

ISSUE 1

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BOING BOING

ENERGIZED FUN!

ROBERT ANTON WILSON

COMICS • CYBERPUNK

BRAIN TOYS • NANOTECH

WHY YOU MUST SUBSCRIBE

Imagine finally being able to gain privy to secrets carefully guarded for centuries by the world's wisest and most powerful people. Secrets these people applied towards gaining that certain kind of control over themselves that made them invincible. The secrets known only to the *Boing Boing Revelatory Adepts In Nothing* (B.²R.A.I.N.).

Throughout the ages many important people have employed the secrets of the BOING BOING: Lao Tse, Confucious, Pythagoras, Ghengis Khan, Jesus Christ, Nefertiti, Joan of Arc, Rasputin, Leonardo DaVinci, Adam Weishaupt, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, G.I. Gurdjieff, J.R. "Bob" Dobbs, Aleister Crowley, Robert Anton Wilson, Timothy Leary, and others. So what? That's nothing. What's complete control over a lousy continent or two?

The above people all had access to the outer sphere of the B.²R.A.I.N.'s knowledge. While most of them acquired power, sex, and a direct cosmic link-up with Jawah, the information they held was merely a front set up by the ultra-secret inner circle of the B.²R.A.I.N., closely guarded by a few nameless immortals (namely, us here at BOING BOING Magazine).

Now, what with the Harmonic Convergence converging in the toilet, Zen Master Rama on the lam, and religious leaders of all faiths making grand displays of their hypocrisy, the Boing

Boing Revelatory Adepts In Nothing have decided to rapidly boost the level of consciousness of the planet, by offering this journal to anyone willing to order it. We feel it our obligation to push for universal enlightenment, thereby staving off otherwise immanent human-caused disasters such as nuclear war, designer virus outbreaks, famine, addiction to shopping malls, etc. This (plus the fact that we haven't been doing so well in the global control business lately) has prompted us to sell all our best secrets in magazine form.

Now for a limited time only, the B.²R.A.I.N.'s have put out a popular magazine series of their most arcane occult writings! These handsome volumes will sit with importance on any coffee table, and can stand up to comparisons made to the PEOPLE magazines and TV Guides laying next to them. The finest *Leatherluv* binding, resembling top quality cow hide to those with powerful imaginations, has been chosen to adorn these sacred tomes.

A certain moronic poltroon has criticized us, saying *Boing Boing* is so vapid it shouldn't even be called a magazine. He even went so far as to say it wouldn't be fit to sell at a grocery check-out stand, next to the *Cucumber & Roughage Diet* and *Quick Tips for Broken Nails at the Office* booklets. We found out who was spreading these vicious rumors and we had his legs broken. (Well, were pretty sure it was him. It might have been a couple of other jerks we knew, so we had their legs broken as well just for good measure. It didn't cost much more. The leg breaking service, you see, had a special 6-legs-for-the-price-of-4 deal, and being smart shoppers in addition to the secret chiefs of the planet, we couldn't pass it up.)

There's no reason not to buy our magazine (and a pretty good reason to buy it, unless you want to share a fate similar to the gentlemen described in the above paragraph). Send in for a subscription today!

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BOING-BOING

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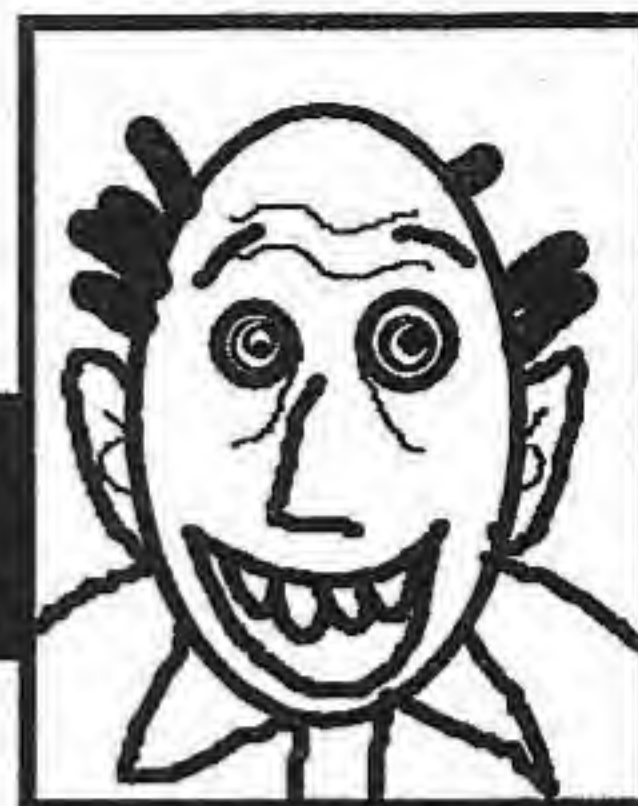
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CASHING IN ON THE SLACK SURPLUS



Wow! Human beings have been creating neat things to amuse themselves ever since they began renting this planet millions of years ago. They've expended fantastic amounts of energy and ingenuity on discovering methods to keep their nervous systems happy. (Some reptile-humans might argue that this energy would be better spent towards making bombs, establishing territorial boundaries and making grunts of warning at one another. If you're a reptile-brain, put this magazine down now before you burst a blood vessel!) Today, the constant search for novelty and the benefits of the information explosion have combined to form a glut of wonder. It's all a poor hedonist can do just keeping up on new brain toys available to her! In the dark

ages of last year the question might have been : *What can I do to alleviate the boredom?* The new question has become: *Which will it be today, ecstatic euphoria or euphoric ecstasy?*

Here at **Boing Boing** research laboratories, we've taken it upon ourselves to sample as much of everything that we can get our hands on, and transmit our results back to you. But we can't do it all by ourselves. We need your help. Start sending in articles, interviews, art and **neat stuff**. It's your chance to get in on the core workings of a potential hypernova. Pollinate us with your own personal bliss recipes!

Tap into the potential energy stored in the coils of your own spring and **BOING**.

Boing-Boing issue No. 1.

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Boing-Boing Interview:

Robert Anton Wilson

Robert Anton Wilson has apparently discovered the secret of creating quantum behavior in the macroscopic world. At least he sure acts like a quark. Currently lecturing across the country, Wilson also edits his own newsletter (Trajectories), leads his ongoing role-playing game called Conspiracy, continues to write the Historical Illuminatus! Series, experiments and writes about brain machines, contributes regularly to several periodicals, and holds a weekly Ulysses reading and rapping group.

Fortunately one of his dopplegangers managed to jump over from the Everett-Wheeler universe next door for this interview, while his other versions worked on new and exciting projects.

We talked to RAW and his wife, Arlen at their home near Venice, California. Upon arrival, Arlen gave us some herb tea and RAW showed us the fractal mountain he'd generated on his Macintosh. After a hearty swig of tea, we began firing away.

Boing-Boing: It's been twelve years since you wrote Cosmic Trigger, in which you made several predictions regarding Life Extension, Space Technology and Consciousness Expansion. Has the progress made in these fields in the last decade pleased you?

Robert Anton Wilson: Well I

would have like to have seen it all happen faster. But it's all working out. I know the people in the space movement are discouraged; they feel it's not coming along fast enough. But the Russians had an entitled colony up there for quite a while, and more satellites are going up all the time. As far as Intelligence Increase, Arlen & I were discussing that last night. It seems there's been a terrible decline in general intelligence, but at the same time the brightest people are brighter than they've ever been in history.

