

SYNAPSE

Published for FAPA 117 by Jack Speer, 1301 San Pedro NE, Albuquerque NM

DENDRITES

Dick Eney isn't the only fan with a crystal ball. Ted Pauls's works best at long range: From halfway across the country last spring, he called the turn on our gubernatorial race, both the upset primaries and the general election in which the supposedly underdog Republican won.

At the ABDick outlet where i got the supplies that produced the atrocious showthrough in this issue, i learned a little more than i had known before about mimeoinks. It seems there are three main kinds of liquid inks: water base (quick-drying?), oil, and emulsion. Now can someone tell me whether all white stencils are the protein type that some ink cans warn against?

Margaret Ann stenciled her own drawing herein. I believe it resulted from her mother's efforts to sketch a portrait of her brother.

This month's has been a particularly frantic race with the deadline, and i think i've lost this time.

In the first place, a week before the home stretch, when i might have concentrated on finishing to read the mailing, we took a trip to Oklahoma instead. In the course of this, we did visit Dan McPhail and Danaline. He has a little house in his backyard devoted exclusively to filing and workspace for things fanish. The dedication of an area solely to s-f is a significant indicator of the confirmed stfan.

The weekend before deadline, when i'm usually bearing down, i spent some hours campaigning instead, trying to keep from losing my bet with Pauls. Sunday i skipped a meeting of the s-f club to read the mailing, but got no further than the reading.

This meant doing the stenciling week nights instead. And with the days of salaried ease behind me, like all selfemployed people i work many nights as well as Saturdays. However, i had it planned so i'd hit the mail Friday morning, which was good enough once before, with airmail and special delivery.

The final blow came when i learned that the postoffice would be closed Friday for Armistice Day. I'll mail this stuff Saturday, but can't have much hope for making the mailing.

Mailing 116 Epimetheus

Se Dice

A Good Year for Time

We Also Read Books

2
12
15
17

EPIMETHEUS

FANTASY AMATEUR

I see that Phil Harrell postposted a second Vorp al Dragon, of which i didn't receive a copy. Will you send me one to this address, Phil?

VANDY (Coulson & C)

Juanita, are you sure you know what a tirade is? The passage in Godot that you referred to as "tirading Christ and the Bible as one lump" was about eight lines long, and more temperately worded than your comment, hardly "A long-drawn speech or declamatory passage, esp. one marked by intemperate and, usually, vituperative or harshly censorious language; a prolonged fire of invective."

Buck, what comics does Juanita collect?

In the discussion of essentials of life, we were talking about humans living on Luna or Antarctica, not about vague creatures.

I thought it was obvious that Dwain's letter was printed sic. To continually insert that word would distract attention from what he was saying. I always print quoted matter sic; i think anyone who changes what he purports to quote is untruthful.

In a history of any war, one is likely to be struck by the vast number of stupid mistakes. It may be that wars between evenly matched opponents are generally won by making the fewest crucial mistakes--so long as one doesn't make the biggest mistake of all, doing nothing.

I guess the validity of the remark about conquest being a losing proposition is limited to cases where the conqueror tries to exploit or enslave. When colonists come who are willing to do their own work, conquest may in a way pay.

HORIZONS

Even if the laws of robotics do resemble the laws of slavery, would you rather have it some other way? Should we crusade for equal rights for robots?

It's hard to take seriously the suggestion of s-f fandom not based on the written word. But suppose it were, do you really think people would be more pleasant? Are gossipers at a cocktail party kinder than gossipers on paper?

I'd say that if translations from English bulk large in continental prozines, the easy explanation would be that to justify writing such a specialized kind of fiction requires a large language community from which potential readers on first publication can be drawn. The languages spoken by only fifty million people don't meet this requirement so well. Occasionally a genius like Waltari will write in a minor language and be translated, but the prospect of being read only in a minor language, which would face the Italian equivalents of Cummings and Leinster, must be discouraging.

You may assume that you have stated your position on the Breenigan somewhere, but it wasn't in FAPA, so i must ask what you designate as "the whole mess" which would cause the supposedly victorious pro-Breen faction to lapse into inactivity "in disgust". The suggestion that it should have been the anti-pederastic faction that quit has been made before, but it rests on the fallacious premise that when an organization you belong to makes a mistake, you should resign.

I don't know whether it's good or bad for a travel route to run through country unaffected by it. This was one of the attractions of train travel to me, but freeways do much the same, and i feel they lost something when they bypassed the Willamette Valley towns.

I agree that dramatic speaking is nearly always unnatural. An occasional exception, such as "So also I have heard, and do in part believe it" in the Olivier Hamlet, is striking. The wasted word and the pointless gesture, however, I think must be largely dispensed with, if art is to fill its role of presenting something more concentrated than life.

"I try not to talk other people out of enjoyment of the music they consider great." But you do, do you not, try to convince people that Disney is shoddy?

I find it hard to believe that charging more for longer subway rides would produce enough revenue to offset the disadvantages, such as the trouble of collecting. There's much to be said for "postage stamp" rates.

Why do low temperatures make it harder to breathe?

Then don't leave it up to innocent souls to inventory your attic after your death. Have fans do it, who'll appreciate everything.

Have you told people in Hagerstown that you're leaving the paper?

It's hard to get worked up about the bad housing of people as subnormal as those you describe. Let us, rather, be concerned about subnormal people.

I didn't know you had created things on movie film. Have you written this up in one of the many fanzines that I haven't read?

I make no pretense about catching all the typos either, but I do make the attempt. This Horizons has an unusually number of uncaught typos, as well as many questionable constructions. "One is usually aware of an error at the moment of its commission, and that seems the best time to apply the obliterator." My plan for Synapse is a little more flexible than Horizons's in the number of pages. So long as it's a multiple of 6, whatever fits goes.

"Don't turn out the light till I finish this paragraph", I said, but I didn't tell her I was reading Horizons.

