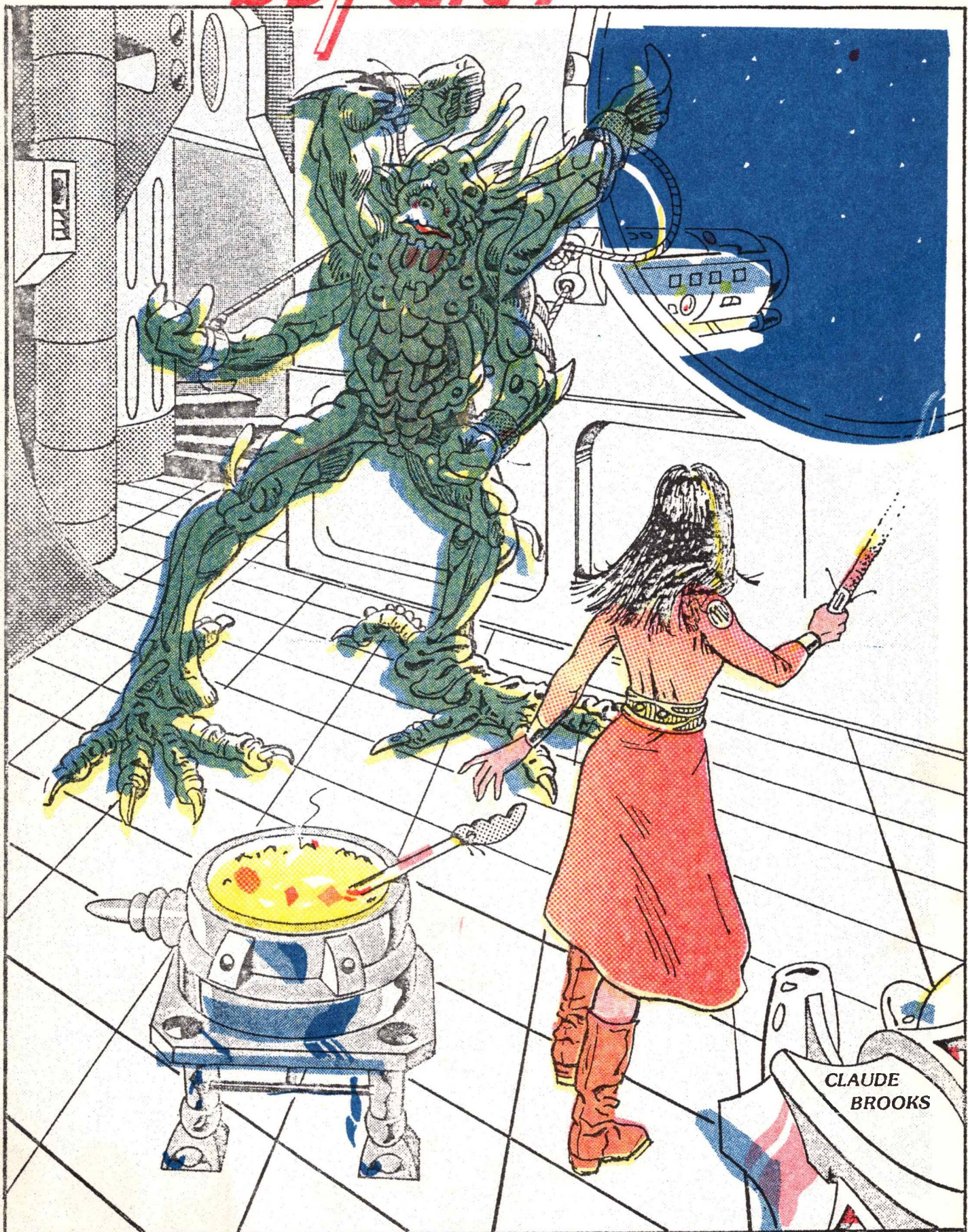


bsfan 9 =



"We have ways to make you talk."



BSFAN 9

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□ BALTIMUTTERINGS □

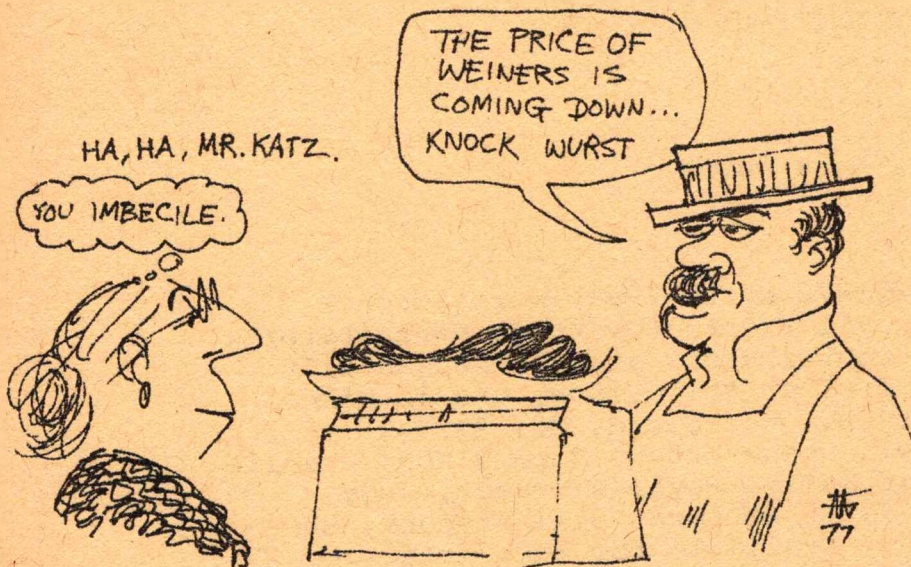
The Winter of '78 wasn't as cold as the Winter of '77, but it was colder than normal, to wit:

- The average temperature in February at the airport was 27, 8 degrees below normal.
- The temperature in Baltimore City fell from 60 on January 8 at 11 p.m. to 26 on January 9 at 11 a.m., a 34 degree drop in 12 hours.
- The thermometer failed to rise above freezing at the airport on 24 days. 15 such days is normal; last year there were 31 days below freezing.
- 10 inches of snow fell on Baltimore City on February 5-6, the greatest snowfall since 1966. Reisterstown got 12", northern Baltimore County 15", and Cecil County in north-east Maryland 24".
- Some snow was on the ground (in Hillendale) from January 9 to March 19; even longer than last year, when some snow was on the ground (in Owings Mills) from December 25 to February 21.

But spring finally came, and so did over 1900 fans to Balticon 12, the largest yet. And now it's June, and this issue of BSFAN is coming out at last. We're entering our fourth year of publication; here's a brief publishing history:

issue	date	pages	circulation
1	March 1975	9	585
2	May 1975	14	125
3	October 1975	22	125
4	April 1976	14	110
5	September 1976	20	130
6	February 1977	20	135
7	June 1977	22	150
8	November 1977	30	175

There's not a whole lot more that I want to say this time. I do want to talk a little about Baltimore's very own Alien Factor, but I'll do that with the film reviews (page 26). This issue would have been out earlier (excuses, excuses), but doing the Balticon program book at the time I would have been starting on BSFAN didn't help. Hopefully next issue will be out after a shorter interval, say about November. Regards until then.



LETTERS
OF
COMMENT

GEORGE FLYNN
27 Sowamsett Ave.
Warren, R.I. 02885

Great trivial questions: when a zine uses the all-capitals style for zine titles, how does one who doesn't use that style know how to refer to it --i.e., should I write BSFAN or Bsfan or BSFan

or...?

Great cover. I spotted the original on the sketch table at Disclave and at once got up a consortium of Boston fans to buy it for Joe Ross, the local Howdy Doody freak; it was appreciated. (But I seem to recall its being marked "BSFAN 9 cover"; wha hopen?)

I enjoyed Rocky Horror somewhat, but can't quite see the rapture of these fans who go to see it more times than Star Wars (but I've only seen that once too; how unfannish of me). Most unfortunate about the Carrie incident; and the really good part is at the end, too (well, "good" isn't exactly the word for it--but "unforgettable", anyway). Fortunately, those two "post-Star Wars" films built up enough adverse word of mouth that I didn't have to see them to know about them.

"Spending an hour in Cleveland...is a sobering experience." Interesting thought; I spent a couple of hours there last year, but in the bus station, not the airport (on the way to/from Autoclave). But one shouldn't be too hard on Cleveland, which after all gave us Harlan. As I recall it, ORBIT 18 didn't have the complete rules of Moopsball. I don't really think Alternities is of sufficient stature to qualify as "the absolute worst collection of prose of any kind." Offhand, though, I don't have another candidate to propose (probably suppressed the memory). I seem to be one of the few people around who actually liked (more or less) the film Solaris.

What's this nonsense about Baltimore being "more centrally located than the other bids"? It's a well known fact that Boston is the Hub of the Universe.