BB: I heard recently that ninety percent of Americans surveyed thought that the Sun revolved around the Earth.

RAW: It's not that high, it's forty percent. I remember reading the news story a few months ago. A much higher percentage knew the Earth moves around the Sun but weren't sure how long it took. Some of them guessed one day! Over forty percent can't point out the Pacific Ocean on a blank map and over fifty percent don't believe in Darwin yet. So you see Copernicus is doing better than Darwin. Sixty percent of the people understand Copernicus and only fifty understand Darwin, because he hasn't been around as long.

BB: You probably meet lots of interesting people as you travel on the lecture circuit. Can you tell us about some of the cutting edge technologies and projects you come across on your trips?

RAW: That's a good question, I think of myself as a meme (*a term coined by Oxford zoologist Richard Dawkins- meaning a concept or idea which can replicate and mutate like a gene-ed*) transporter. I pick ideas up on my lecture tour and distribute them on my following lectures. It's like I'm in the meme-transportation business. I see a lot of brain machines like the Synchro-energizer and the Graham Potentializer. With the Graham Potentializer you move around in an electromagnetic field in a way that the manufacturer claims will increase your intelligence. But like all of the intelligence raising technology around, it seems to work best on bringing those with below average intelligence up to normal. But nothing has come along to shoot those with average intelligence up to the genius level. I'm still waiting for that. But as for the Graham Potentializer, however much it raises I.Q., it certainly gets you high, I've never tried a brain machine that's more euphoric. I feel much more creative for the next day and a half. I'm getting more fond of the synchro-energizer. But it costs about seven thousand dollars. The neuropep on the other hand costs about three

By Mark & Carla
Frauenfelder

hundred dollars and it's almost as good.

BB: Do you think the government will ever attack the use of brain machines in the same way that they attack the use of certain psychoactive chemicals?

RAW: Since I've started talking about brain machines, I've heard that question more than any other. I don't think so, because these machines have come into wide use in hospitals. And the manufacturers are pretty shrewd in that they avoid talking about miracle cures.

BB: What about the role-playing game you host called *Conspiracy*?

RAW: It's a cross between a fantasy role playing game and an encounter group. There are different levels of deception; everybody's deceiving everybody else, but most of them don't find out until they're well along in the game. It's almost like a paranoid experience except for the fact that everybody knows it's a game so they don't get freaked by it. There's all sorts of lessons about psychology and social relations you can learn. Big surprises come

up that I don't expect. What I find fascinating about the game is that I structured it in such a way I thought this would happen, but I was astounded at the extent to which it happened. The game gets completely out of control. I don't know what's going on any more than the players do; I can't keep track of everything that's happening.

The last time we did this I had Satanists and Christians in it like I usually do, and spontaneously people got the chief Satanist and the chief fundamentalist Christian to have a debate. That was one of the high points of the game, especially since somebody got possessed by a demon in the middle of it, which I didn't plan either.

BB: So each time you play, you can incorporate elements from previous games into the current game.

RAW: It's like a fractal, totally unpredictable. Twenty minutes after it starts I start getting surprised, just like the players. I'm a player myself.

BB: Is there a gamemaster?

RAW: I'm the gamemaster but it doesn't mean I control things. I act through five archons and they try to keep things going in the right direction; if it gets dull they liven things up, but it never does get dull.

BB: How many times have you held the event?

RAW: Three or four times now. I'm improving it each time. The next time we're adding extraterrestrials.

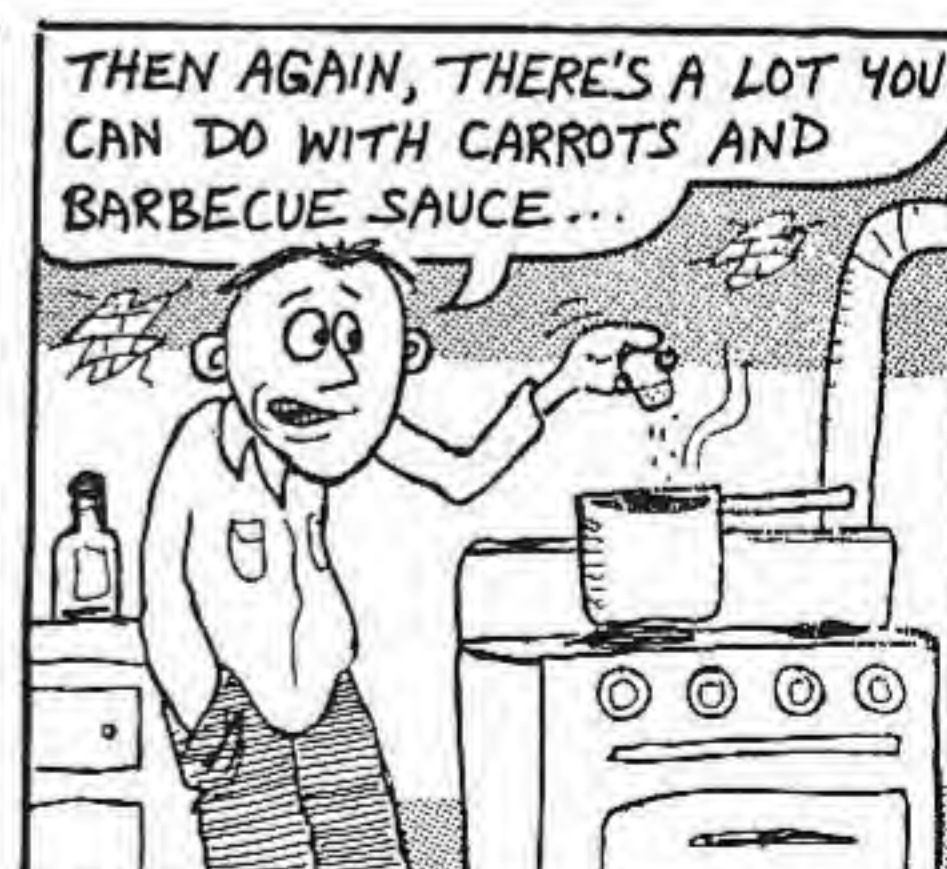
BB: Have you given thought to creating a software program such as a "head tool" or interactive novel?

RAW: Some people invited me to work on an interactive novel, but they never got the capital. I've got an idea for a computer program but it's not a game, it's just an educational device. But I have a hundred ideas for every ten I can carry out; I'm fertile, but I don't have time to do them all.

BB: I think that your type of fiction would be ideally suited for interactive novels.

RAW: Yes, I think so too. The Byzantine novel would be very well suited for that. Especially the paral-

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lel universe novel.

BB: Sort of like a dynamic version of a William Burroughs cut-and-paste novel.

RAW: Yes. Speaking of interactive novels, interactive pornography interests me, but not personally, just the implications of it. This will change the whole breeding pattern. Those who are still human enough to have a sex drive but not human enough to bear association with another human being will find ideal three-dimensional interactive pornography in the next twenty years, so we'll get them out of the breeding stock!

BB: I was wondering if CSICOP (*Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims Of the Paranormal*) has ever responded to your criticism of their mangling of the scientific method in their attempts to discredit psychic phenomena, as you wrote in *The New Inquisition*?