MELANGE (Trimble & T)

The typeface on that typewriter seems to be modeled on the "windows" from which we were taught nearly all capital letters could be cut: But your lowercases follow the pattern too, with the result that it's hard to tell, say, an e from an a or an s. I've noticed that some letters are hard to distinguish in my mimeoing, but as I said to Dan in regard to stylusing, the fact that I'm guilty of something I call attention to doesn't mean it's not a fault.



"Like buying from the Merchant of Venice," --then Les must have been very liberal, for Antonio was generous to a fault.

"A fanzine is what keeps everything from being said at once." This is a pregnant thought, but I think the truth is more nearly that a fanzine permits a great deal to be said at once, without interruption, and this is sometimes a great advantage and sometimes a drawback.

I have a book of old formulas from Johnson Smith and Company, and it includes some recipes for making fake gold. I wish I had a well enough supplied laboratory to try some of them. "Some of your words don't seem rare. Reddle, for example, is famous because of the redleman in The Return of the Native." I didn't know "abbacinate", but the custom plays a pivotal part in Michael Strogoff, an implausible mundane novel by Verne which nevertheless illustrates the fantast's taste for the little-known, taking place in Siberia.

I do not see that "time has shown" the subscription method of staying on the waitlist to be "inferior to the old system in operation". The waitlist is no longer than it was, verdad?

SERCONS BANE

"The teacher-salary bite makes up very little of that 700% bulge, be it known." Oh yeah? Quote the figures, including state aid.

I'd call Washington a very unhappy state, taxwise, because the damned supreme court kept it from levying an income tax, apparently on the theory that the best kind of tax should not be permitted because it wasn't painful enough.

SELPRESERVATION (Hoffman)

What's an avaut private home?

Like most people, i'm not very good at the Cocktail Party Effect, but i did in one instance pick something out of a gabble that was nothing to my usually keen-eared wife: At the end of the movie Brigadoon there's a frenetic New York cocktail party, everybody talking at once, and i remember one fellow saying, "But all the time you're building, building, building."

Was Andy Porter's exotic soft drink Dr Pepper? I asked for this the first time i was in Philadelphia, and the fen were puzzled, but i thought it had obtained better distribution ere now.

The way i heard it--from a left-leaning Time reporter at a Keechelus caucus--it was the clockmaker's union, but it could easily have been cloakmakers to begin with.

You've done better than i if you've seen one copy of your book on a stand. I've never seen any of yours, nor Marion's, nor a lot of other fans', and yet i check the stands every month or so, not to mention the second-hand sources.

ALIQOT (Hevelin)

Did any yore story predict the death of the central city while the sub-urbs were still becoming more crowded?

My kids don't watch Batman much any more. There's something else that conflicts with it in part, i believe; or maybe it's just supper. They will force Ruth to defer supper for some shows, such as the Twilight Zone, but they sort of forget about Batman. I suspect the college students who made up a large part of its audience earlier this year have largely deserted it by now, too.

It's largely from first-hand sources that i'm forming my ideas about the Vietnam war: A young noncom recently returned from there who dropped in on a Great Decisions discussion and said, in answer to a question, that he felt sure our side could and would win (a most important question, for if they can't, there is no need to ask whether they ought), and now our own man in Saigon, Dick Eney.

The program called We Are Not Alone was rebroadcast last Sunday, and i got to see all of it this time. It was very good; the animation especially. It wasn't as dogmatic as the title suggested, nor as the ESP report was.

In what way did Don Bratton go on to bigger and better things after 1948? Has the moon really anything to do with radio reception?

ATOMIC GALAXY / BUGLE OF DINGLY DELL

David, you ask "Can you spell that without any r's?" and then answer "No." The answer is Yes.

"There were some mysteriousmachines all around the walls of the cave, and some other chemical equipment." Were the machines also chemical equipment?

ATOMIC GALAXY / BUGLE OF DINGLY DELL

Duecker mixes up various forms of verbs in "Whoever did it had to come through the fence by cutting the hole, setting off the alarm, gone into the Lab, opened the safe and stole the formula, and gotten out within ten seconds."

I hope you don't pronounce it "Whinny-the-Pooch".

"A Satellite Explodes" was interesting. I didn't know pressure built up inside them in space, even the balloon type. You were remarkably lucky to be watching at the moment it exploded.

Bob: It's not surprising that only Justice Warren attended every session of the commission. It's standard practice for hearing boards to meet with most members absent, sometimes only one present. Even a board that has to make decisions, the Bernalillo County board of equalization, holds hearings and makes recommendations with only one of its three members present (plus a hired adviser), which are then generally rubberstamped by a quorum. I'm sorry there are doubts about the assassination. I was inclined to shrug off the doubts expressed by people who just wanted to believe it was a right-winger rather than a left-winger who happened to shoot the president. But a review in a right-wing magazine says some of the recent books raised grave doubts in the reviewer's mind, so I guess there must be something to them. I would suggest the following principle to anyone who's willing to wade into the details: An individual is an extremely intricate bundle of sometimes contradictory motives. Only a fool will think it possible in every case, from evidence available after a man is dead, to understand his motivations exactly. If you can't understand why a Marxist would shoot Kennedy and make Johnson president, remember that Oswald was a person, not just a Marxist.

DESCANT (Clarke & C)

Gina, your comment on the review of Greek Love sounds as if you thought this was an example of a mundanian quoting fans. Think, now: Who, other than Breen, would have access to an unpublished master's thesis by Walter Breen, which hadn't even been accepted?

"Counselor" is used fairly often in speaking to a lawyer, usually in a humorous way. Among themselves, lawyers often use "Counsel", especially in referring to opposing counsel while speaking to the judge (I don't know that there's any rule about it, but a similar rule against a Congressman referring to another Congressman by name in debate is supposed to keep personalities down a little). "Professor" is part of a professor's name, but does anyone say "Professor will be here in a minute"?