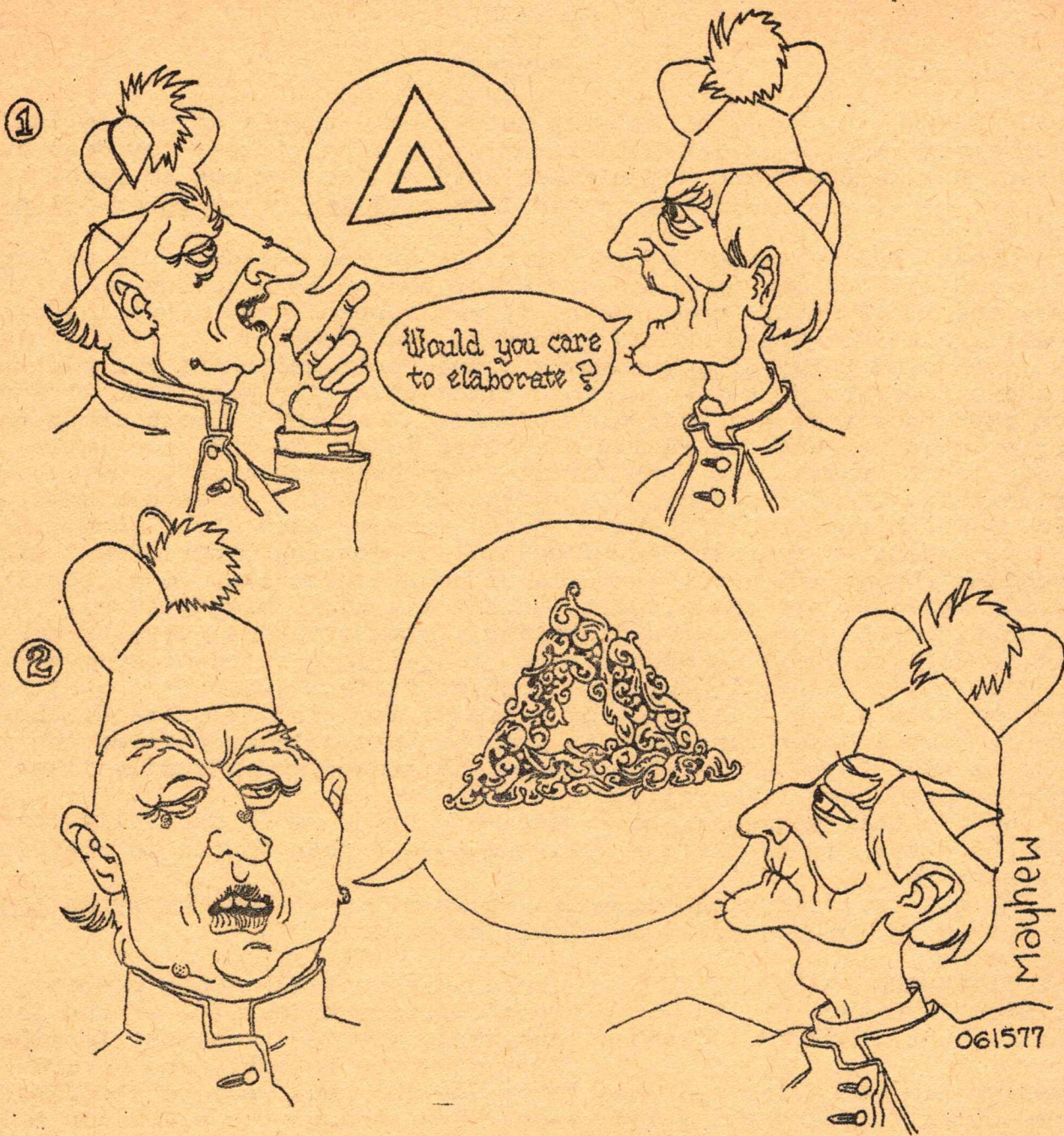
By the way, congratulations to Steve Miller, whose story in Amazing I read the other day; very nicely done.

MIKE GLICKSOHN
141 High Park Ave.
Toronto, Ont., M6P 2S3, Canada

The covers on BSFAN 8 are probably the most impressive features of the issue and would do credit to most fanzines.

It's always a delight, and a rare one nowadays, to see a Steve Stiles cover and this may well be the first three color Stiles drawing I've seen. Even though the color isn't integral to the drawing (as it is with the back cover) it definitely adds an extra dimension to the cover which is whimsical Stiles at its best.

Even though Suncon is less than four and a half months in the past I've already read dozens of comments about it and almost all of them have been like yours, a mixed reaction with complaints about the disorganization of the committee. Most of us seemed to have had a good time but everyone was aware of serious weaknesses in the way the con was set up. Personally I never encountered the problems in the film program and official programming areas because I attended no films and very few program items but I too was dissatisfied with aspects of the con that affected my own con style. I'd heard the story about the projectionist, though, and while I'd agree with you that the whole situation was badly handled by the Suncon committee I can still sympathize with their reluctance to part with an additional \$550. If reports I've received



are reliable then Suncon's financial situation was/is rather precarious and that large an unexpected expense could have been a real problem. It'll be interesting to see if there is ever a financial report so we can see just how justified their refusal to screen the film for the promised second time was.

As a Canadian I cringed at your plot summary of Starship Invasions! (A film I'd previously somehow managed to avoid all awareness of. Perhaps it's true that all knowledge is contained in fanzines but there are some things man didn't want to know!) I suppose it was inevitable that there'd be a wave of abysmal sci-fi flicks (I use the description deliberately) trying to cash in on the phenomenal popularity of Star Wars and Close Encounters. One can only hope that the negative effects these turkeys will have on the public's impression of science

fiction won't totally nullify the positive influences of the two good movies we were treated to this year.

I'm not sure what a "colloquim" is but from what little I know of writers' workshop participants I'd say the word was most appropriate! Steve's article is good light reading. But I'm surprised he found laying over in any airport a "sobering experience": Cleveland may be a boring experience, a stultifying experience, a dismal experience (and since Ro Lutz-Nagey moved there it is all these things and much more) but I've spent many dozens of idle hours in a great many airports and I've never come out more sober than I went in! The very opposite is usually the case, as barmaids all across America will testify.

Did anyone ever clue Steve in as to how all fandom knew what he'd been up to? (All knowledge is contained in fanzines...whether you want it to be or not!)

The things Sylvia suggests are all valid ways of acquiring the occasional good book bargain (even twenty-five cent book club editions at church rummage sales aren't to be sneezed at) but there's one thing she doesn't really mention. Time. To go to all the yard sales and used book marts and flea markets takes a hell of a lot of time (not to mention transportation which I don't happen to have either) and when one is busy replying to fanzine articles about how to acquire bargain books every night one doesn't have time to be out chasing down rare first editions of Seeds of Change I'm afraid. Still, I guess that leaves such treasures for Sylvia and others of her lucky ilk who don't letterhack fanzines.

Having been the happy and proud owner of a rather well-known boa constrictor for several years I naturally found Steve and Judy's article about Nello both nostalgic and amusing, although not without elements of pathos of course. Not that I was ever unfortunate enough to lose Larson E, of course, despite his use of a well stuffed armchair as a favorite crawling ground. I always kept a close eye on him; not because I was worried he'd get himself entangled in some hard to be extricated from hideyhole but because I felt my wife of the time would have been upset had he eaten either the rabbit or the cat.

Anna and C.D. do a droll job of quoting the U.S. Government out of context. Not every one is a winner but a surprising number caused me to laugh out loud which is quite a testament to their cleverness. Some people seem to resent the amount of egoboo Anna and, especially, C.D. are getting but quite simply they deserve their growing reputations.

If I were George Flynn I wouldn't put too much money on Star Wars copping a Hugo next year: several U.S. fans who had a chance to see Close Encounters in the week before it opened in Toronto called me to tell me I had to see it and they were going to be voting for it for the Hugo next summer. I'm not sure I'd switch my vote but I've only seen CE once and SW five times so I've got a little balancing to do first before I can decide. I sure wouldn't go on record with any sort of prediction though.

Looking back at this letter I'm forced to admit that there isn't much that one can really get fired up about in BSFAN. It's a pleasant enough fanzine but it lacks any real solid content. The lettercolumn reflects this with most of the comments being rather inane and going nowhere. (Much like this letter, of course.) Still, being pleasant is no sin and hopefully BSFAN will develop into a fanzine that one can really react to rather than just float along with. I wish you the very best of luck with future issues...

SAM LONG
425 W. Lawrence, Apt. 7
Springfield, Ill. 62704

Thanks for BSFAN 8, the enjoyable clubzine. Nice three color cover. Howdy-Doody really takes me back... Nice interior art too. Steve Brown's tale of colloquia and bheer bashes was entertaining. I've never been to a Milford or a Clarion, but I know a number of people who have, and their experiences seem to have been rather similar, considering they were there to write, not to colloquiate and bash beer--or so they say.

And Sylvia Starshine's advice on finding old sf was excellent. I'll have to look at my dad's home when I'm next there, poking about among all the old magazines and such that he has, seeing if any old pulps are there. He has, or had, some old railroading pulps that are of interest, but not, perhaps, to sf fans. Still, you never know.

Snakes are funny creatures, as Steve found out. But they're nice, and as long as they're not put where they can get outside, they'll eventually come out from wherever they may be hiding--especially if tempted by a small mouse or some such. There is a funny Lord Peter Wimsey story concerning snakes and children and furniture and unwelcome guests that I recommend to Steve. It can be found in the book Lord Peter, a collection of Dorothy L. Sayers's LPW short stories.

Carolyn "C.D." Doyle and Anna "A.S." Schoppenhorst wrote a most chuckleworthy article. But the bit about leashes is true. I used to have a harness--this was thirty-odd years ago now--which my mother would put on me as a toddler and to which she attached a leash so I could be "controlled". My brother had it later; but I've not seen a kid on a leash in a long time--though there are some I know who should be on one.

SW filksong good. As were the zine reviews.

I have to agree with Don D'A in his doomsaying about even fannish education. Grammar and spelling ain't what they used to be--more's the pity. I observe that I've committed an error of style (if not of grammar exactly) above, but I'm not going to go back and change it, preferring to leave it as an exercise for the reader.

Norman Schwarz's bit was interesting...there are lines on the map, particularly in the Midwest, where boundaries and township lines follow one another. But the problem is, the land's the same color on both sides of the line, unlike the situation on many maps. This can be confusing. On occasions there are both lines and color differences across them. A case in point is the Imperial Valley of California. Seen from above, in space or in a high flying plane, the U.S.-Mexican border is quite distinct because "the grass is so much greener" on the northern side of the ~~land~~ border. But this is an exception rather than a rule. Weather satellite pictures, which I've had considerable experience with, don't have boundary lines.

Thanks for a most enjoyable zine.

RONALD M. SALOMON
1014 Concord St.
Framingham, Mass. 01701

A nice front cover. Came in handy when a young lady in conversation said to me she'd never seen Howdy Doody, so I showed her. The zine cover that is. Is the alien in the mid-

dle from some sf movie?