RAW: I don't think it's been reviewed in the *Skeptical Inquirer*, but another CSICOP newsletter wrote a review in which they surprisingly understood where I was coming from.

BB: I would like to see a debate between you and the Amazing Randi.

RAW: I wouldn't! There are several people in CSICOP I'd like to debate: Carl Sagan, Martin Gardner, Robert Shaeffer. But Randi is a dirty fighter; I'm not at my best debating people like that.

BB: Did you and Arlen decide to leave Ireland and come to Los Angeles in order to work on a screenplay?

RAW: That was part of the reason.

Arlen Wilson: Whatever it was, I

had enough!

RAW: Arlen's a feminist, and a ninety-five percent Catholic country is no place for a feminist.

Arlen: They were having a debate over abortion when we got there.

BB: I was disappointed when I learned that last year's Libertarian candidate for President, Ron Paul, is an anti-abortionist.

RAW: I didn't know that. I'm theoretically a Libertarian, but I know they're never going to win so I don't even pay that much attention to the Libertarian Party. What I like about the Libertarian Party is they throw good parties. They invite me to their conventions and I have a good time. I kind of wish that they would have nominated Russel Means. I thought he would have been a colorful candidate. The idea of a Native American running on the Libertarian ticket would have gotten more publicity. I mean, it's all show biz these days. I keep telling all the Democrats I know they should persuade Paul Newman to run for President. He's been a Democrat all his life and he'd win hands down. The Republican's have nobody they can put up against him. Could they get Charlton Heston? Hell no! Heston looks his age, Newman doesn't. Newman hands down, a walk in. The Democrats don't think that way. The Republicans are way ahead of them in terms of PR.

BB: The Yuppies were good at getting media attention.

RAW: (laughs) Yes, but what good did it do them? They got a lot of attention but presented a bad image.

BB: Do you think that COINTELPRO got in the way of letting the Yuppies present a positive image?

RAW: Oh yes! COINTELPRO got in the way of everything. COINTELPRO is what killed the underground press. They forced the record companies to stop advertising in the underground papers and drove them all out of business. And to this day they've never recovered.

BB: Have you heard of *Factsheet Five*?

R.A.W.: I have heard of it. I may have even seen a copy of it.

BB: It's a magazine that represents

"I'm theoretically a Libertarian, but I know they're never going to win so I don't even pay that much attention to them. What I like about the Libertarian Party is they throw good parties."

a bastion for the amateur/underground press. It's put out by a fellow in New York four times a year and in every issue he reviews approximately seven hundred small press magazines.

RAW: Oh yes! Somebody told me I should send them a copy of my newsletter (*Trajectories*) so they can review it. Have you seen *High Weirdness in the Mail*?

BB: Ivan Stang's book? (*Ivan Stang is the man behind the Church of the SubGenius- ed.*)

RAW: Yes, it's terrific. You can get any kind of nut literature you want.

BB: Mike Gunderloy, the *Factsheet*

continued on page 16

Solvin' Life's Mysteries

By Steve Posner

They say a man can run and run, and then he realizes that what he's running from is his self. I had been running about 27 years when I discovered that maxim.

I'd done it all: Climbed Everest, coached the Lakers to five world titles in six years, married whom readers of People magazine had voted the Sexiest Woman of the Eighties, divorced her because I'd grown bored with her, raised a Bengal tiger cub to adulthood and released it successfully back into the wilds from whence it came, caught trout on all seven continents, written a landmark textbook on neuroanatomy, bowled a perfect 900 series on national television, sold out seven nights in a row at the Los Angeles Coliseum as lead guitarist for my own rock band, conducted Perlman for the London Symphony Orchestra, won the big spin in the California Lottery, been indicted for mail fraud in an otherwise foolproof scheme for making unlimited amounts of money in the food-dye industry, invented the flangler, contradicted the Surgeon General in front of his friends, swum in shark-infested waters after cutting myself shaving, invented yet one more way to eat pudding, balanced a broom by its handle on my nose for three days while debating an industry spokesman on the merits of non-refrigerated microwave meals, built a cabin in the backwoods of Kansas and won Wimbledon.

And yet I had no idea who I was. Everything I did seemed to come to nothing; sure, I succeeded in everything I did, but what could I show for it all? Hundreds of millions of dollars? Well, that can take a man only so far; from there, he must grapple with what I came

to refer to as The Ultimate Truth. The way I began to see it, The Ultimate Truth is that no matter what you do, no matter how well you do it, no matter with whom you do it and how often, you die. SO what is the bleeding point? Then I read a collection of Bil Keane's Family Circus cartoons and calmed way down and began to enjoy life, which is what I'm doing right now as you read this, if in fact you actually are. And so I stopped running long enough to smell the roses and you know what? They don't smell so bad after all! Imagine, all that suffering over one lousy existentialist novel. Well, no more of that, from now on it's Sports, Comics and Calendar, in that order.

Contact the Underground:

If you are enjoying this zine and want to find a horde of others of the same ilk, try a copy of the journal of crosspollination and crosscurrents, the one and only



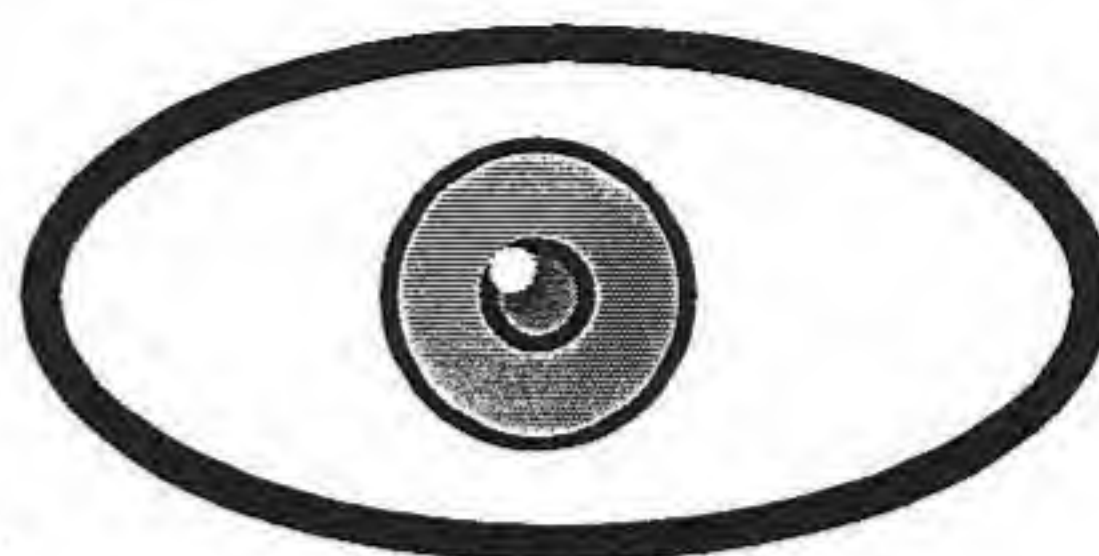
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Boing-Boing on Books



Reviews by Carl Sayagain & L. Ron Mother

Wetware, Rudy Rucker, *Avon* 1988



Computer science professor and mathematics author Rudy Rucker has donned his mutant cap once again to pen *Wetware*, the sequel to his novel *Software*, published six years earlier. Avon books had the good sense to republish the formerly out-of-print *Software* so readers who missed it the first time can buy both books at once and read the epic back-to-back.