If you think the suggestion is obscene that the holes in the slipsheets were triangular, you should see the slipsheeteer in action. The holes are circular, by the way. They're there so that a prong on a rocker arm can go through and strike the slipsheet that has already slipped down a bit, knocking it into the tray.

"For desert I produced a cheesecake". And in this mailing Juanita was hoping that fans would get their just desserts.

HORIB (Lupoff & L)

That's the 1930s moderne all right.

Your future history suggests that you harbor some surprising ideas about American history. It was the Louisiana Purchase, not the Mississippi ditto. And this did not include Indiana. The Gadsden Purchase was not, as you seem to think,

the bulk of the Southwest, which we acquired by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, paying a few million dollars to help out Santa Anna's bankrupt government, but acquiring it mostly by right of conquest. New Hampshire was one of the original 13, so its people would have become Englishmen; you were probably thinking of Vermont for Canada. You overlook the principal state of the Northwest, Washington, whose metropolis, not Portland, would be the terminus of any causeway from Ket-chikan.

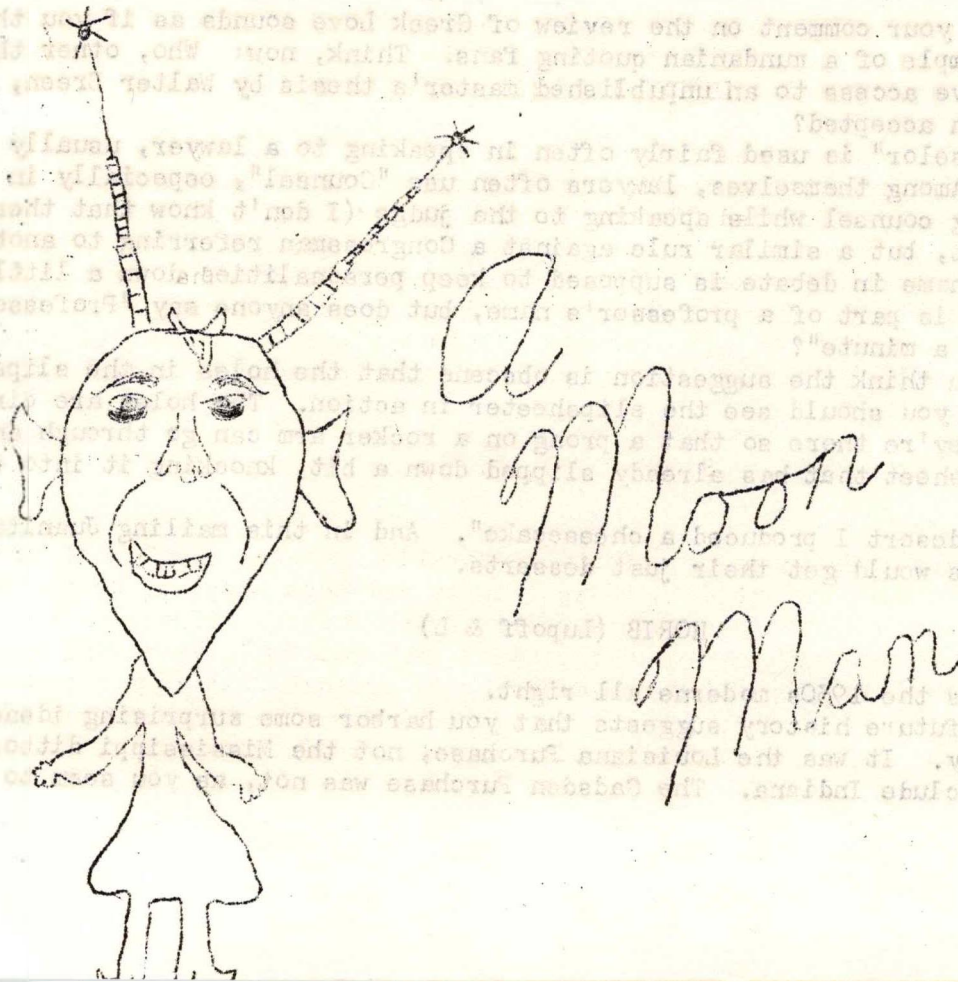
I doubt that Korea is ancient history to the generation now in school, nor WW2 one with the cavemen. Through movies made about these wars, they are there.

AYORAMA (Morse)

"She had written nonovels for several years because of the income-tax liabilities they would have entailed". Would you like to blame that on the Daily Telegraph, or shall we rehearse our discussion of the income-tax fallacy?

"watching the leader like a hawk unless he strays from the upright path". Do you mean lest he stray?

For reasons previously suggested, 5 percent is not high unemployment in the USA. When unemployment is high, it is for many of the unemployed a temporary condition, painful but passing. Thus it is not a matter for as much concern as highschool droppingout, which produces persons permanently unemployable except in times of labor shortage. You are confusing two different things, failure to achieve "success", which can happen to those who "go all the way up through high school and to University graduation", and becoming a permanent dependent of society, which rarely happens to the university graduates but is happening in increasing numbers to the dropouts.



a Moon man

"ripped out of context" is ordinarily used of passages whose apparent meaning has been changed by elimination of the context. It does not usually refer to a failure to adduce everything that might be used in an exegesis of a difficult passage. I believe you feel that the passage in Matthew is embarrassing, and if you had had it in mind a year ago you wouldn't have made the statement "I do not recall any statement in Matthew, Mark, Luke or John where he went against enjoying the pleasures of sex", to correct which was, after all, the only purpose of my three-line comment that necessitated your page-long reply.

You seem to assume that Peter wrote the letters attributed to him. The Columbia Encyclopedia and Goodspeed both date these well after Peter must have died (probably of old age, in Asia).

"Page 6, para. 9: I doubt if anyone tries to hold a contest with you in that way." I had to look this up to understand it, and I'll bet no one else did.