Rocky Horror may be only fair, but not having seen it yet I still look forward to a future viewing--perhaps at Iguanacon. But it'll have to really be somehin' to beat Earth vs. the Flying Saucers which I just saw for the first time and really enjoyed the saucers and the destruction of Washington.

No, didn't make Balticon. Probably won't go to 'nother con until Iggy, either, due to a pinched wallet.

And haven't seen Darnation Alley either but won't go out of my way. Just read the book (a quick read, that) which to me came across as definitely movie material with very little change from the novel to be a better movie than the garbage the movie turned out to be. I visualized Hell Tanner as the character Peter Fonda portrayed in Easy Rider.

Am I alone in thinking that Seeds of Change wasn't one of the worst of all time? I thought it was a pleasant rehashing of some sf stereotypical characters and plots. True, it was hash, but pleasant hash, not harsh hash. For that matter, Darnation Alley to me wasn't that much better than SoC.

I wonder just how rare and valuable a complete set of Laser books will wind up to be in the future? More than we think, probably. For that matter, I can't remember ever seeing any figures on print runs of the series. Anyone know?

And I haven't seen any commercials for Mindbridge on tv, now that you haven't asked.

...This was the most enjoyable ish yet that I've received. All the articles were of interest to me. Especially enjoyed "Snakes Alive": Is there much of a snake fanclub? I thought fen only adored cats and abhorred dogs. Oh yeah, there was that Glicksohn fella, wasn't there?

And the fannish babysitting p.g. was truly funny. Held up surprisingly well. I've always liked kids myself, sauteed or boiled but always well done.



JOYCE SCRIVNER
Apt. AG3-3, Hatfield Village
Hatfield, Pa. 19440

Lovely cover on BSFAN
8, and three colors
yet. The more I see
of Steve Stiles's

work, the better I like it. I also like the Sylvia Starshine back cover (I've seen the original), but don't care for the style of coloring used.

I agree that several pieces of the program (including the films) were badly planned at Suncon. The most interesting and pleasant programming I found was in the fan room. I was impressed with what Gary Farber accomplished there.

I also had the choice that Steve Brown had, i.e. Clarion or Suncon. And I had to take the other side of it (I had committed myself to driving people to Florida). I've been hearing stories of the reunion, though, and "if only"ing ever since. Bother. He does leave me with the question of which acquaintance he talked with Seth McEvoy about. Not me because no one could find more than a minute's worth of natter about me. I turn series of people over in my head and then look again and turn them over again. Rather like plowing a field: all the earthy things come up. Fascinating.

The Starshine article and illo were informative. Living in a similar part of Pennsylvania I know what she talks about. It's money (lack of) that keeps me away from the markets.

The illo for "Snakes Alive" was more impressive than the story, though I imagine the frustration of waiting about to recover a snake would be upsetting. He probably only wanted to sleep. It reminded me about Taral Wayne MacDonald's escaped lizard at Suncon. It was so small that it hid in the carpet.

The Government Printing Office (GPO) puts out all sorts of interesting books. I wouldn't mind seeing what C.D. and A.S. would do to "VD Illustrated". It would satisfy their bloodthirst at least.

...I wish Baltimore in '80 would come up with at least a distinctive logo. I've been reading their ads in various fanzines lately and if I didn't know the people running the bid, from their illos and ads I'd think they were all fifteen. (My apologies to my friends.) I'd like to go to Baltimore, but...

JOHN THIEL
30 N. 19th St.
Lafayette, Ind. 47904

Well, I sound like a radio announcer getting affectionate toward his broadcasting equipment. And BSFAN is hardly full of what I would call broadcast material.

Stiles looks like he might become another Atom, after he changes his drawing style a little. Well, if he did that he'd be changing his



name. Does he draw directly on stencil? I ask because there isn't a trace in his art.

Well and well for those "Baltimutterings". You have a dome there, that the mutterings come out of?

Right on for Steve Brown and his beer bash. I like reading about those things. And flea markets with Lovecraft editions are interesting to me, too. So, it's a pretty good issue, except for that story about snakes. Couldn't figure out what it was doing in a fanzine.

I'm going to surprise you a bit by saying I won't be at the Balticon. Seems I don't dig the Baltic.

C.D. Doyle and Anna Schoppenhorst both? A real plus. Those girls get in more fanzines--well, but they'll be less fanzines after Indiana fandom gets through with them.

Let Rich Dixon Pat Kelly, if that makes any sense; I must be the type that doesn't read filksongs and poetry. Wish you had some fanfic.

...No comment on the letters, except tell Ron Salomon that I met a fellow at the WindyCon that wore a hat. Is he anything like him? Sure it's an enigma, but give it to Salomon, let him figure it out.

Thanks again for bringing us all joy with another issue of BSFAN.

IRA M. THORNHILL
1900 Perdido St., Apt. B97
New Orleans, La. 70112

I continue to enjoy your zine--the only real clubzine that I can say that about now that SHADOW appears dead and RUNE is dormant.

Nice front cover. Loved your Suncon report...especially the bit about "at least two females" skinnydipping. Didn't you count the males? "Colloquim and Beer Bust" was nicely done, but for some reason I find that I preferred "Snakes Alive!" (surely one of the nicer pieces of fan writing to come my way in the last month or three--probably because I've had so many days like that recently) and Anna and C.D.'s babysitting guide (both because I once upon a time made pocket money by that very method, and because I'm secretly supporting these two young ladies' bid to take control of fanzine fandom).

Perhaps I'd best keep Ronald Salomon's PEARS AND FROTHING idea in mind. The way things have been going lately, one never knows...

LAURINE WHITE
5408 Leader Ave.
Sacramento, Calif. 95841

The front cover is nice. I don't remember seeing many Steve Stiles cartoons lately. Perhaps I've been looking at the wrong fanzines. Color cover art usually adds to a fanzine's appearance, but that creature on the bacover looks so strange. It looks like a refugee from Fantastic Planet.

Tim Marion is trying to stir up a Rocky Horror Picture Show fandom, so a lot of fans must see something special in that film. Why do you consider it only fair? I read someplace that the Suncon projectionist was told not to show Carrie a second time, but he did so anyway, in an attempt to get that extra money from the con committee. Starship Invasions hasn't played in Northern California yet. I don't know what the delay is in distributing it here. Why devote several paragraphs to a plot synopsis of a "very poor film"? I did see something called Star Pilot. Has that turkey made an appearance in Baltimore yet? It is a lousy Italian film that has been kept in the vaults at least fifteen years.

If this Steve Brown in Maryland is the same one who reviews books for SCINTILLATION and SFR, Darrell Schweitzer doesn't think he has a sense of humor. After reading "The Great Combined Milford and Clarion

Beer Bash", I'd say Darrell is mistaken. A typewriter is never a waste of money for a writing fan. Writing longhand takes so long. Somebody working for the circus must have talent. I wonder what Steve did for Ringling Brothers. What does Alexei Panshin expect recognition for? Rite of Passage was written in 1968 and he was lauded enough for it then. He hasn't finished the Anthony Villiers series yet. SF in Dimension was published last year. I read about 10 pages before it nearly put me to sleep. The only review I've seen was unfavorable.

What a cute alien from Maryland University! That's the kind of fun loving alien I'd like to see land in this country, rather than aliens intent on conquering the Earth or offering pronouncements from the skies. David Gerrold's Alternities is a title I don't remember. Mention Seeds of Change to any Sacramento fan, and he'll probably fall asleep. We use the book as a soporific.

Sylvia Starshine either has lots and lots of shelves for her book collection or else she buys a lot for her friends.

Like all creatures, snakes have to excrete sometime. How can Janet be sure that Nello won't pee on the rug? Dan Steffan's cartoon on page 14 reminds me of a quote from The Thing: "An intelligent carrot? The mind boggles!"

"When you decide to become a babysitter," it might be because you have nothing better to do on your weekends. It was better to be watching tv with some kids and getting paid for it than watching tv at home alone. Or reading comics if the kids had a large collection of early Marvel comics. Actually, this babysitting article reminded me of high school weekends I'd just as soon forget. As a result of all that babysitting, I stay as far away as possible from other people's little monsters, and have no intentions of bearing any little monsters myself.

Pat Kelly's Star Wars filksong is the first I've seen in print. I'd like to see a filksong more complex than "What do you do with a drunken hobbit?" Verses 41 and 42 are very similar to the song being filked in Juanita Coulson's cartoon on page 2 of the latest YANDRO.

How nice to see some fanzine reviews again! I've missed them in other recent zines. I like the swashbuckling spaceman on page 23. With that jetpack on his back, maybe he is headed for the Death Star to battle with Darth Vader. I kept telling my father how good Star Wars is. He refused to pay the high prices the theater charges for tickets. Finally my sister paid his way. He told me he thought Flash Gordon was better! Did you know that Buster Crabbe will be playing Flash Gordon's father in the remake?

Several of us Slanapans gathered last Christmas for the annual TanKon, a week of hard drinking and riotous living. Someone played a cassette of Chickenman adventures. That's the first I'd ever heard of the Caped Capon. Unfortunately the cassette didn't include any of his crimefighting adventures.

The ship on your Baltimore in 1980 page reminds me of a fuzzy blacklite poster I bought several years ago, showing a beautiful ship with sails unfurled and stars in the sky. It is now under the bed with all my other posters.

Fanzines with yellow pages look better than fanzines with green pages. And this issue didn't have any fanfiction (unless it was in a clever plastic disguise). A very nice issue.

Membership in Seacon '79, the 37th World Science Fiction Convention, to be held in Brighton, England, is \$7.50 supporting, \$15 attending, until 12/31/78, to 14 Henrietta Street, London WC2, England.

THE LAST MORNING
Pat Kelly

to "Morning Has Broken"

Morning has broken, it's a great morning
P.A. has spoken with the last word
Praise for the speaking, praise for the launching
Praise for our leaping up from the world.

Loud the jets do bawl, star lit in heaven
Fun is the free fall on the first day
Praise for the neatness of our new garden
Building completeness in our own way.