Tossing around such concepts as Von Nueman's catastrophe, artificial intelligence,

and Hilbert Space as if they were nerf balls, Rucker is able to both create great gee-whiz mind-blowing fiction and introduce the reader to mathematical theories at the same time. He's never boring, and his clean narration really hits the spot.

Portions of the book take place on the Moon, where mobile intelligent robots run the place: falling in love, taking special robot drugs, and conspiring to create the first all-meat robot, which they send to earth so that it can breed with human folk.

Some humans live on the moon. They barter for the fresh tank-grown human organs that the robots produce. Others spend their time hunting for *merge*, a designer drug that temporarily causes people to turn into puddles, which feels really great, especially if two lovers take it and merge into a single pool.

As in his other books, Rucker shows himself to be optimistic about life. Unlike his other books, *Wetware* ends on a surreal note rather than a "well here we are right back where we started, almost, but we learned a lesson" feeling. While most of his books deal with a neo-Pythagorean philosophy of the universe-as-mathematics, Rucker can always surprise and entertain the reader by providing novelty in everything he writes.

Engines of Creation, K. Eric Drexler, *Anchor Press, Doubleday* 1986

ENGINES OF CREATION K. ERIC DREXLER

"K. Eric Drexler's *ENGINES OF CREATION* is an enormously original book about the consequences of new technologies. It is ambitious and imaginative and, best of all, the thinking is technically sound. . . . *Engines of Creation* is the best attempt so far to prepare us to think of what we might become, should we persist in making new technologies."

—From the Foreword
by Marvin Minsky

ISBN: 0-255-1472-4

K. Eric Drexler has written a fascinating book about the inevitable future history of technology, called *Engines of Creation*. Marvin Minsky, Artificial Intelligence maven at M.I.T., writes in the introduction that "*Engines of Creation* is the best attempt so far to prepare us to think of what we might become, should we per-

sist in making new technologies." *Engines of Creation* makes the reader both excited about the horn of plenty coming around the corner and terrified of the horde of vicious monsters looming behind the trees, just up the trail.

Drexler explains the techniques of miniaturization (called nanotechnology) of machines and computers using molecular assembling factories. He envisions computers smaller than a speck of dust containing memory equivalent to all the world's libraries of congress, and armies of machines too small for the eye to see which could build thousands of items on demand, such as spaceships, Ferraris, and new human bodies. Immortality is rapidly becoming a reality, says Drexler, and the implications must be understood now, so people can begin to plan for the changes to come.

Nanotechnology cannot be halted. Ideas take on a life of their own (see *Selfish Genes*, *Selfish Memes*, by Richard Dawkins in *The Mind's Eye*, edited by Douglas R. Hofstadter and Daniel C. Dennett, for the theory about the evolution of thought with which Drexler concurs) and rather than try to ignore or suppress that which is unstoppable, Drexler urges us to prepare for nanotechnology's effect on the universe.

To misquote Bucky Fuller: "Utopia or Oblivion, which one will provide us with a better head-rush?"

Aleister Crowley: The Nature of the Beast, Colin

Wilson, *Aquarian Press*
1987



Occult historian Colin Wilson has presented a biography about Aleister Crowley that establishes itself as one of the most well-balanced accounts ever of one of history's most enigmatic men.

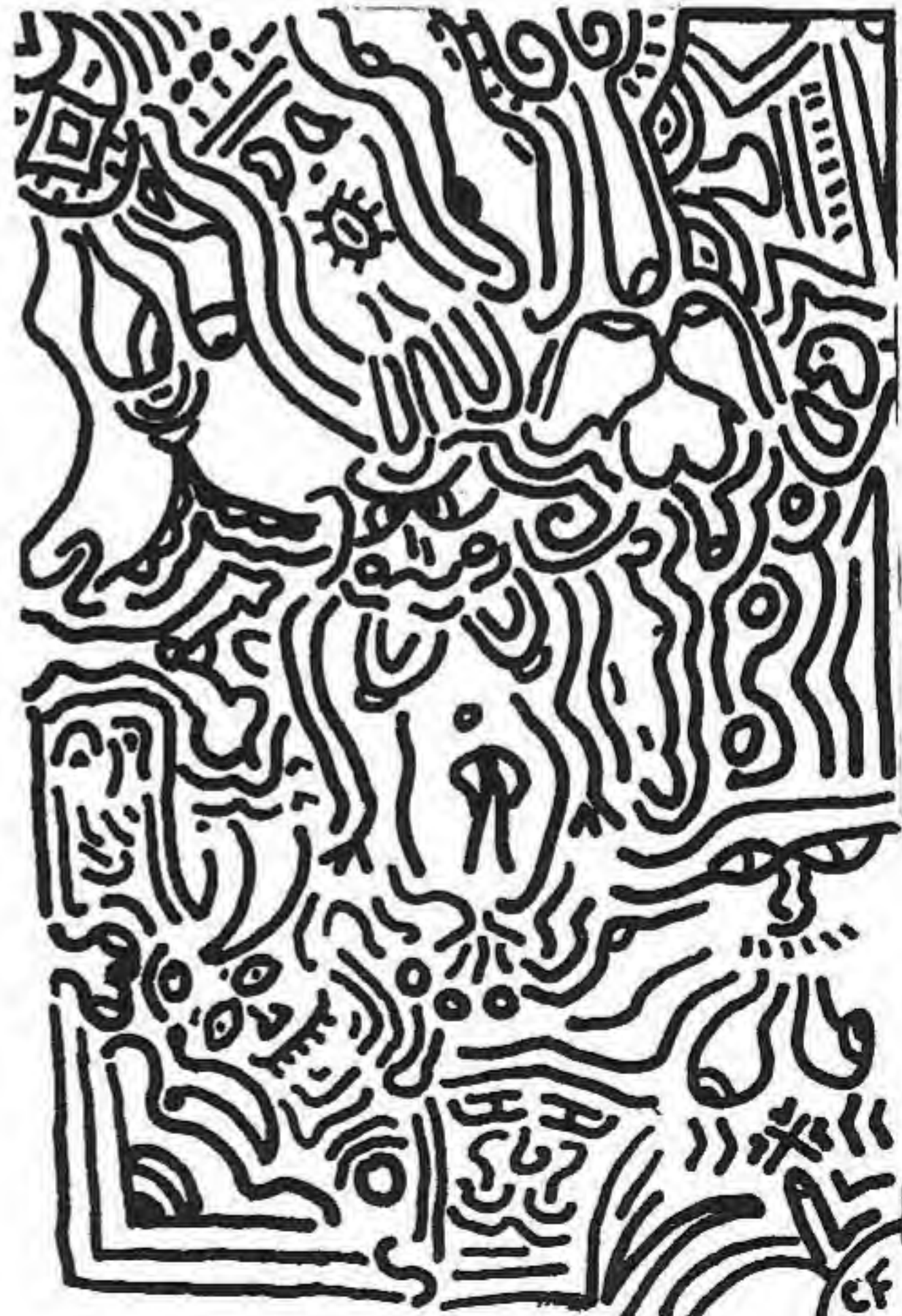
Rather than attempt to obscure or apologize for Crowley's vicious side (as some authors have done), or paint the image of a complete and utter fiend