Wyszowski:

"This majority will not be swayed by any drug-induced experience, nor will it be tempted by easy availability of any drugs." This looks like either-or thinking, which ignores matters of degree and borderline cases. "If restoring the inside-outside balance of the Western man" means anything, I wish you'd explain it.

"the poor shall always be with us because there will always be some who are less intelligent and less energetic than others" --but are these the same, in your thinking? "Social mechanisms exist for maintenance of conservative interests which effectively prevent the less privileged from improving their lot. This is part of human nature and cannot be altered without altering human nature." This sounds almost like saying that social mechanisms cannot be changed, which I'm sure was not your meaning. No doubt there is a tendency for whoever controls the machinery to design it to serve his group's interests, but these are not necessarily conservative interests, and the machinery need not be such as to prevent the less privileged from improving their lot.

LUNDYS LANE (Lichtman)

Lundy's Lane was near Niagara.

25x100 seems pretty small for "a good sized residence and some yard". I thought the platters favored 25-foot lots because this forced the consumer to buy two in order to have enough space. "The Scavengers Protective Association sounds like a protection racket. "The garbage trucks here have a brush-hogger attachment which starts up when brush is fed into it, chomps rapidly and hungrily. We ought to mention these things, because a future historian who wants to know how garbage was actually collected may scan the purple pages of Lundys Lane for information.

SUPERSCRIPT (Caughran)

"swang"?

Yes, and there's an uncomfortable parallel between the Republican resurgence that's being reported on TV as I type, and what happened to the New Freedom when Woodrow Wilson became preoccupied with foreign affairs. "I agree that many protestors seem to have lost contact with reality", demanding something in the name of the majority which the majority is against. "I don't think the war is merely "an easy excuse" for not appropriating the money required for New Frontier programs; it has made restrictions something of a necessity.

You say we could buy the VCs off more cheaply than we can kill them. We seem to be trying both approaches.

"One wonder how rich the society would have to have been to afford such a thing." Why not "would have had to be"? The perfect infinitive seems to give many FAPAns trouble.

Who sponsored the NYTimes ads advocating a third house to the UNO?

DAMBALLA

I too favor continuing the Egoboo Poll.

That was sure a lot of people who came forward with the information about the Dead Man's Hand. (Now for a switch, who can identify the source of "We were amphibians, tailed and scaled, And drab as a dead man's hand"? To top it all, the latest Maverick episode contained the same information. (Are these Maverick episodes reruns?)

I assume "dry" in that context means not sweet, but how do you make cider dry?

FHANTASY PRESS

"sword & soccery" sounds like a combination with possibilities.

"only 12 men in all history to create an alphabet" sounds a bit too restrictive. How about Gregg, Pitman, Braille, Morse, and whoever invented the International Phonetic Alphabet? " The middle part of Stomp Dance was pretty well written. However, i would say that you express yourself better in person than you do on paper.

SAMBO (Martinez)

Dave's drawings are very good for an eleven-year-old's.

Some weirder than usual idea of the meaning of "flair" is indicated by Ron Parker's "A slight flair to be noticed" and "the flair of fandom is similarly needed". " Do you read all those pocketbooks, Sam?

Dave's poems are good too. What does he do with his chemistry set?

ESDACYOS

"Microbii" isn't the plural of "microbus"; it's "microbi".

The singular-plural discrimination synapse seems to have broken down on you. "So it was that we stayed in Laramie the second night and was sure to eat in The restaurant there"; "Kevin got to see many a trains"; "Neither Dave nor Ruth were home"; "We took pictures of each other and was, again, genuinely sorry to leave"; "We'd gone across into Norton, Vermont and soon was across the line into New Hampshire"; and that error that so many made in this mailing, "the Clarke's" (if Norm were a clerk, this wouldn't be too erroneous).

I'm surprised that few of the people at the Montreal gas stations spoke English. I thought nearly everyone there was bilingual.

Your talkative down-easter doesn't fit the stereotype, nor does "the genuine warmth of the people in that part of the country". I suppose people are warm anywhere if you hit them right, but i'd never heard of this as a special characteristic of the dry down-easter.

I look forward to your account of the stay in Lubec.

VUKAT (Patten)

"Did you remember to send your 25¢ to Bob Pavlat yet?" "Yet" connects the past and the present, and this calls for the present perfect, "Have you remembered?"

It would seem that the renewal month should be marked on the waitlist opposite each person's name, as is done on the roster. We aren't trying to eliminate waitlisters by Russian roulette.

What's "getting an ob" on somebody? A Tolkienism?

I'd like to know what that "entirely plausible explanation" was that Leinster produced for the hero's fiancée crashing on his planet. Burroughs had the same kind of thing happen, but never troubled to explain.

I'd say Fear is in no sense science-fiction. It might well be considered pure fantasy, even though it's revealed at the end to be the protagonist's imaginings.

"Rover Cleveland" is a beautiful name for a dog. I suppose this was in the last century; apparently no one in the twentieth century has called his dog Rover.

"à la the Philippines" is mistreating that expression about as badly as can be done. Why not avoid the problem by saying "like the Philippines"?

Cartier never illustrated Astounding much, did he?

No; what's a Mickey Mouse watch worth? (Are you quoting New York or Moscow prices?)

Do you remember the fourth Marx brother, Zeppo?

I guess the FBI might put a man in FAPA if it has a policy of one watcher for every 65 people in the country, but that ratio seems a bit extreme even for 1984.

S-f fandom used to be a cohesive society. But that pretty nearly ended about the time these non-Saxon fandoms got started. I hope some people are taking on themselves the function of maintaining contact with Italian, Russian, fandom.

What are the prozines doing with their original artwork now?

Here's the opposite of what I opened these comments with: "I hope to Roscoe that they've all been destroyed long ago." That seems to call for the preterit.

ISOMER (Graham)

The alternation of scenes is a good device here. I think I envy you the bike tour even more than the worldcon.

Which of the German parties is liberal in the European sense?