Ours is the sunlight, ours is the orbit
Born of the real might of the great day
Praise of the nation, praise every launching
Man's re-creation of the first day.

Morning has broken, it's a great morning
P.A. has spoken with the last word
Praise for the speaking, praise for the launching
Praise for our leaping up from the world.

THE BALLAD OF DARTH VADER

Jack Howard Lechner

to "Mack the Knife"

You can sing of Ming of Mongo,
Or the Klingons, or the Mule;
But Darth Vader is the villain
Whom no others ridicule.

Vader started as a Jedi,
Kept the galaxy policed;
Average Jedis sought out trouble,
Gave an assist, and deceased.

Now, the Jedi Knights were peaceful,
As was par then for the course--
But Darth Vader was devoured
By the dark side of the Force.

He grew evil, and contemptuous
Of his colleagues and his friends;
He betrayed them, then destroyed them,
To achieve his wicked ends.

So the bad guys that he worked for
Made him Dark Lord of the Sith
(And we'd all sleep much more soundly
If we knew just what that ith).

Time marched onward, and Darth Vader
Soon a villain great became;
He commanded a space station,
And "the Death Star" was its name.

Oh, the Death Star was so massive
You would think it was a moon,
Or a later book by Heinlein,
Or a Macy's Parade balloon.

It had beams to destroy planets,
And could travel, under stress,
To Tatooine in three parsecs,
And to Alderaan in less.

You would think that this colossus
Was invincible as hell--
And it was, 'til a disgruntled
Group of citizens rebelled.

Seems the Death Star had a weakness
Which could blow the thing to bits,
So the rebels stole the blueprints
To see where to make their hits.

Vader started chasing rebels,
But a rebel is no slouch--
Princess Leia had the blueprints
In her diplomatic pouch.

But Darth Vader was relentless,
And he caught them with great ease;
Searched the starship, from the Princess
To the captain's B.V.D.s.

Vader couldn't find the blueprints,
And the search proved null and void,
For the Princess had entrusted
Them to two devoted droids.

After many complications,
Vader found them on a ship
With a Wookie, an old Jedi,
A space pirate, and a drip.

Now, these misfits seemed quite harmless
To Darth Vader and his hordes,
So the ship was apprehended--
But nobody was aboard.

Meanwhile, Darth had Princess Leia
(Say, do you remember her?)
Under torture, to find out where
The main rebel bases were.

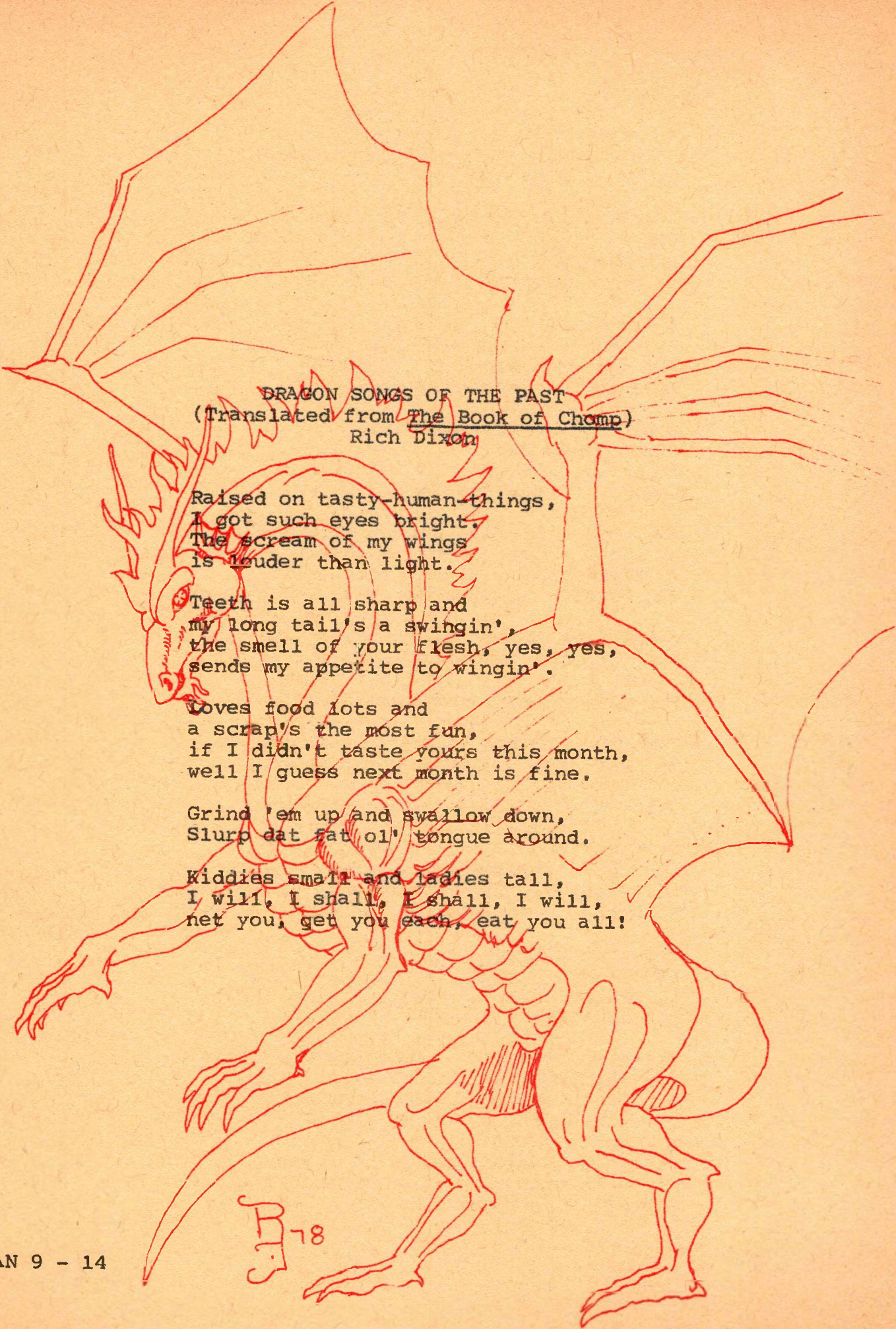
Just when things looked worst for Leia,
She was rescued, with great spunk,
By those weirdos from the spaceship
(Who had hidden in the trunk).

They escaped from old Darth Vader,
And got to the rebel base,
Where they found the weakness which would
Blow the Death Star out of space.

Rebel spaceships stormed the Death Star
(They were aiming for the flaw);
It exploded in a vacuum,
But they heard as well as saw.

Those who weren't signed for the sequel
Perished bravely in the fight,
But Darth Vader, under contract,
Spiralled safely out of sight.

Since the Death Star is no longer,
You'd think peace would sweep the stars;
But old Darchy left in toto--
Don't think victory is Oz.



DRAGON SONGS OF THE PAST
(Translated from The Book of Chomp)
Rich Dixon

Raised on tasty-human-things,
I got such eyes bright.
The scream of my wings
is louder than light.

Teeth is all sharp and
my long tail's a swingin',
the smell of your flesh, yes, yes,
sends my appetite to wingin'.

Loves food lots and
a scrap's the most fun,
if I didn't taste yours this month,
well I guess next month is fine.

Grind 'em up and swallow down,
Slurp dat fat ol' tongue around.

Kiddies small and ladies tall,
I will, I shall, I shall, I will,
net you, get you each, eat you all!

PRECIPICE OF LIGHT
Simon

Well, here I am again. It's been months since I sat down to write for BSFAN. I missed the last issue altogether. Funny thing about that. Ever since I moved into this apartment last June I've been under some sort of weird prescription against writing. Everything from letters to grocery lists, it just doesn't get done. Possibly it's over. At least for the moment it has abated.

This column will be a diverse collection of comments on everything of interest to me, mostly but not necessarily relating to science fiction. It will replace the scattered book and movie reviews and occasional con reports I have been doing.

A long time ago, the middle of last year at least, I reviewed a movie called Wizards. I was completely enthusiastic about it, and I said, "If this doesn't win an award the Hugos will be meaningless," or something like that. Well, it seemed like a good idea at the time. (The remark was largely motivated by aggravation over the previous year's "No Award" in the dramatics category. I thought there were several realistic candidates. Did any of you read Ellison's comments in the latest (Spring '78) ALGOL concerning the failure of SFWA to vote their dramatic award intelligently so as to garner some good will and free PR in Hollywood?) Since then I've found that not many people enjoyed Wizards as much as I did, but I still like it a lot. But my statement came before Star Wars and Close Encounters, and, of course, looks kind of silly now. In the next issue someone wrote in asking whether Simon had yet seen Star Wars and recanted. I was not in that issue due to my writer's pox, and I had no prior knowledge of the letter before publication, but the answer was, "Yes, yes." 1977 was a rich year for visual sf, both movies and television. The majority of it was garbage, but we expect that, don't we? I don't know who will win the Hugo, but at least we have a choice.

The cinematic bounty is not all in, either. John Dykstra, who did the special effects for Star Wars, and worked with Doug Trumbull on Silent Running, is working on a space war adventure called Galactica (see Smithsonian magazine, April '78). And the Star Trek movie is said to be promising.

What's happening here, among other things, is that animation technology is getting really good. Not long ago Doug Trumbull came to the Smithsonian Institution to talk about his craft, and a week later Smithsonian magazine came out with an article about John Dykstra. Both of them talked about a new device which adds a new dimension to animation--a moving camera. "Big deal," you say. But the big problem in animation is accurate super-imposition, since different elements of the scene are photographed separately, and they all have to fit together just right. As many as twenty or more different elements may make up a single scene. Moving the camera while filming any segment of the scene complicates things enormously. The camera must move in exactly the same way while filming all other segments of the same scene. (I'm simplifying, partly because I don't understand it all myself.) The new

camera they have is mounted on a frame which is wired to a computer. The computer records every movement, and causes the camera to duplicate those movements during subsequent filming of animation, and even scales down the movements if the sets are smaller than lifesize.