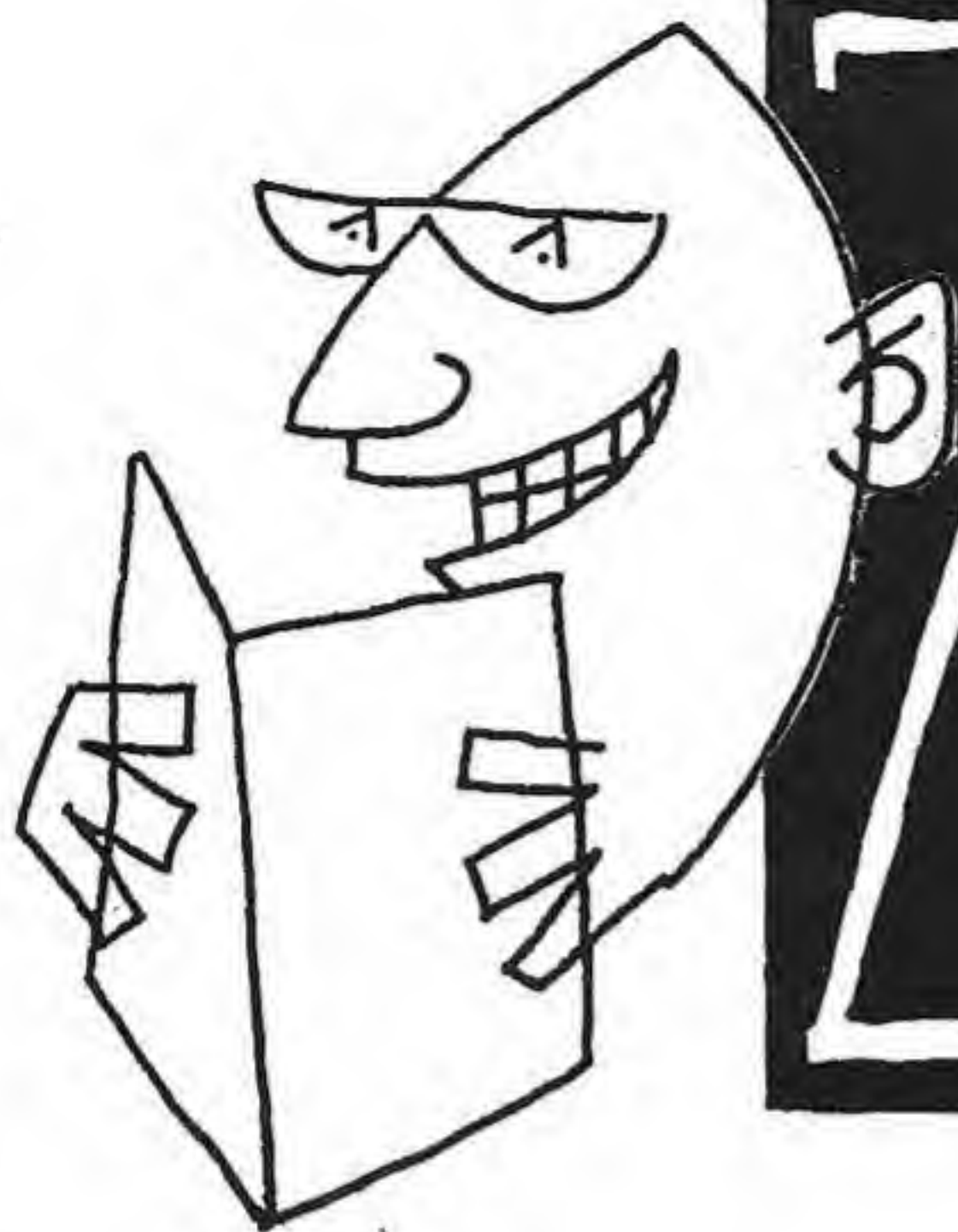
and then look no further (as most authors have done), Wilson's *Aleister Crowley: The Nature of the Beast* gives examples of The Great Beast's rotten behavior as well as his incredible contributions to magickal and occult knowledge.

For anyone wishing to study Crowley's often arcane writings, Wilson's book is excellent preparatory material. It traces Crowley's childhood and Plymouth Brethren upbringing (and comes to some conclusions as to why Crowley turned out to be the way he was), and follows his lifelong attempt to become one of the "Secret Chiefs" (a goal Crowley believed he conquered).

Aleister Crowley, as a subject for study, deserves a more objective analysis than he has been previously given.

Colin Wilson has broken free of most the prejudices of which Crowley's past biographer's were guilty, and has given the reader a lucid and concise account of both the Beast's life and psychological make-up.





Zines

The following represents a list of some of the better self-published 'zines dealing with neuro-goodies and the like:

SCREAMSHEET (Newsletter of CYBERPUNK INTERNATIONAL. Membership is \$3. Cyberpunk International, P.O. Box 2187, Sunnyvale, CA 94087. Make checks payable to KATRA SERVICES.) From their ad: "Join Now! A bastion of technoglossy on the wavefront of a neural burst storm organized to spread the virus of cyberpunk. High bandwidth cognitive dissonance in real-time mode for the post-modern techno junkie." Dr. Odd, the driving force behind this 'zine, is selling his blood, sweat & neurotransmitters for next to nothing. Buy it!

HIGH FRONTIERS (\$5 Post-paid, P.O. Box 40271 Berkeley, CA 94704) "The latest in science and fun." Unwaveringly optimistic