I was surprised and impressed by the description of Strathclyde, which I take to be the Willises' home (I'm with you on that plural-possessive). Other members may have read about it outside FAPA, but I didn't know they'd risen to such grandeur.

My favorite entrance was at a Young Democrats' school at Millersylvania state park. The discussion group I was signed up with for the first period was on international relations, led by a couple of UWFers whom I knew well. Arriving a bit late, I put my sleeping bag in a barracks and headed for this group, which was some distance away in back of the mess hall, across uneven ground. They saw me running and stopped to watch; I must have been a curious sight as I topped a rise, then nearly disappeared in a dry channel, then reappeared. Panting up to the group, I gasped, "Am I in time to save national sovereignty?"

TRILL (Wells)

But escadrille is just a fancy word for squad.

Life is much better in Western Europe than it was prewar; it seems a reasonable hypothesis that this would have been true in Eastern Europe if Moscow's hand had not been laid on those countries.

HABAKKUK

Is "Jazz critics es ma foute oit" double-talk?

"I tried to stand and stretch my legs and fell into a mangled shivering heap." That's just the way i feel when bitter cold.

I'm gratified to hear that "fans were wearing clothes appropriate to the turn of the century rather than modern clothes which suited them." I hadn't noticed this at conventions--i can't remember what fen wore--but if they're rejecting the Mod styles, more power to them.

I agree that ideas are the main thing in s-f. And ideas are not hard to come by. But it's not good enough, to just hold an idea up for inspection: it must be clothed in a plot, with characters whose fortunes are affected. The process of so clothing them, however, seems in the abstract to be a rather dull, mechanical business, and untrue to life, because the odds are against a given idea (e g a piloting problem) becoming so dramatically crucial in a person's life as it must to make a story like Space Jockey. Still it must be dramatized. At a recent club meeting Roy suggested that a story could be written around an item in the morning paper about the birth-control pills becoming popular in Australia. He's right, and the idea would be the important thing; yet we will think about it only vaguely unless someone makes a story of it.

I like Berry's possessive "The Rolling Stones's", but i'm not sure the logic of grammar calls for it. Would we say "The United States's"?

The discussion of technical competence without creativity embodies an assumption that genius is a spark that either is or is not there. Is there any validity in this assumption?

"Homo Sap would be a pretty sorry creature without Music of some form or another, Huh...?" I think not. One plus would be missing, but if we'd never known it we'd never miss it, and we would be much the same creatures we are now.

SPIANE (Moffatt)

Do an article on the manufacturing of paper boxes.

Wasn't the death-releasing-you concept originally applied to the NFFF, when Burbee got an honorary membership he didn't want and friends told him even death would not release him?

The ash Yggdrasil great
evil suffers, far more
than men do know;
The hart bites its top,
Its trunk is rotting,
And Nidhogg gnaws
beneath.

Yawn.

MINAC (Main)

"vegetarian" may be the shortest way to say it, but it's not the most lucid. I'll bet most of us don't know what you mean by it.

I'm glad to know the source of the report that the Ho Chi Minh trail is a journalistic fabrication; now it rests on something more than the ipse-dixits of John Boardman (p-p). We can ask meaningful questions such as: How accurate and truthful was Scheer and Sheinbaum's description of what a Life journalist said to them? If he was correctly quoted, how accurate and truthful was his statement?

Is methanol jet fuel?

Pretty Boy Freud is a pretty name for a cat. It might be most appropriately used of a Siamese, since that species seems to be the most neurotic.

I like a lot of your Tired American, but I take exception to a few passages. "the rich still getting richer, the poor still getting poorer": are the American poor getting poorer? "wasting 60% of the world's goods": If we were using up irreplaceable resources to that extent, it would be quite an indictment, but for the most part these goods are the product of our processing or manufacturing, and it would seem to be a sound principle in nearly any world order that a group should be able to consume in proportion to its production.

BINX (Grennell)

Well, then that's another use for the fanzine index: When you've lost track of volume and number for your own fmz, refer to the index in numbering your next.

"cau-ght" :Grotch.

If the "yet another fandom" is too horrible to reveal all at once, give us a hint, like, What does "perobject" mean?

SYNAPSE

In agreeing that fen are interested in relatively unstudied periods of history, I might have added that they show little interest in some of the periods that seem most popular with mundanians, such as the age of Louis XIV.

Let us be accurate, even if no one else knows the difference: The trailer with which we had so much trouble was not the one of "chiefly fanstuff".

And "hasn't seemed to have changed" isn't two perfect infinitives, as I implied.

And I was guilty of uncertain number or lack of antecedents or something when I said "Even worse are the series of law books which ... has to be cited".

Too, I wrote "amost". Somebody lend me a sackcloth?

"I'm a bigger hypocrite than you are!"

Here's a folksong to the tune of the Irish Washerwoman as remembered by JPSI. I think "tree" is intended as a synonym for axletree.

The earth turns around on a geographical tree,
Or so the astronomers say unto me.
The axle got hot and stopped for a while,
And all of the people went boring for oil.

"A lot of these people ought to be about ready for probate."

SE DICE

Creath Thorne comments on issue before last:

... I particularly enjoyed your comments to various FAPA members about their use of the English language. This is a subject that recently has come to have more and more fascination for me. I realize that my own writing is still flawed; I think that if I had regular access to criticism like yours along with the professional guidebooks on the subject, my writing might improve some.

I remember Mickey Mouse watches; they were most popular when the hour-long Mickey Mouse Club was shown every weekday on television. /Ah, you young people. The great day of Mickey Mouse watches was World War II, when Ivan went ape over them and GIs sold all they could get. /M-I-C (see you real soon) K-E-Y (why? because we like you!) /Y and why don't sound at all alike to me. /M-O-U-S-E....) As I remember Disney began showing the various MMClub features over and over; when he began to show them for the fifth or sixth time most of his young viewers quit watching the show.

There is a difference between Merril's Milford Writer's Conference and the regular sf conventions, regional or world. The Milford Conference is only for established sf writers, and it's main purpose is to talk about the writing of science-fiction. ...