Not all the tricks used by the sorcerers of animation are that exotic, however. In fact some of them are so simple it's disgusting. I'll never again be awed by those clouds that roll across the sky in Close Encounters.

John Norman is a helluva writer. I bet no sf reviewer ever said that before. John Norman is not real popular among fans, which is a shame because he writes good adventure stories. He is also one of the most hilariously funny speakers I've ever had the pleasure of listening to. But he is also a bondage freak, or is deliberately catering to bondage freaks, and that's what aggravates everybody. His stories are so sexist they're almost a parody of sexism. His female characters are alternately free and independent, even heroic individuals who are treated like people, and the next minute slaves who are treated like trained pets. The transition from one state to the next follows rules which are arbitrary, inconsistent, and unconvincing. Obviously a fantasy trip which need not make much sense. Which is really odd because logical, convincing motivation is the strong point of these books. Norman is a psychologist by profession, and he knows something about motivation. His characters may do some weird things, but it is always plain that they have reasons for doing them. And the imaginary culture supports those reasons pretty well. Except when it comes to women. Oh, well. I would put his stories up against Robert E. Howard when it comes to action. Howard wasn't too good on women either, as I recall. He mostly just left them out.

How many of you have copies of The Silmarillion, I wonder? And how many of you have read it? Uh, huh. I thought so. The book is a vast disappointment. Tolkien's lifelong work, it unquestionably contains material for amateur and professional scholars to ponder for an equally long time. (You might actually enjoy it if you know Lord of the Rings cold.) But there is absolutely none of the narrative charm that made Tolkien so popular. It is a story as vast in scope as the Bible, and it reads just about as well. Joe Mayhew called it "Tolkien's phone book". There is interminable naming of names. This may be of great interest to a philologist, because Tolkien was a very great philologist, and his names are not just funny collections of letters, they mean something. But almost no one is capable of appreciating the derivation of names from ancient Welsh and Celtic and Scandinavian tongues and languages of Tolkien's own invention.

Rather I would recommend the Tolkien biography by Humphrey Carpenter. Tolkien fans should find interesting the account of his birth in South Africa and his old fashioned upbringing and the fact that he evidently took note of only one woman in his entire life and his extreme perfectionism toward anything of his that was to be published that led him to work and rework The Silmarillion from his youth until his death.

I think there was a brief panic at Balticon this year when it appeared that registrations were going to exceed all expectations by Friday night. People were running around saying that they had already run out of registration cards and that the overflow had filled two other

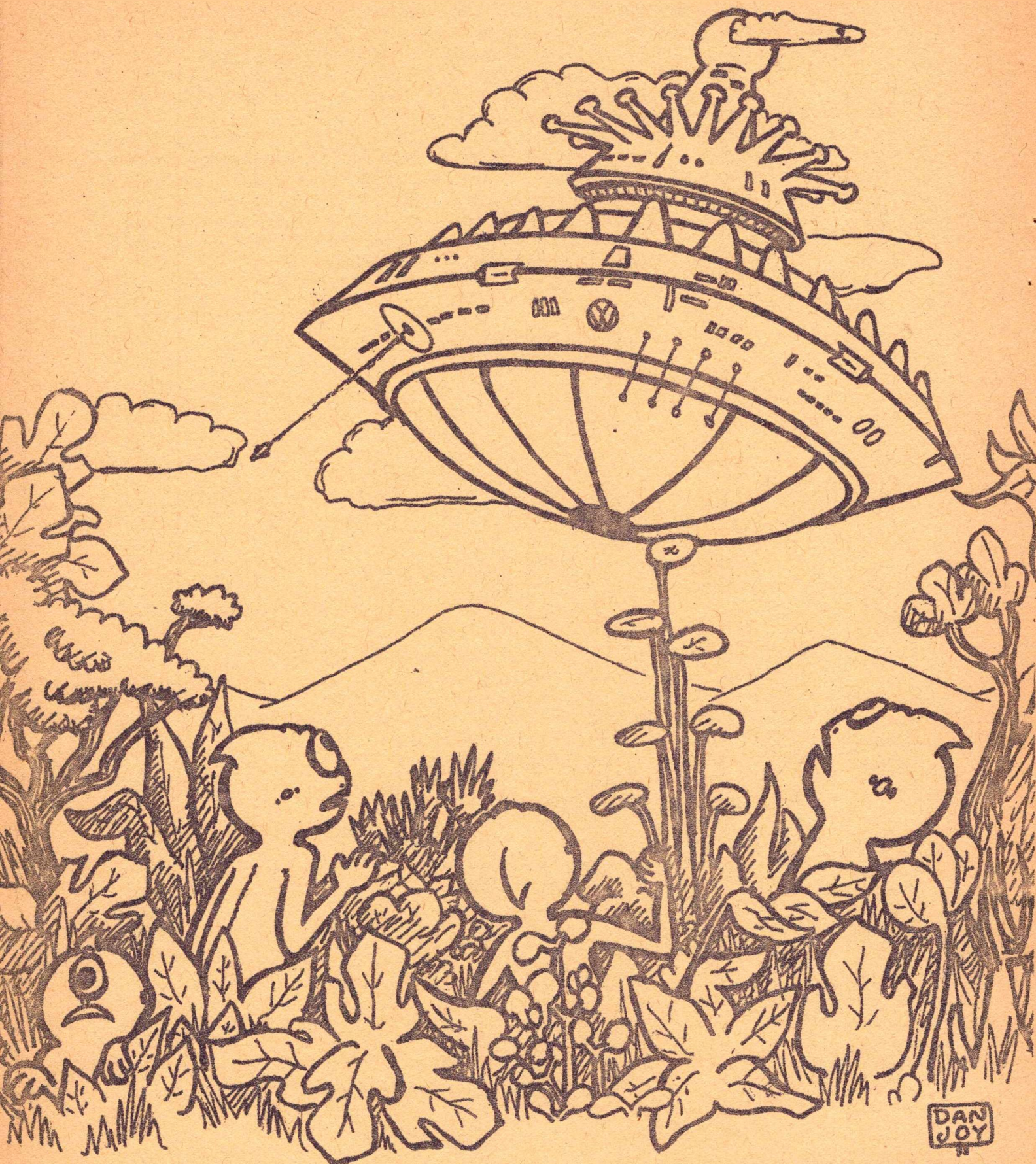
hotels. The numbers were reaching for two thousand and a strong second day might add half again that number. A rosy mention had appeared in the Friday evening "Weekend" section of the Washington Post, and the local TV news had noted us as well. But for one reason or another, the weather might have played a part, the crush never materialized, and the final registration was just under two thousand.

But the committee came through with flying colors. There was enough activity to keep everyone thoroughly occupied, and enough booze to keep everyone thoroughly sotted. As usual there were not enough hands to delegate every task, and the same people ended up doing far too much. But Balticon, as usual, had more to offer than most cons. That's why Balticon grows ever more popular, and that's why Baltimore remains the leading contender for the 1980 Worldcon.

THERE'S A RIOT ON THE ROCKET PAD
Rich Dixon

There's a Riot on the Rocket Pad,
and your daughter's on board Dad.
We've long been planning out this night,
soon you'll just be scanning our mad flight.
That's your blood and Family Flesh,
on board young, and firm and fresh.

We thank you Papa dear,
our orbit time is near.
SHE LED the Riot on the Rocket Pad,
and once she had us on board Dad,
she smiled and showed us BAD!



DAN
JOY

CAPSULE CON REPORTS
Kathy Lydick

Boskone - Much better than last year, with the hotel not hassling the con or its members nearly so much, the con suite actually open at most of the times one would expect (last year, the only open party on Friday night was the one given by Baltimore in '80), and the people who ran it not nearly so cliqueish.

The trip up was almost something out of the filksong "Going to Boskone", with our carload nearly giving up after spending a couple of hours lost in the potholes of Camden (we were trying to avoid the traffic around NYC).

Other aspects of the con: the programming items good, if a bit dry; the film program good, but not what I remember from previous years; the art show, as always, superlative--easily the best one on the East Coast.

Lunacon - Surprisingly good. The atmosphere was relaxed, the parties good, the programming adequate. Somewhere between four to five hundred fen, with those who snubbed it because it was not in NYC proper not especially missed. I hadn't attended any of the recent ones that so many people had judged disappointing, but I found this one pleasant. If the same people run it next year, I'll be happy to attend.

Balticon - Insane. Well run, but so much of it. The hotel unfortunately inadequate for this year's crowd (thankfully, next year the Hunt Valley will be double its present size; it's unfortunate that the additions weren't ready for this year's mob) and the hotel personnel not nearly so well organized as in the last couple of cons. One unexpected dividend of the overcrowding was that the shuttle run to the Best Western, the overflow hotel, gave the opportunity to those of us without cars to take advantage of it to hit the fast food places nearby.

Lots of things happening all the time. Fun programming (thankfully videotaped for those of us who didn't see too much of it during the con), a truly fine film program (coupled with an abysmal sound system), a barely adequate art show, and a surfeit of good parties.

