency occupying our Nation's Capital with comments about the "sleaze" and "iniquities" of the Clinton era. When asked to, please, provide examples of such, he either repeats himself more loudly or brings up "...what the meaning of 'is' is..."

As to when and from whom Capp got letters of complaint -- it's always been my theory that Democrats/Liberals complain to the Editor, Republicans/Conservatives complain to the Publisher and Libertarians complain to the writer.

I have no trouble reading Damon Runyon (stylistically), partly because i find that i can easily slip into that sort of style myself and partly because i "hear" Sheldon Leonard, Frank Sinatra and Marlon Brando's voices "reading" the major parts.

Have you not seen *Guys & Dolls*? It's worth it if only to speculate on how many takes it took to get Brando through the vocal on his one real song. And the cast is to die for -- the afore-mentioned trio and Stubby Kaye plus others i can't recall offhand and a couple of the songs -- the "Fugue for Tinhorns" ("I got the horse right here..."), "Luck be a Lady", "Almost like Being in Love" (i think that's in

G&D) and Kaye's "Sit Down, Stop Rockin' the Boat"... I don't like movie musicals. I make an exception for *G&D* and *Music Man*.

At the minimum i simply hang up on phone solicitors in mid-spiel, as soon as i'm sure that's that what they are. In particularly egregious cases, the police-whistle treatment is not inappropriate.



Offline Reader //
I.Koch // Sorry to hear Daniel had a heart attack. I've been out of touch with that whole bunch -- hell, out of touch with Atlanta fandom in general.

In regard to your call phone story -- how did they get in the car might include using a Palm Pilot if your car has an IR security system.

As to ESNs not being switchable which James Young and John Campbell assured you they were not, unless they've changed the way things work since i worked for OKI on cell phones ten years ago, it's actually rather easy to swop ESNs around, whether using a tester/programmer that plugs into the board or by physically swopping the chip the ESN is stored in.

Actually, stolen phones were (when i worked for OKI) often stolen specifically for the ESN, which is used to program a phone on the other side of the continent for use by what the industry refers to as a "roamer bandit". The phone can be used for a couple of days as a roamer before the system catches up, by which time they have another stolen ESN ready to go.

Electron Band Structure In Germanium, My Ass

by Lucas Kovar

(reprinted from his website, <http://www.cs.wisc.edu/~kovar/>, by permission)

Abstract: The exponential dependence of resistivity on temperature in germanium is found to be a great big lie. My careful theoretical modeling and painstaking experimentation reveal 1) that my equipment is crap, as are all the available texts on the subject and 2) that this whole exercise was a complete waste of my time.

Introduction

Electrons in germanium are confined to well-defined energy bands that are separated by "forbidden regions" of zero charge-carrier density. You can read about it yourself if you want to, although I don't recommend it. You'll have to wade through an obtuse, convoluted discussion about considering an arbitrary number of non-coupled harmonic-oscillator potentials and taking limits and so on. The upshot is that if you heat up a sample of germanium, electrons will jump from a non-conductive energy band to a conductive one, thereby creating a measurable change in resistivity. This relation between temperature and resistivity can be shown to be exponential in certain temperature regimes by waving your hands and chanting "to first order".

Experiment procedure

I sifted through the box of germanium crystals and chose the one that appeared to be the least cracked. Then I soldered wires onto the crystal in the spots shown in figure 2b of Lab Handout 32. Do you have any idea how hard it is to solder wires to germanium? I'll tell you: real goddamn hard. The solder simply won't stick, and you can forget about getting any of the grad students in the solid state labs to help you out.

Once the wires were in place, I attached them as appropriate to the second-rate equipment I scavenged from the back of the lab, none of which worked properly. I soon wised up and swiped replacements from the well-stocked research labs. This is how they treat

undergrads around here: they give you broken tools and then don't understand why you don't get any results.

In order to control the temperature of the germanium, I attached the crystal to a copper rod, the upper end of which was attached to a heating coil and the lower end of which was dipped in a thermos of liquid nitrogen. Midway through the project, the thermos began leaking. That's right: I pay a cool ten grand a quarter to come here, and yet they can't spare the five bucks to ensure that I have a working thermos.

Results

Check this shit out (Fig. 1). That's bonafide, 100%-real data, my friends. I took it myself over the course of two weeks. And this was not a leisurely two weeks, either; I busted my ass day and night in order to provide you with nothing but the best data possible. Now, let's look a bit more closely at this data, remembering that it is absolutely first-rate. Do you see the exponential dependence? I sure don't. I see a bunch of crap.

Christ, this was such a waste of my time.

Banking on my hopes that whoever grades this will just look at the pictures, I drew an exponential through my noise. I believe the apparent legitimacy is enhanced by the fact that I used a complicated computer program to make the fit. I understand this is the same process by which the top quark was discovered.

Conclusion

Going into physics was the biggest mistake of my life. I should've declared CS. I still n't have any women, but at least I'd be rolling in cash.

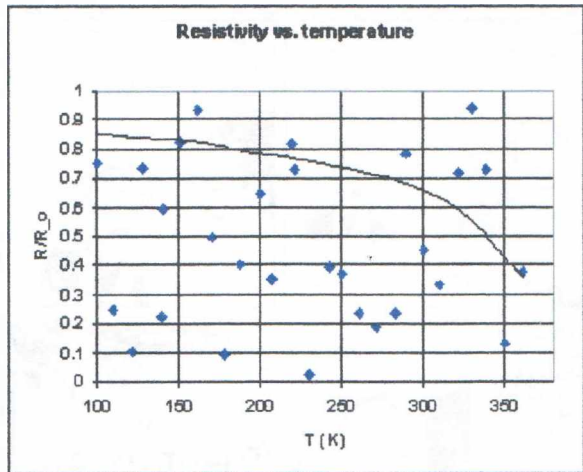


Fig. 1: Check this shit out.

Well, since i'm at a divisible-by-four page, i'm going to wind this up; i'm not sure i can afford the ink to print what i already have set up. (This may come to you in more-or-less crappy xerox, since i think that 12¢ per sheet is cheaper than i can print it on the HF 920. There was going to be a little colour in the zine, and, even if i photocopy the main zine, i will try to do the cover in colour...

Depending on whether, among other things, we still have a place to live by next deadline, i may have an additional zine later in the mailing.

See you later (i hope)