Why do you leave out punctuation marks when you center the titles of fanzines on the page before commenting on them? "HELENS FANTASIA" would look better with the apostrophe inserted in its proper place. /I won't say a thing about your apostrophe in "its" in the preceding paragraph. The theory of omitting punctuation from titles is that it will be simpler in indexing, and especially for computer indexing, if there are only 26 different characters (and perhaps a space) taken into consideration. It's a reaction against the practice of making punctuation an integral part of a fanzine name, as in Imagination!. That wasn't so bad when handled by careful people like Mirta Forsto, but many people will not be consistent. /

There have been many forged fanzines in fandom. One of the most recent is Focal Point #23 which contained slighting references to a New York female fan. The edition was not put out by rich brown.

You quote a sentence from Harry Warner's fanzine that you say is wrong grammatically. I would revise the sentence to read: "changes came that I took in stride with more ease than an old man normally shows in adapting to novelties." Did I catch the error? /That would be one way of rewriting it. / ...

I think you're wrong in stating that we would have to rotate ourselves on a vertical axis to see things aright if we went through the mirror as Alice did. Can you prove your statement? /Well, if you walked into another room and wanted to see things aright in the room you'd just left, would you rotate on a horizontal axis? /

There were three creatures that Beowulf slew. He first slew Grendel and then Grendel's mother. (This led several boys in my literature class to extrapolate horror movies based on the epic: "beowulf," "Beowulf Meets Grendel's Mother," etc.) Beowulf finally slew a dragon; he was mortally wounded in this last battle.

TAPS is a twelve man apa based on the Cult without the bitching and angry-young-man attitude of the Cult. It is worthwhile for the in-group discussion. Stobcler is a thirteen man apa, another of the in-group groups, which has quarterly mailings. It is run dictatorially by Dave Hulan and Ed Cox.

The most expensive electric mimeograph Gestetner produces, the 366, has a handle on the side (for what purpose I don't know), so perhaps the superduper mimeo would have mink-covered handles after all.

Why did you skip the part of Ted White's con report that began, "The bus was between ten and fifteen minutes late...."? Many travel reports exhibit what I call the St Mark's Syndrome, after a passage in Volpone where they found a man's diary full of such pedestrian detail.

I thought the oldest comic book/magazine featured reprints of "The Yellow Kid" comic strip. Now that was before even my time. I think The Funnies was significant however, as being possibly the first devoted to original comics, which seem now to dominate the field. Are there any reprint magazines like Famous Funnies left? The all-one books such as the Peanuts series are probably more profitable.

Lilapa is another apa based on the Cult.

Go-Go girls here in Missouri are young ladies of rather questionable virtue who dress scantily and gyrate and wiggle at Go-Go palaces to the tune of Go-Go music. Now you know all about it. I thought it might be a tag for what are or were miscalled topless waitresses hereabouts; they had bras but rather scanty ones.

I liked "Wonders of Communication."

I saw "The Time Machine" last winter on television while my uncle, a newspaper reporter in Arizona, was here. We both agreed that it was unmitigated trash. I both agree that you were out of your minds.

Dick Eney:

I always thought the reason criminals were mythologically held to redeem themselves by courage in war was that they were defending the social order which they had attacked before, and the increased risk raised the former action to a higher power than the latter. ...

Bernard Shaw made a good statement of what you call the scientists' position: Not exactly, but it's a thought-provoking statement anyway. We don't need Art Education for the people. We need bread for the people, housing for the people, decent treatment for the people, relief from contempt and insult for the people. When they get that they'll make art themselves, though all Beethoven's works perish in the mean time.

I liked the distinction in "I was serious in that cartoon, or at least I meant what I said." ...

I instinctively pronounce the initials for "ultra" German style, making UHF "oo aich ef" and requiring "an".

C'mon now. Apollonian types design to remain who they are, and retain their civic names; as distinguished from Dionysians who are willing to lose their selves in exstasis and Faustians whom you know about already. Ruth Benedict. Patterns of Culture. ...

Why should a man's right to go to Hell in his own way be restrained by the presence of a family, or hurting others? Family, or others, can appeal to exactly the same right to nullify his power to harm them. By "right", do you mean a moral justification to set one's mind at ease, or something that will be enforced by social machinery, e.g. the men with the white jackets? And, as I noted above, it isn't as if partial dissolution of the family meant automatic social extinction and beggary, as it once did. Anyway, I always understood the expression to mean, not that people really took action with the intention of going to Hell, but that actions harming only the actor were exempt from censure. If there is such an action.

... Well, even if you do restrict the discussion to the US, ^{today} Big Name Inheritors and Crooks get money without working for it, without being Capitalists in any usual sense. ...

The story that Dick Ellington would kill Breen if WB touched Poopsie again was started by Ellington deliberately leaking it to known blabbermouths in order that they might pass it on to Breen, who is reputedly terrified of violence.

We wonders whether your judgment that liquor lords are not fine people represents voting with your glands rather than your brains. [I don't think so. Making all allowances for generalizations and for the uncertainty of value judgments, i think the statement has testable meaning in its context, and that the meaning is true. Incidentally, the state supreme court on the eve of this election knocked out the guaranteed markup on liquor. It wasn't exactly a case of the supreme court following the illection returns, but i don't think they would have been so bold if the handwriting hadn't been on the wall.]

I should think that the successful holding action against the Church of Rome here would not account for "incipient liberalization of Catholic attitudes" unless the American stand had been only one element of a multi-national trend ... as it may have been, for all I know. The decision to back off on parochial-schoolism seems a more reasonable result to follow from a purely American resistance movement.