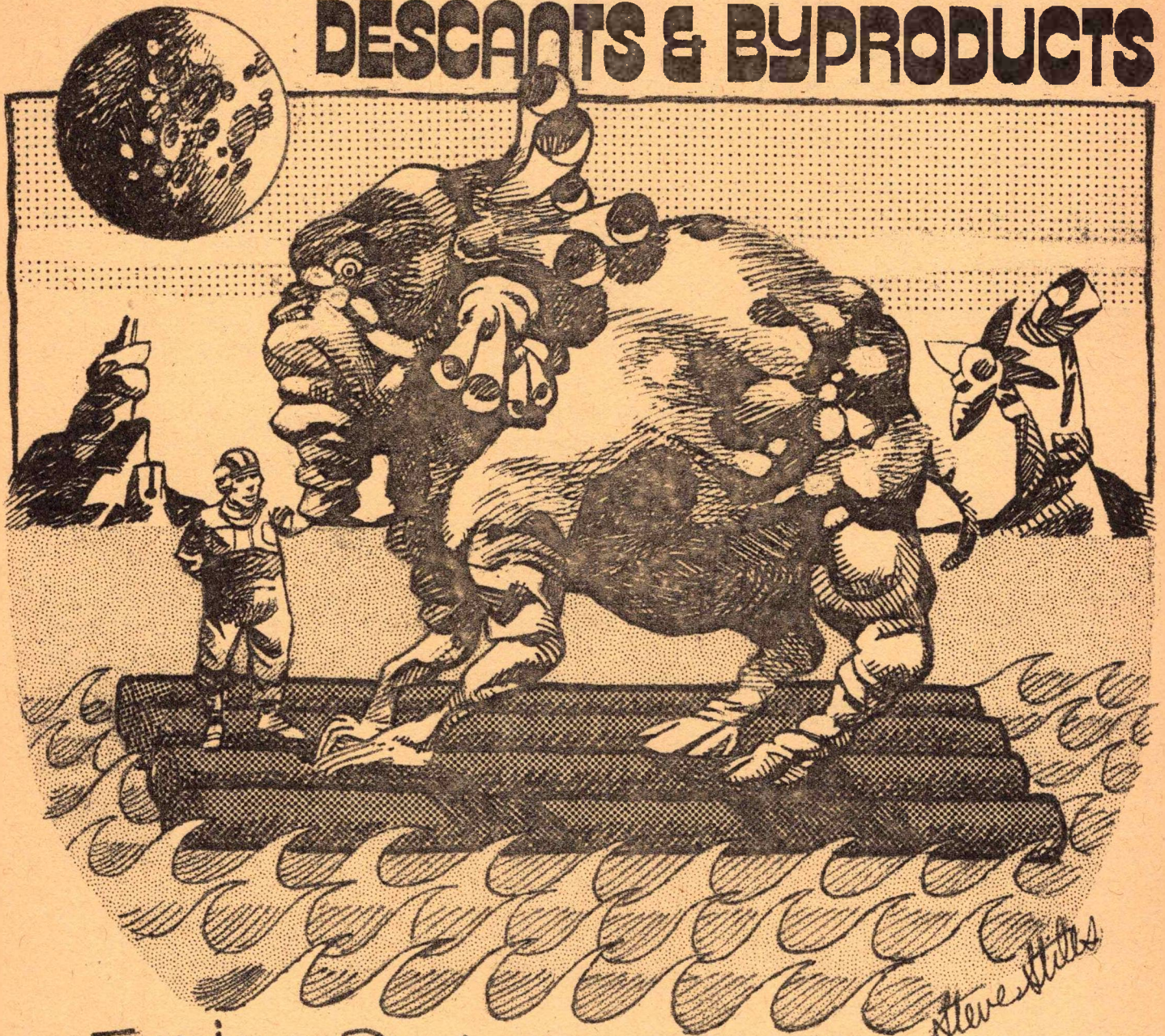
Artkane - Too small. There couldn't have been more than 75 people there at any time. With that amount, you can get a rousing party (though not all of them were party people), but a con?

The film program was quite good, the programming of course art oriented. The art show was nice, but not of the caliber one would expect considering that the con revolved around it; though its management was impeccable.

Perhaps the problem lies in its orientation. Or that it's too close, both geographically and chronologically, to too many other cons.

In BSFS news, Sue Wheeler, BSFS president since the club's formation in the Spring of 1974, resigned her position in April, and Charlie Ellis was elected the new president. But Sue assumed another important job--she was elected chair of Balticon 13. And Judy Kurman, leaving for graduate school in Pittsburgh in June, resigned her post of recording secretary, and Edie Williams was elected to replace her. Best of luck to Judy; many thanks to Sue for four years of service, during which the club grew from a handful of fen to more than 60 members; and best wishes to Edie and Charlie in their new jobs.

DESCANTS & BYPRODUCTS



FANZINE REVIEWS BY STEVE BROWN

AMBROV ZEOR #6. Jan McCrossen, 166 Western Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12203. Free to Believers. Talk about your specialized sub-fandoms. This zine is a product of the fans of: one book (House of Zeor), a handful of short stories, and a forthcoming book (Unto Zeor, Forever)--all by Jacqueline Lichtenberg. The author and books are fairly minor efforts (yes, Zeor fans, I hear you, but I know what I like). They (books, fans, and author) appear to have some sort of ideological connection to Trekdom and to M.Z. Bradley's excellent Darkover series. Lichtenberg is very present throughout the zine, to the point of copyrighting the contents in her name. As said contents consist for the most part of lavish praise for her and her work, I feel that that copyright violates the anti-trust laws, and should be stopped immediately. Ethics are,

after all, ethics.

ASH-WING #23. Frank Denton, 14654 8th Ave. S., Seattle, Wash. 98166. Available for whatever. There is a lot of skippable fan fiction (so much of the pro stuff is awful enough), an entertaining musical debate in the lettercol (featuring a spirited defense of Wagner by Robert Blenheim, the bane of A Woman's Apa), and a fine article on sf (rebuttal of a column by Eric Bentcliffe in an earlier issue) by one of my favorite writers, Keith Roberts. The graphics are pretty dull, consisting mostly of minor Shiffman, forgettable Rotslers, and similar doodles.

Bunches of apazines with different titles. Fred Haskell, 7510 Cahill Rd., Edina, Minn. 55435. Mostly rambling travelogues. Fred gets around a lot--he even ended up at my place a few months ago, and I don't even know him. Entertaining stuff if you know the people he visits, confusing otherwise.

FANNY HILL #3. Dan Joy and Somtow Sucharitkul, 3815 Whispering Lane, Falls Church, Va. 22041. 4/\$3.50 or the usual. Funny. Get it. Besides the brash, impervious humor of Dan Joy (who will become a dangerous man when he reaches puberty), there are dozens of Gilliland cartoons and superb covers (front and back) by Joe Mayhew--who ought to spread his work around a little more.

FEAR AND LOATHING #3. Ira Thornhill, 1900 Perdido St., Apt. B97, New Orleans, La. 70223. Available for the usual. A well written and candid personalzine, giving insight into the mind of an interesting person, and, peripherally, New Orleans fandom. It has two pages of photos and some superb art by Delmonte (I know, Ira, I'm supposed to put that little toothpick mark over the final e in Delmonte, but my typewriter won't make that mark. The best I can do is e, which looks dumb).

FILE 770 #1 & #2. Mike Glycer, 14974 Osceola St., Sylmar, Calif. 91342. 4/\$1.50, 1 copy 2 15¢ stamps, locs, art, news. Glycer is trying to fill the gap left by KARASS (see review below), and is so far doing a fine job. #1 is aimless and unfocused (as is traditional for all #1s), but #2 settles right into its ecological niche as a fan oriented LOCUS, indispensable to gossip-mongers everywhere.

It's nice to know that during the inevitable chaos surrounding this transfer of power between Bushyager and Glycer, that the People's Right to Know has not been interrupted (put away your riot helmets, haul back out those shelves full of canned food you'd started to hoard).

HOPSFANATIC #6. HOPSEFA, c/o Student Activities Commission, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md. 21218. A college clubzine full of bad art, sophomoric opinions, "humor" ad infinitum, and wretched fiction--for those interested in that sort of thing.

JANUS (un-numbered, estimated number 11). Jeanne Gomoll & Janice Bogstad, SF3, P.O. Box 1624, Madison, Wis. 53701. \$1 or the usual. This zine is one of the many examples (5 fanzines, 1 convention, 1 radio book review show, 3 regular groups, 1 speakers bureau representing slide and other presentations on a wide variety of sf related themes, and a growing sf library) of the fanatic activity of the Society for the Furtherance and Study of Fantasy and Science Fiction (SF3). They virtually rule the city of Madison; the mayor recently capitulated to the inevitable and declared an official SF Week.

This issue is a combination fanzine and Wiscon program book.

After skimming past the mechanical con stuff and the local clubby material, I found a treasure trove: a splendid group of thoughtful and incisive feminist oriented sf essays. Susan Wood's piece on her growth as a human being and a woman (in that order) within the confines of fandom is a brilliant and evocative piece of autobiography. I don't mean to imply that Wood has matured only within the strictures of fandom (she is an active academic), but that her essay is concerned with that aspect. There is an insightful piece on Vonda McIntyre by herself, and another on the same topic by Ursula Le Guin. I was entranced by a speculative article by Ctein on the future of fanzines in an increasingly microprocessor-dominated society (not particularly feminist, or any other -ist, but a good read anyway). Then a valuable series of essays on the recent works of Vonda McIntyre by Susan Wood, Douglas Barbour, Karen Axness, and editors Gomoll and Bogstad. I found the review work to be completely accurate (i.e., I agreed with their opinions)--McIntyre is a true giant, just beginning to loom over us all. Stop reading, put down your BSFAN, and send away for this one while they still have some left. Reading it coerced a rare thing from me: I produced an actual loc, and a rather gushy one at that. I also plan on hauling down "Aztecs", "Screwtop", and Dreamsnake, reread them, and reread the McIntyre reviews.

JCJ Spring 1978. The Nelson Bond Society, P.O. Box 1367, Salen, Va. 24153. 75¢, \$3/yr., or the usual. Another super-specialized zine, but I liked it even though I don't like the genre it specializes in (hack'n'slash barbarian epics). I enjoyed the highly readable critical material, even though I disagreed strongly with the opinions in every case (some kind of record). Nice art and layout. Recommended for readers of Bond and offutt.

KARASS #35. Linda Bushyager, 1614 Evans Ave., Prospect Park, Pa. 19076. 50¢, zine folds with #38. A valuable and necessary zine is ending. Fans the world over will suddenly find themselves Getting Behind On What's Going On. I expect wholesale riots, famine, pestilence, and rains of frogs. But all is not quite lost. In this issue Bushyager plugs a new zine from California that will be picking up her cast-off gauntlet (FILE 770 above).