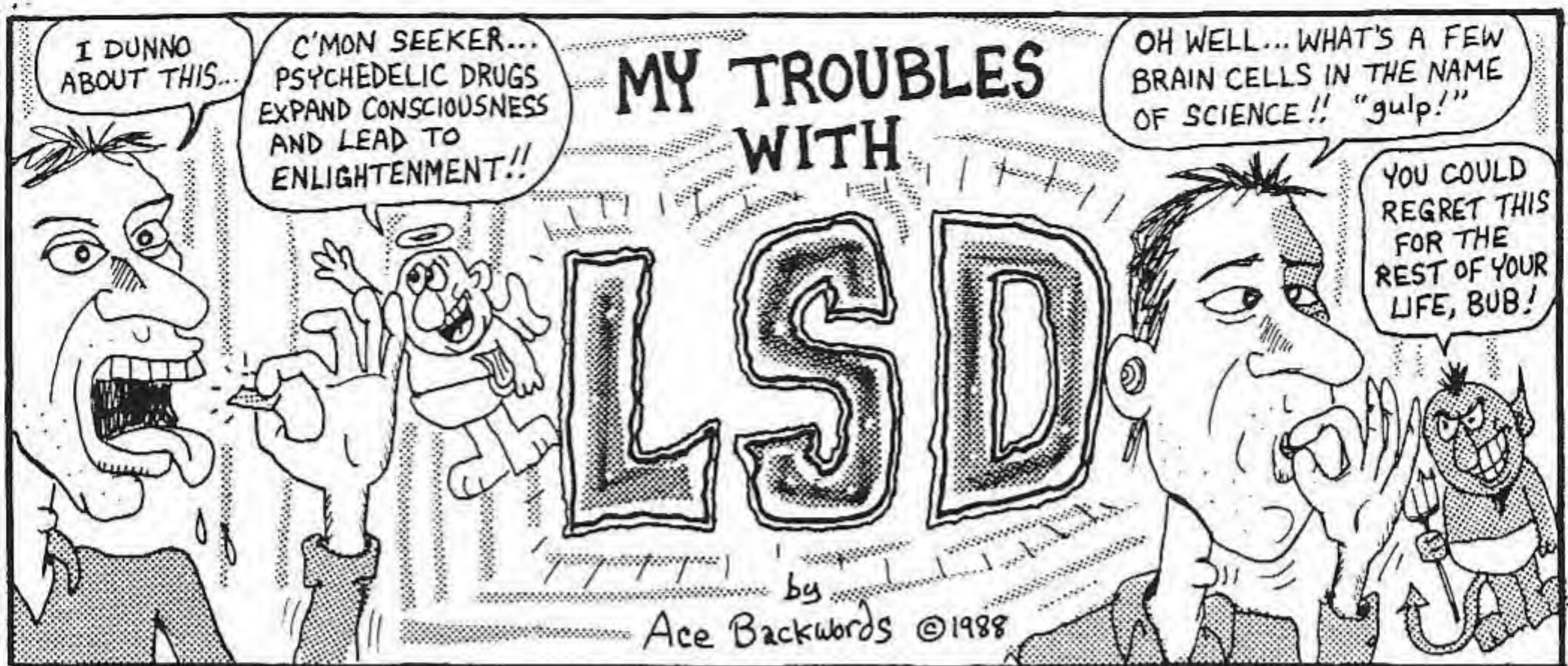
tweeksters, the High Frontiers crew pilot the entheogenic rocketship through the matrix of psychedelic cyberspace. The magazine's layout has mutated with each issue, from newsprint tabloid to day-glo oversize to the current standard glossy format of #4. The current issue features twenty articles by well-known Neuronauts such as Psychedelics Encyclopedia author Peter Stafford, Hawaiian forest plant curator and fractal visionary Terrence McKenna, Cyber-Shaman Antero Alli, and Quantum Reality author Nick Herbert. High Frontiers comes out twice a year, and **REALITY HACKERS**, a related 'zine from the same folks, comes out every three months. If you want to find out what other people are doing in the world of high-tech metaphysical psychedelia, get a one year subscription to both 'zines for only \$20.

RE/SEARCH #11 (\$17 Post-

paid, 20 Romolo St., Suite B, San Francisco, CA 94133) The format of this 'zine is more like a nice big 240 page paperback book. RE/SEARCH #11 is devoted solely to interviews with over 40 expert pranksters, people who twist and warp the collective version of reality to mind-blowing limits. The interviews focus on pranks as art, as social satire, and as a way to have fun. I'm having a great time reading this. If you're an adult who forgot to grow up, you'll want a copy of your very own.

FACTSHEET FIVE (\$2 Post-paid, Mike Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave. Rensselaer, NY 12144) "The 'zine of crosscurrents and cross-pollination." Many readers will already be familiar with Factsheet Five, truly one of the most incredible publications of the millennium. Every three months, 4000 rabid mail-freaks from all over the world

continued on page 16



L.S.D.... "THE HEAVEN AND HELL DRUG"...
 HOW'D I GET STARTED MESSING WITH THAT SHIT? I GUESS IT STARTED IN 1968 WHEN I WAS A 12-YEAR OLD BEATLES FAN. YES! ART LINKLETTER WAS RIGHT!! IT WAS THOSE SUBVERSIVE LIMEY FUCKERS THAT FIRST PLANTED THE SEED IN MY VIRGIN MIND!!



I REMEMBER WHEN THE CLEAN-CUT MOPTOPS OF "THE BEATLES SATURDAY MORNING CARTOON SHOW" SUDDENLY, AND INEXPLICABLY, METAMORPHISED INTO THESE STRANGE AND HAIRY-LOOKING CRITTERS!! SOMETHING WAS IN THE AIR!!



WHEN MY HIGH SCHOOL GIRLFRIEND SCORED SOME ACID, I WAS CURIOUS...



WE TOOK IT AT A BASE-BALL GAME... ABOUT AN HOUR LATER I NOTICED MY FLESH WAS GLOWING AND I BEGAN HAVING PROFOUND REVELATIONS!!



ON THE RIDE HOME I NOTICED FOR THE FIRST TIME THERE WAS A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TREES AND TELEPHONE POLES!!



THAT NIGHT AT THE DINNER TABLE I WAS STILL TRIPPING MY BRAINS OUT!!