And a later letter:

Sure enough, my prediction for an upturn in Chieu Hoi intake (breaking 300 on 26 Sept \pm 7 days) was right. Week of 29 September there were 315. Just to show it wasn't a fluke, 377 defected the following week ... It hasn't been so high since April; the Buddhist disturbances sent defections into a slump, and Viet Cong evasion of contact plus a rigorous security program kept them down until this psychological blast cracked the block. Perhaps you caught the news story about the murdered prisoners of the VC who on investigation turned out to be North Vietnamese Army men, and the high number of surrenders that have also been obtained recently.

On the other hand, I did miss calling the VC response to the election, as I note in the enclosure. ... I was sure they wouldn't miss the chance to combine two moves they desperately desire: hitting a heavy and propoganda-fruitful blow at American forces before the election, and scaring the Vietnamese away from their own polls. ... I thought they'd use their forces ~~in Cambodia~~ outside Viet Nam, but I certainly didn't think they would make so brazenly contemptuous a move as frank invasion across the Demilitarized Zone. Or as we call it over here the Demilitarized koff koff Zone. Maybe there is something to that speculation about Uncle Ho having concluded that no action whatever could alienate people who had committed themselves to his cause.

Phyllis Economou:

I won't even ask if your still in FAPA. I have almost completely lost touch with that microcosm, although I do maintain a few tenuous contacts -- mostly around Christmas. It was fun though, and one of these years I'll probably go to a convention just for auld lang syne.

"But, Mr. President, has it been settled then, that we want to annex San Domingo?"

A GOOD YEAR FOR TIME

15

The new season on the boob tube is heavily loaded with science-fantasy, with temponautics especially prominent.

In the first place, they are rerunning the Twilight Zone classics from the late 1950s. I missed them through not having a boob box at the time, and am glad of this chance to see the stories, some of which I'd already read. Serling and his other writers saw the human-interest possibilities of time-travel better than anyone else in a position to exploit them; his non-temponautical s-f is often good too.

A recent Outer Limits hour concluded with the remark, "It is said that if you move a single pebble on the beach, you change the whole pattern." The hero, however, went to much more trouble than that. He was prepared to kill the man who was to father a scientist who would visit a curse on the future, the future from which the hero came. If one thinks it through, however, it would have been sufficient to knock on the door of the house where either bride or groom lived. The odds are millions to one that any interference with them, even so slight, would have resulted in the conception of a child with a genetic makeup different from that of the scientist who might have been. The idea that one seeking to change the past must make it impossible for the old chain of events to occur depends on either a tacit theory that the past will resist any disturbance and cancel it if possible, or a theory that the time-traveler's intervention was part of the original past, which makes the whole effort to change it vain. (Neither of these theories will stand up under a Swisher-type examination.) In this story, the hero was able to change the past, resulting in his own extinction (the Ancestral Voices fallacy which Phil Nowlan demolished in a letter to Brass Tacks). To dramatize the situation, the hero was permitted to continue existing, after an intimation of extinction, long enough to explain the situation to the stolen bride who was returning to the future with him. There is probably no logically respectable theory that justifies such extinction.

I can't get away without saying something about The Time Tunnel, but there is no point in discussing the logic of it, for it embraces the indefensible idea that you can have time travel with an unchangeable past. Dramatically, the series is more disappointing as it goes along. The writers are confused on many details of the time tunnel's operation, on which they could without much trouble be consistent. The general scheme of the series shows a weakness for the spectacular, resulting in coincidence upon coincidence in a way that would shame even ERB. The acting and motivation of the main action is getting to be almost as bad as the scenes in front of the "tunnel". The last episode I saw, the Trojan War sequence (which carried science-fantasy pretty close to sheer fantasy), looked like a low-budget production in that it borrowed quite a bit of footage from the fairly recent movie Helen of Troy, not to mention the ideas borrowed from The 300 Spartans.

I watched only the first installment of It's About Time. The main thing worth remarking on here is that, like The Time Tunnel, it uses the no-language-barrier convention. This ridiculous but dramatically useful convention originated, I believe, with Alley Oop, where the only explanation given was: "There must be Something about traveling in time that enables a person to understand what people are saying by telepathy."

Leaving time for the moment, something should be said about the other big show, Star Trek. This leans too far toward pure fantasy for my taste. I stopped watching it when the writers seemed to catch the disease that is the common characteristic of Bewitched, My Favorite Martian, and I Dream of Jeannie: the introduction of characters who can do just about anything, and no need to explain. But Star Trek does seem to deal with problems as adult as those dealt with in the prozines, something which only the Twilight Zone else does.

I guess My Favorite Martian is off the air now. One of the few stories that I watched in that series also dealt with time. Instead of the commonest theory, unchangeable time, the fallacy it embraced was the persisting power of the previous present: Martin and his friend did things in 1626 that caused New York as we know it to cease to exist temporarily; but once they got things arranged so that the Indians did sell to Minuit, Manhattan came back just the way it had been before.

This is somewhat confused in my mind with a similar story on one of the kids' cartoons, maybe that series where the dog is the narrator. About all I remember is that unless someone could get across Fifth Avenue, blocked by the St Patrick's Day Parade, and stop the bad scientist, there would be no St Patrick's day parade; so since there wasn't one they were able to get across, so there was.

I Dream of Jeannie, the only one of the three last-named that I enjoy (though I abominate the confusion of "genie" with "djinni"), once had Jeannie able to control time itself and undo what had been done. This must have been too great a power for even such a series, because it would solve all problems that Jeannie and her master might get into, so it has been conveniently forgotten.

Before I wind up, let me just mention the recent version of Through the Looking-Glass which was broadcast. I rather liked what I saw of it, but it was far from being straight Carroll, and someday I would like to see Carroll dramatized straight.

Spengler speaks much of the enigma of time, "queer, tempting, insoluble", and of the special interest of Western man in that mystery. Odd as it may seem, the people who watch television belong to the Faustian civilization and share, in their own way, some of its thoughts about time that would be incomprehensible to other souls. That Faustian man, with his enormous power drive, should ultimately seek power over the greatest mystery of all, time itself, is appropriate and predictable. For the masses belonging to the civilization to participate in this doomed quest is as natural as their participation in the countdowns of the pioneer flights into space. When they have lived with temponautics long enough in the popular media, they will understand it better than any of our authors do now.