KHATRU #7. Jeffrey D. Smith, 1339 Weldon Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21211, and Jeffrey A. Frane, P.O. Box 1923, Seattle, Wash. 98111. \$1.25, 4/\$4, published contributions, arranged trades. KHATRU coming out on a regular basis is some of the best news I've heard in weeks. Jeff has joined up with another Jeff for a coast to coast editorial reign. And this issue is a brilliant one to start off with. There is a large section on Dr. Alice Sheldon/James Tiptree, Jr./Raccoona Sheldon that lifts this mag completely out of the fanzine category. This is simply the most important and insightful look at one of the most fascinating and enigmatic figures writing today, in any genre. The section is composed of an essay by Jeff Smith on the events surrounding her pseudonymous existence, an autobiographical sketch by Tiptree, a piece on displaced persons in Germany in 1946 reprinted from the New Yorker by Sheldon under her maiden name, Alice Bradley, and a complete Tiptree/Sheldon bibliography.

But that's not all. There is a somewhat over-awed interview with Jon Anderson of Yes by Freff, and reviews by both Jeffs, Gardner Dozois, and *blush* myself, a weed between orchids. The Jeffs had the wit to print, in the editorial column, a textbook example of how to write a fuggheaded letter, by John Thiel. A true masterpiece for those

connoisseurs of Wrong Thinking.

KNIGHTS #19. Mike Bracken, 1810 Ramada Blvd., Collinsville, Ill. 62234. \$1.25 or the usual. Gorgeously produced (just look at that Derek Carter cover!) and containing such gems as an Algis Budrys interview by Michael Stern, a superficial but heartfelt piece on sexism and racism in fandom by Wayne Hooks, a spirited defense of supernatural fiction by one who should know, C.L. Grant, and a humbling interview with a gothic writer also by C.L. Grant.

But the issue left me with a distasteful impression of ennui, bored over-sophistication, and contempt. This impression, while apparent on every page, is made concrete in Thomas Monteleone's vicious little column in which he expresses his smug distaste for ugly people, drawing into the discussion the whole of fandom, which he reduces to a few unpleasant stereotypes (stereotyping is not a new skill for Monteleone; read as far as you think you can handle it into any one of his "fictions")--and then he tells us that he only goes to cons to "meet other writers" and to "contact my agent"--hellevan agent who is only available at cons.

The first four articles mentioned are very good, and worth reading, but I am compelled to ask you to boycott this issue on the basis of the Monteleone article, and the subtler but similar editorial flavor.

MAD SCIENTIST DIGEST #3. Brian Earl Brown, 55521 Elder Rd., Mishawaka, Ind. 46544. 75¢ or the usual. This issue is an "all mundane" issue, achieving a fannish tour-de-force. It consists of articles by the editor and others describing their often bizarre methods of whiling away the hours between nine and five--ranging from managing a pinball parlor (Sandi Lopez), through a gruesome encounter between Victoria Vayne and the Killer Fudge, to the irritations felt when confronted with an embarrassing number of tons of zinc oxide to dispose of (editor Brown).

The star article is "Who Cures Medicine?" by Avedon Carol. It is a lucid and damning account of the problems created in the free clinic where she works by the universal deification of doctors. The simplest procedures cannot be done without the magic imprint of a doctor's signature--which might not materialize for days, while the patients' conditions worsen. The piece is written with a frigid anger that adds semantic power to the indictments.

And along with all those goodies, your three quarters get you an outstanding Steffan/Gilliland cover in living color.



MIDNIGHT MARQUEE
#26. Gary J. Svehla, 5906 Kavon Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21206. \$1.75 or the usual. A beautifully done horror flick slick paper fanzine (repeat that phrase to yourself a few times. There. Did you feel it? Try again). The contents are mostly in-depth analyses of current and classic flicks, liberally enlivened by lots of photos and poster reproductions. A lot of the prose is breathy and overdone, and Svehla appears to be style-deaf regarding the use of press type; but if you're interested in the genre, this one is for you.

MOTA #24. Terry Hughes, 4739 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Va. 22205. \$1, the usual, trade for old fannish

fanzines. A comfortable low-key zine for the old and quiet. The emphasis is on mild humor, and the stand-out article is a witty report on a Belgian con by Bob Shaw--adorned with a typically hilarious and skillful Steve Stiles illo. For the experienced fan, and all those who enjoy gentle repartee. Buy it for the magnificent Dan Steffan cover, if for nothing else.

RUNE #51. Lee Peton and Carol Kennedy, 1204 Harmon Place #10, Minneapolis, Minn. 55403. 50¢ or the usual. Once I forced my way past a truly ugly cover, I found that the effort wasn't worth it. It is a clubzine that I found dull and mostly incomprehensible to anyone living outside of the state of Minnesota. The main source of energy is a Rocky Horror review ("In Search of the Pelvic Thrust" by Greg Ketter) which is little more than a recitation of plot, but is written with the enthusiastic zeal of a New Believer.

SCIENCE FICTION

REVIEW #25. Richard E. Geis, 1525 N.E. Ainsworth, Portland, Ore. 97211. \$1.50, 6/\$7.50. An interview with George Scithers, another with Ursula Le Guin, one with Poul Anderson, a UFO article by the man who "invented" them, Ray Palmer, book and movie reviews by Jack Chalker, Larry Niven, and a cast of dozens. And, the first installment of One Immortal Man, an sf novel by Geis, which ain't half bad, though with an excess of leather/fur/muscled-stud imagery. Geis is going bi-monthly, and is starting up his personalzine again. If you don't read this one already, what are you doing here?

SO IT GOES #15. Tim C. Marion, 614 72nd St., Newport News, Va. 23605. 50¢ or the usual. Unmitigated drivel presented as straight reportage in a dumfounding burst of naivete. Pretentious, unpleasant, boring, asinine trash.

FILMS

Kathy Lydick

The Incredible Melting Man - Yes, I saw this one. In the company of several other local fans--only slightly high--I snickered all the way through, except at the most absolutely stomach-turning scenes.

A few of the things we laughed at were really meant to be funny. The bit with our hero's mother-in-law and her boy friend necking in the woods came off quite nicely, as did the scene after our hero catches hell from the military for telling his wife just what's going on: The local sheriff corners him and makes him 'fess up. "All right," says our hero. "But you've got to promise not to tell anyone ...(pregnant pause)...not even your wife!" The sheriff chews on his tobacco just a little, and finally replies, "Tom (or whatever our hero's name is), you know I'm not married."

Other than that, and the last scene, where the janitor scoops up the remains of our melted man and tosses them into the trash, any humor was totally inadvertent. The melting man was "truly disgusting" (courtesy of Lee Smoire); the lack of science in the film likewise: "You've never

seen the sun 'till you've seen it through the rings of Saturn!" Whereupon the special effects team flashes what's supposed to be Sol, but many times the size we see from Earth.

If you get off on eyeballs falling out, or utterly graphic cannibalism, this is your film. But for whatever it may be worth (okay, okay), I think The Incredible Melting Man ought to've been thrown in the trash with its remains.

Alien Factor - On the surface, this film has a good deal in common with The Incredible Melting Man. Obviously amateur camera work, a simplistic storyline, and a lack of recognizable actors (with the exception of a couple of local fans) put the film under the suspicion of being just another piece of schlock.

But somehow the storyline is just a bit too simplistic, the actors just a bit too stereotyped. We have everything--a menace (or more than one) that kills anything just for the sake of killing; the local punks who stick their necks out when told not to; the girl brought along for absolutely no reason; the mayor who wants the story suppressed because it will hurt business; the intrepid girl reporter who pokes her head anywhere in search of a story; and, of course, the slow-witted law enforcer who bears an uncanny resemblance to McCloud.

And there were too many parts of the film that were meant to be funny. For once we are given a rationalization for women screaming their heads off in this sort of movie. You see, ultrasonics destroy the monsters. A good, loud, high pitched scream scares them away. So the stoic males die right and left and the women come off untouched.

As mentioned before, some of our local fans acted and otherwise worked on this. Don Dohler must have drafted his entire family. Charlie (a.k.a. Dave) Ellis was also highly visible, and had such typical Charlie lines as "Screw it!" and "I'll drink to that!"

But don't go expecting to see a serious movie. Rather, go with a group of like minded folk who aren't afraid to laugh aloud in a theatre with mostly non-fen who won't get the joke. It'll be more fun than a barrel of monsters.

[I want to say a few words about Alien Factor. Made by Baltimorean Don Dohler's Cinemagic Visual Effects (an article about Don Dohler appeared in BSFAN 1), the actors in this 35 mm film include fans Charlie Ellis and George Stover and local radio personality Johnny Walker. The film debuted (after several invitation-only showings) on a Friday and Saturday night in May at midnight at two local theatres. A total of about 600 to 700 people came to see the film. Showings in D.C. are planned in the near future.

The plot: a spaceship crashes in the woods near Perry Hill (a takeoff on Perry Hall, the Baltimore suburb where Don Dohler lives). The ship is transporting three alien beings destined for a zoo on another planet. These aliens are liberated by the crash, and terrorize the countryside. But a mysterious man shows up, claiming he is from an observatory in adjoining Harford County, and saying that he can destroy the marauding monsters.

The acting is terrible, the plot flawed, but the special effects are well done, particularly the crashed spaceship. The film is no worse than many other bad science fiction and horror films, however it's remarkable what was accomplished with the microscopic budget the filmmakers had to work with.]

Going to meet Dracula is a strange experience. To begin with, one expects, or doesn't expect, to meet Dracula in the pitch dark. Armed with garlic, a silver cross, or a wooden stake and mallet, the expectant person looks over shoulders and around corners, perhaps walking with a dog as well, right?

A MEETING WITH DRACULA
Steve Miller

No.

To meet Dracula one first gets an invitation. For midnight, or some later and bewitched hour of the evening?

No. Please RSVP, 10:30 breakfast at Girard's.

Later a phone call from Dracula's appointment secretary (!) changes the time to 11:00. Please be there promptly.

Girard's, by the way, is a disco-bar-restaurant deep in the heart of Baltimore. While a few of the buildings on Read Street might look like Transylvanian transplants, over on Cathedral Street it merely looks like a bright Baltimore spring morning.