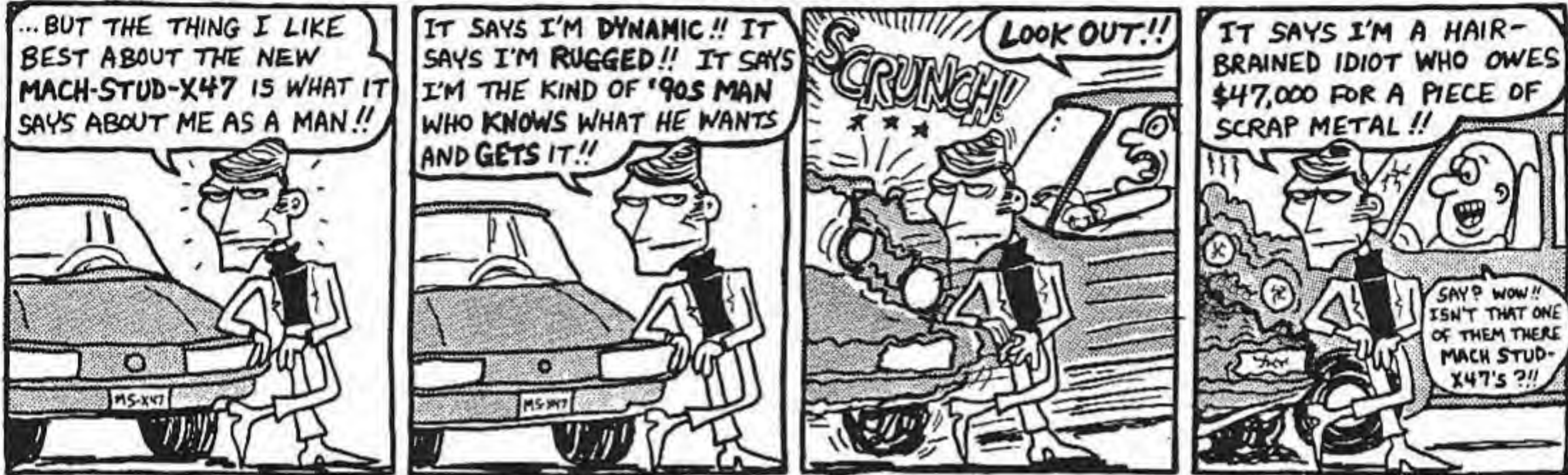
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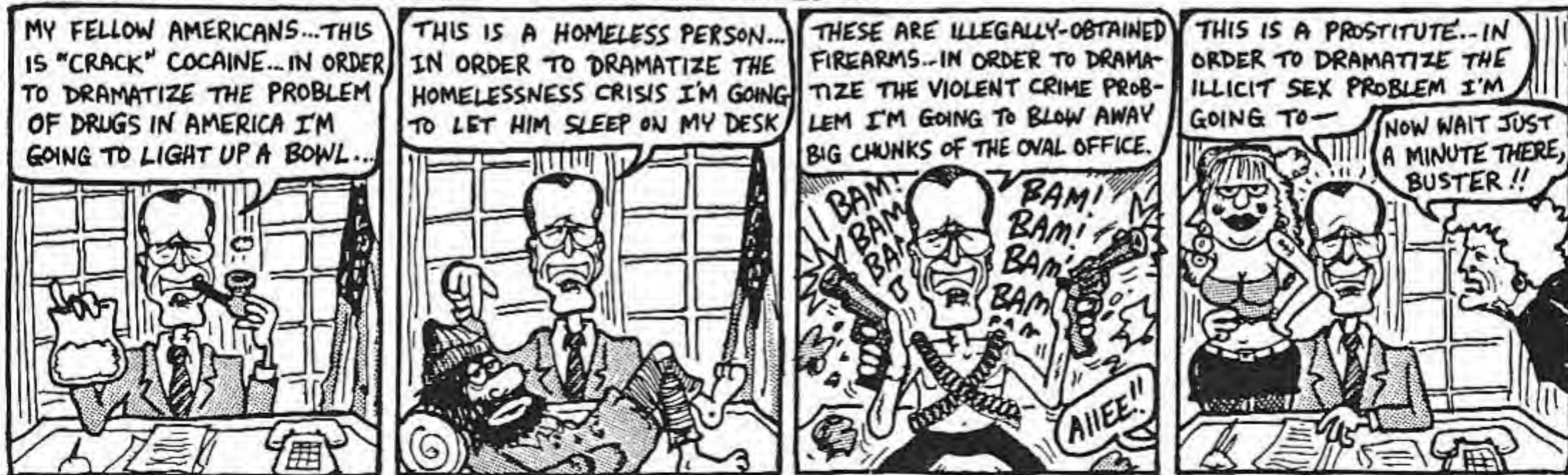
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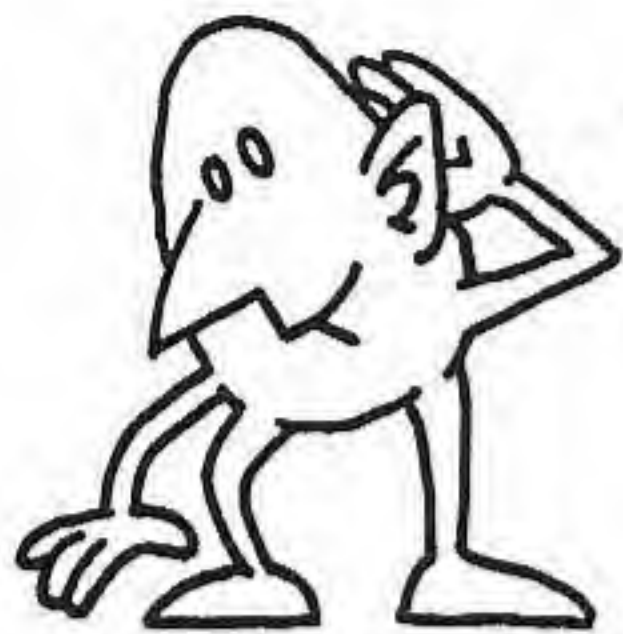
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Crossbows to Cryptography: Techno-Thwarting the State!

By Chuck Hammill

There is a maxim—a proverb—generally attributed to the Eskimos, which very likely we have all heard, and while we probably would not quarrel with the saying, we might well feel that it has become simply a cliché, that it has nothing further to teach us, and, perhaps, we are even tired of hearing it. I shall therefore repeat it now:

If you give a man a fish, the saying runs, you feed him for a day. But if you teach a man how to fish, you feed him for a lifetime.

Your exposure to the quote was probably in some sort of a "workfare" vs. "welfare" context; namely, that if you genuinely wish to help someone in need, you should teach him how to earn his sus-

tenance, not simply how to beg for it. And of course this is true, if only because the next time he is hungry, there might not *be* anybody around willing or even able to give him a fish, whereas with the *information* on *how* to fish, he is completely self-reliant.

But I submit that this exhausts only the *first order* content of the quote, and if there were nothing further to glean from it, I would have wasted our time by citing it again. After all, it seems to have almost a crypto-altruist slant, as though to imply that we should structure our activities so as to maximize the benefits to such hungry beggars as we may encounter.

But consider: Suppose this Eskimo doesn't know how to fish, but he does know how to hunt walrus. You, on the other hand, have often gone hungry while traveling thru walrus land because you had no idea how to catch the damned things, and maybe they even ate a lot of the fish you *could* catch. And now suppose the two of you decide to *exchange informa-*

tion, bartering fish knowledge for hunting knowledge. Well, the first thing to observe is that a transaction of this type categorically and unambiguously refutes the Marxist premise that every trade *must* have a "winner" and a "loser"—the idea that if one person gains, it *must necessarily* be at the "expense" of another person who loses. Clearly, under this scenario, such is not the case. Each party has gained something he did not before, and *neither has been diminished in any way*. When it comes to exchange of information (rather than material objects) *life is no longer a zero-sum game*. This is an *extremely* powerful notion. The "law of diminishing returns," the "first and second laws of thermodynamics"—all those "laws" which constrain our possibilities in other contexts—no longer bind us! *Now that's anarchy of a new and exciting kind!*

Consider another possibility: Suppose this hungry Eskimo never learned to fish because the ruler of his tribe had decreed fishing illegal. Because fish contain danger-

ous tiny bones, and sometimes sharp spines, he tells us, his rulers have decreed that their consumption, and even their possession, are too hazardous to the people's health to be permitted...even by knowledgeable, willing adults. Perhaps it is because citizens' bodies are thought to be tribal property, and therefore it is the function of a ruler to punish those who improperly care for tribal property. Or perhaps it is because his ruler generously extends to competent adults the "benefits" to children and the mentally ill: namely, a full-time pervasive supervisory conservatorship--so that they need not trouble themselves with making choices about behavior thought physically risky or morally "naughty." But, in any case, you stare, stupefied, while your Eskimo informant relates how this law is taken so seriously that a friend of his was recently imprisoned for years for the crime of "possession of nine ounces of trout, with intent to sell."

Now you may conclude that a society so grotesquely oppressive as to enforce a law of this type is simply an affront to the dignity of all human beings. You may go farther and decide to commit some portion of your discretionary, recreational time *specifically to the task of thwarting the tyrant's goal*. (Your rationale may be "altruistic" in the sense of wanting to liberate the oppressed, or "egoistic" in the sense of proving you can outsmart the oppressor--or very likely some combination of these or perhaps even other motives.)

But, since you have zero desire to become a martyr to your "cause," you're not about to mount a military campaign, or even try to smuggle in a boatload of fish.