Aux plaines du Farwest quand vient le nuit,

Anderson, Commodity Futures:

"A straddle transaction under the terms of commission rules is a purchase of one month and simultaneous sale of another and a subsequent simultaneous liquidation in one market."

Now, is there anything else you'd like to have explained?

Les cowboys dans leurs bivouacs sont reunis.

WE ALSO READ BOOKS

And one book I read recently was a novel by A. E. van Vogt, *The Violent Man*. Van had some things to say that couldn't be said in fantasy, so he wrote a mundane book. In the acknowledgments at the end, he gave as one of his sources a Labourite's account of a ChinCom prison similar to that in the story. There, in the story, a group of white men were the subject of a psychological experiment called Project Future Victory.

This is still very much Van Vogt: There are the inadequate motivations and the erratic actions that mark his s-f, and some of his good points too. I noticed what seemed to be echoes of his General Semantics background; and in explaining the character of the violent man, and in some features of brainwashing, there were unmistakable references to dianetic theory; though in neither of these was he entirely orthodox.

He tried to tie the psychology into his main theme, which was Chinese Communism in practice, but the latter predominates. In expounding this theme, the book is so heavily loaded with expository discourses that only very strong action suffices to carry it at all. VV did fairly well in putting most of his points over, though he whitewashed the Kuomintang and Chiang in a way that I can't accept. He made a pretty convincing case for xenophobia being one of the dominant elements in China's recent history, even perhaps to the point of being race prejudice.

All those conversations without pictures tired me, so I turned to a comicbook *The Illustrated Story of Space*, in the *World Around Us* series. It was published at the end of 1958, when both Russia and America had satellites up and the form of the future should have been pretty clear. Nevertheless there were a number of wrong guesses, as well as current errors, that stand out on reading now.

In the first place, the book was addressed to those who were children in 1959, and told them that one of them might be the first man to ride a rocket into space. As Redd Boggs pointed out not long after that, many people who had assumed they were born too soon to be the first man into space found that they were born too late.

One of the least forgivable errors, unless I'm mistaken, is a picture of a cadet in a centrifuge, getting 2 or 3 Gs. He's depicted sitting with his side toward the center around which he revolves, as if the acceleration in the rpm were creating the extra Gs, directed perpendicular to the arm of the centrifuge.

Far worse, however, is an instructor saying "When you get far enough from Earth you no longer feel gravity." This appears to be a repetition of the popular idea that gravity extends only for a limited distance and then ceases. On the same page, the same stupid instructor explains a photograph of a dog floating in a plane (which was no doubt diving): "When the force pushing the puppy upward equaled the pull of the earth, the puppy floated." It's possible that an airforce instructor would say such things. A few years ago I heard an airforce recruiter on the radio explaining the difference between the "aero" and "space" components of aerospace: "Aero" was concerned with activities within the reach of gravity, and "space" was the area beyond gravity.

In this booklet the first man in space turns out to be on a rocket around the moon. This is preceded by a news announcement that sounds very like the ones that were made: "At 12:38 p.m. today, Earth time, we landed a rocket on the moon. Its automatic TV camera is operating perfectly. Here is a closeup of the face of the moon." It isn't very close up though; the camera would have had to be on an elevation to show craters and hills the way it did.

When they're planning the flight around the moon, it isn't clear why a man has to be along. He doesn't steer the ship ("No. Instruments will guide you."), and though his job is supposed to be to take pictures of the other side of the moon, this turns out to be done by "Your automatic camera". Perhaps the boy does pilot on the re-entry (Jets message him "Follow us down!"), for the ship seems to be of the dyna-soar type which Boeing proposed about that time but the government didn't buy, i'm not sure why. The rocket motor, of course, blasts away continually all during the flight, even during the approach to Earth when, with the ship still pointing toward Earth, the pilot fires a couple of small reverse rockets which cut his speed miraculously. (It reminds me of the wings on kewpies, which are much too small to fly by if one considers things quantitatively, but which satisfy the uncritical qualitative mind.)

The pilot suffers the blackout at takeoff which was traditional in the pre-Space age. Meteorites are a great problem. Among the other errors is a tracking station "in Singapore, China".

Some points i may be mistaken on, but which look dubious: The Red Spot of Jupiter is "thought to be volcanic explosions". Mercury is given the traditional description, with a fixed twilight belt. The clouds of Venus are said to be "either carbon dioxide gas or tiny drops of oil". The author accepted the existence of artificial-looking lines on Mars, only doubting that they were canals.

In another chapter, the building of the first space station is shown. Maybe one will be built, but this one is conceived as a steppingstone for a lunar landing: "With no air to create friction and no gravity to overcome", a single-stage rocket is enough to blast you to the moon.

At least the writer didn't worry because there was no air for the rocket to push against. Who says people aren't educable?

"I don't want to be approximated."

Couple of fantasy items of no consequence:

Newspaper tearing of uncertain age, concerns Fred Astaire in "Imp on a Cobweb Leash" on TV: "His life changes when he is given an invisible imp that turns him into a practical joker. John Keasler wrote the story."

And MGM's president's letter this year announces a Cinerama feature "2001: A Space Odyssey", "projecting life as it will be on earth and in outer space in the new century."

"The word is 'insensitive', Ruth, not 'senseless'."

From a letter in Synapse last year:

"... The trial conducted in absentia by a private agency is symptomatic of social disintegration. ..."

From a news item in the Lobo:

"Calling for the 'exposure of U.S. atrocities in Viet Nam,' the convention urged chapters to publicize Bertrand Russell's 'War Crimes Tribunal.' The tribunal, to be held in Paris in December, intends to try President Lyndon Johnson and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, in absentia, for their role in the war in Viet Nam."

"'Easily', Robin. Correct grammar is always important."