Two children were sweeping at the front entrance of Girard's when I went to meet Dracula there. They also were there to meet Dracula, it seems, and volunteered to clean off the welcome mat. Ah yes, in the days of punk rock, even Dracula has groupies. Entering, I carefully inquired at the desk, carpeted in a deep plush blue rug.

"Is this the right way to meet Dracula?"

"Yes, go right into the lounge there around the corner." The woman didn't even catch the philosophical meaning of my question.

Still, I went around the corner to the lounge there, where a lot of other victims were waiting. I always arrive early when meeting myths and I took the opportunity to case the place.

Fancy. Plush. Dark (appropriate I thought) and mysterious in

part. Full of other news people and writers. Al Sanders was there from WJZ-TV. Sue Coplin was there from WCBM. Someone was there from WBJC. He sold me a tape when mine broke.

There was a lot of newspeople-style gossip going on. Biographical information was passed out, along with a number of canvas bags that said, "I saw Dracula".

We still hadn't seen Dracula. It was promptly 11:30 that breakfast was served, great big servings of quiche. Al Sanders had at least two, smiling and joking with the other reporters the whole time.

When Raul Julia finally walked in, almost no one noticed. And Raul Julia is Dracula in Baltimore, at the New Morris Mechanic Theatre, touring with the role Frank Langella started in New York.

Dracula walked in without a cape, but in a dark suit. Late because he wasn't used to getting up in the morning.

Anticlimax.

Yes, he says, of course he takes the role seriously. Yes, it is a difficult role to play since the cast is required to act it in the style of the 1920s, a style today considered camp.

No. No. He doesn't recommend one come to the play in a state of altered consciousness. "It depends, I suppose, on how strong you really are. But when the bats start flying--no, I won't tell you not to but I wouldn't suggest it."

Raul Julia reminds one of a younger and darker Ross Martin, perhaps. It seems that he is almost typecast in this role of Dracula, which requires him to be "horny and hungry." The role is that Dracula is horny and hungry here. I enjoy practicing."

In his Gumball Rally appearance he was cast as an amorous Italian race car driver. In Three Penny Opera he was cast as Mack the Knife. Lechery and sinister happenings seem his lot as an actor.

"I hope that sometimes in the play the audience will be terrified, you know, sit back and say, 'Oh my God, look at that!'" He accompanies this with a wheezing imitation of someone frozen in fright.

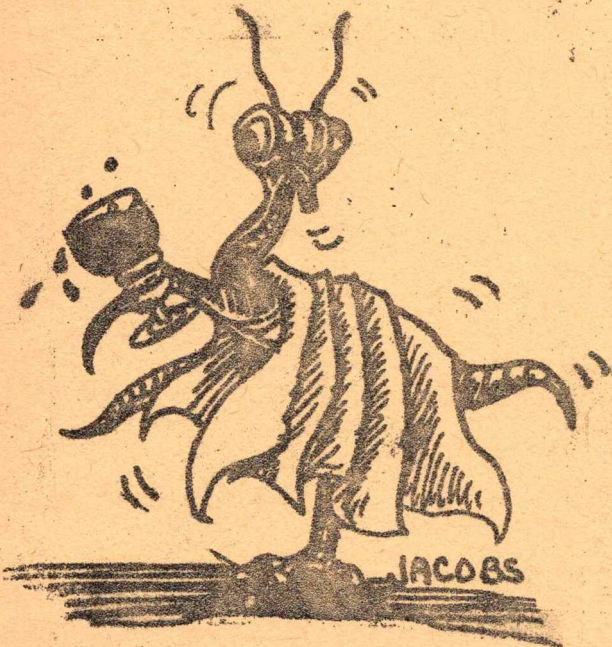
Although he denies he is a "member in a church or witches' coven for the supernatural" Julia does claim a lifelong interest in the occult, and feels that this helps him with his role.

"We have bats you see, oh yes, we have two cages of bats we keep in the basement of the building so I can go down and look at them." The audience is disbelieving. "Oh, yes, it is, is true."

Julia's Puerto Rican accent was seen by one questioner as a problem. Would Julia attempt a German accent for the play?

No, he says. "I have a good accent for playing this role. I never thought of sounding German. It is fine."

Later he is asked about special effects, which abound in the play. "Oh, no," he says, shaking his head and wagging his finger at the reporter who asked the question. "I don't want you to think about that. Then someone comes to see the play and says hey, how



did they do that, how did he disappear?"

To the next questioner, he gave away a small secret. "Yes, these things are hard to do. What I liked about Frank Langella's play is he makes it look easy to swing that cape. But that cape weighs 26 pounds. It is not easy. And to appear and disappear all over the stage, it looks easy. It isn't easy to do, though."

Another fact slipped out during the presentation. Julia, billed as star of the show as Dracula, is only on the stage about 20 minutes. The rest of the time is spent reclining offstage waiting to dash in at the appropriate moment and frighten people.

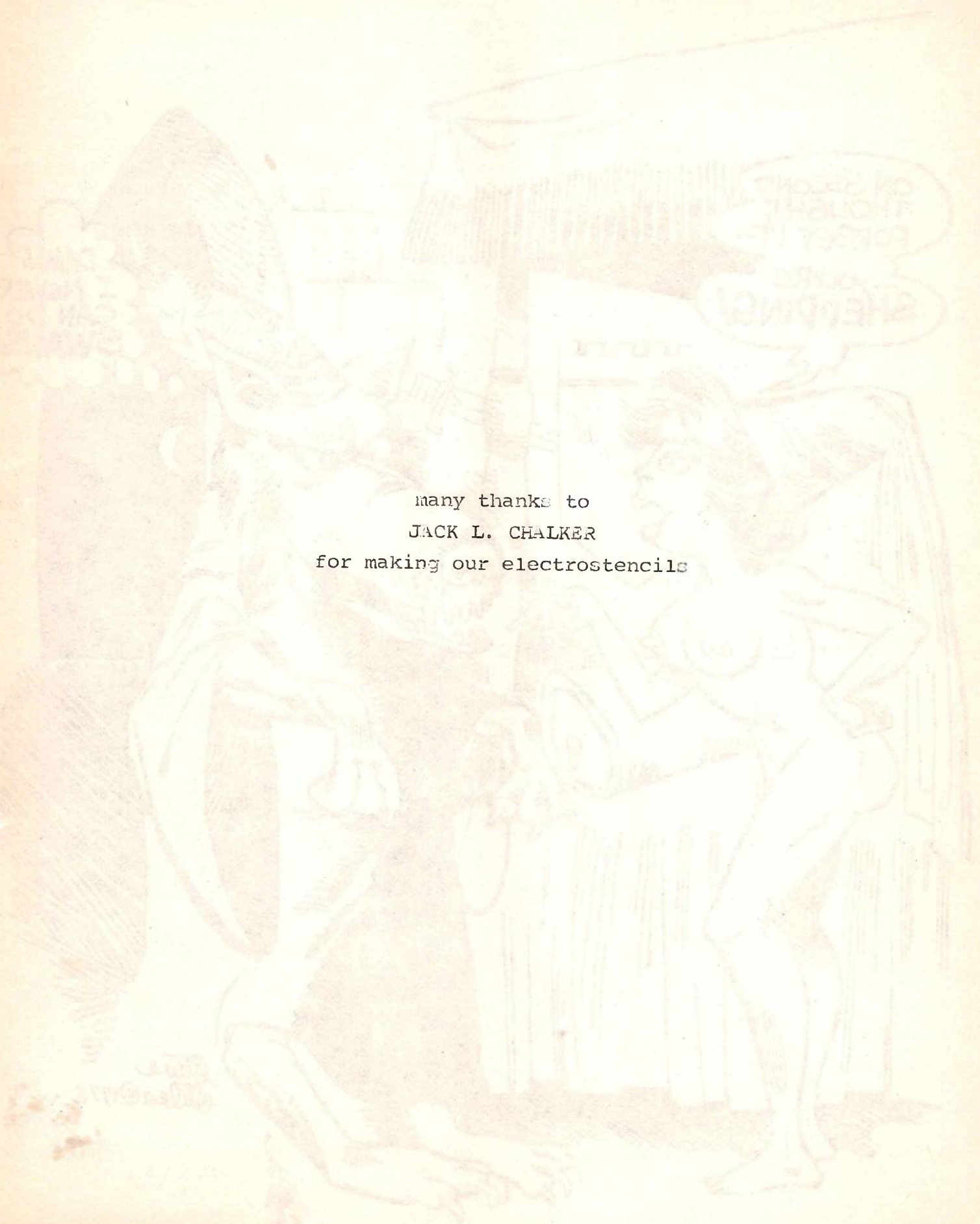
About fright and children, Julia said, "You can bring children to the play, yes, but they should be children you know can be scared. This being scared is something people like. And you know what, people aren't scared by other things, they let themselves be scared. They say 'I will believe in this, and this is scary,' and so they are scared. Bring kids, sure. But remember I want to frighten everyone in the audience."

Julia is tall and dark enough to be Dracula. If he can take the sparkle and fun from his voice and replace it with the intensity he showed in answering some of the questions at this press conference he may have people fainting in the aisles.

BALTICON 12 MEMBERSHIP

California	3
Connecticut	14
Delaware	21
District of Columbia	32
Florida	3
Illinois	5
Indiana	8
Iowa	2
Maine	5
Maryland	1181
Baltimore	560
elsewhere	621
Massachusetts	20
Michigan	11
Minnesota	1
New Hampshire	2
New Jersey	47
New York	136
North Carolina	5
Ohio	9
Oklahoma	1
Pennsylvania	113
Rhode Island	5
Virginia	208
West Virginia	15
Canada	6
England	1
Ireland	1
no address	104
TOTAL	1959
attending	1859
no show	100

many thanks to
JACK L. CHALKER
for making our electrostencils





ON SECOND THOUGHT,
FORGET IT--
...YOU'RE
SHEDDING!

DAMN,
I NEVER
CAN DO
SWANS!

Steve
Stiles ©1978