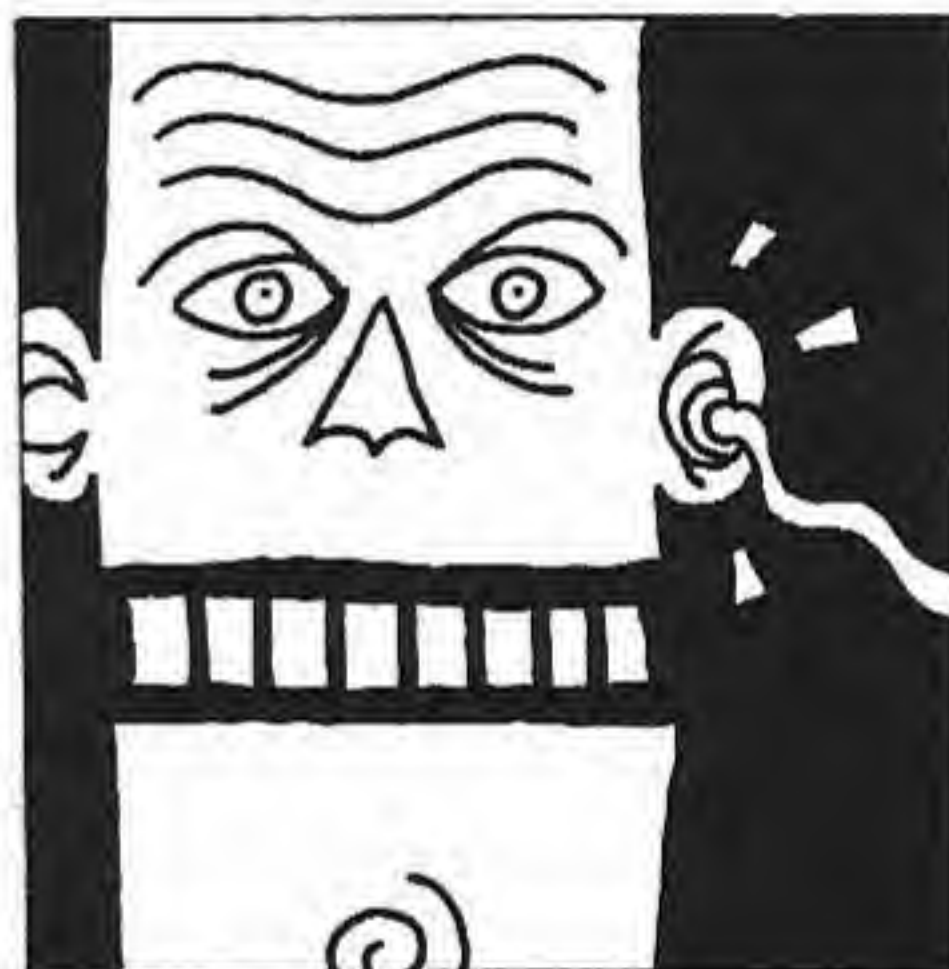
However, it is here that technology--and in particular *information* technology--can multiply your efficacy literally a hundredfold. I say "literally," because for a fraction of the effort (and virtually none of the risk) attendant to smuggling in a hundred fish, you can quite readily produce a hundred Xerox copies of fishing *instructions*. If the targeted government, like present-day America, at least permits open *discussion* of topics whose *implementation* is restricted, then that should suffice. But, if the government attempts to suppress the *flow of information* as well, then you will have to take a little more effort and perhaps write your fishing manual on a floppy disk in an encrypted form, say, or buried in an unexecuted portion of the machine language code of a computer game. The recipient can readily extract the information with his own computer (once he knows the secret), but any unwelcome tribal snoop will learn nothing.

Technology--and particularly computer technology--has often gotten an undeserved bad rap among lovers of freedom. We tend to think of 1984, or Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*, or the proximity detectors keeping East Berlin's slave/citizens on their own side of the border, or the sophisticated bugging devices Nixon used to harass those on his "enemies list." Or, we recognize that for the price of a ticket on the Concorde we can fly at twice the speed of sound, but only if we first walk thru a magnetometer run by a government policeman, and permit him to frisk us and paw thru our belongings if it beeps.

But that mind-set is a serious mistake! Before there were cattle prods, governments tortured their prisoners with clubs and rubber

hoses. Before there were lasers for eavesdropping, governments used binoculars and lip readers. Though government certainly uses tools to oppress, *the evil lies not in the tools but in the wielder of the tools*.

In fact, technology represents one of the most promising avenues available for recapturing our freedoms from those who have stolen them. By its very nature, it favors the bright (who can put it to use) over the dull (who can not). It favors the adaptable (who are quick to see the merit of the new) over the sluggish (who cling to time-tested ways). and what two better words are there to describe *any* government bureaucracy than



"dull" and "sluggish?"

One of the clearest, classic triumphs of technology over tyranny was the invention of the "Personal Weapon," the man-portable crossbow. With it, an untrained peasant could now reliably and lethally engage a target out to fifty meters--even if that target were a mounted, chain-mailed knight. (Unlike the longbow, which, admittedly was more powerful, and could get off more shots per unit time, the crossbow required no formal training to utilize. Whereas

the longbow required elaborate visual, tactile and kinesthetic coordination to achieve any degree of accuracy, the wielder of a crossbow could simply put the weapon to his shoulder, sight along the arrows shaft, and be reasonably assured of hitting his target.)

Moreover, since the only mounted

"With a five-hundred dollar computer, you can create a cipher that a multi-megabuck CRAY X-MP can't crack in a year."

knights likely to visit the average peasant would be government soldiers and tax collectors, the utility of the device was plain: With it, the common rabble could defend themselves not only against one another, but *against their governmental masters*. It was the medieval equivalent of the armor-piercing bullet, and, consequently, kings and priests (the medieval equivalent of a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Crossbows) threatened death and excommunication, respectively, for its unlawful possession.

Updating now to the present, the Personal Computer (with a public key cryptographic system running on it) represents an equivalent quantum leap--in a *defensive* weapon. Not only can such a technique be used to protect sensitive data in one's own possession, but it can also permit two strangers to exchange information over an insecure communications channel--a

wiretapped phone line, for example, or even a radio broadcast--without ever having previously met to exchange cypher keys.

With a five-hundred dollar computer, you can create a cipher that a multi-megabuck CRAY X-MP can't crack in a year. Within a couple of years, it should be economically feasible to similarly encrypt voice communications; soon after that, full-color digitized video images. *Technology will have made wiretapping obsolete!* More generally, it will have *totally demolished government control over information transfer!*

The most promising of these encryption schemes seems to be the RSA algorithm, after Rivest, Shamir and Adelman, who jointly created it. It involves some reasonably heavy mathematics (prime numbers, modulo arithmetic, the "little Fermat theorem") to formally establish, but the gist is that if one is provided with the product of two very large prime numbers, then it is computationally infeasible to derive the original two prime numbers from analysis of their product. "Computationally Unfeasible" means that if each prime number has about 200 digits, then the most powerful computer now in existence would require more than *a century* to factor their 400-digit product.

By converting one's message to a "number" (even something as simple as A=01, B=02, ... , Z=26 will do), and then performing the appropriate mathematical transformation upon it, a new number is generated which represents the encrypted message. The recipient then performs a similar transformation upon this number to re-create the original message.

What makes this a groundbreaking development, and why it is called "public-key" cryptography, is that I can *openly publish* two numerical parameters which will permit anyone to send me an encrypted message, while keeping secret a third parameter so that *no one but myself* can decrypt such a message. The previously difficult step (exchanging cypher keys in person) has been eliminated. So people who would find it impossible or inexpedient or dangerous to physically meet may still reliably exchange encrypted messages--each party having selected and disseminated his own two public parameters, while simultaneously maintaining the secret of his own third parameter.

Another benefit of this system is the notion of a "digital signature," to enable one to authenticate the source of a given message. By performing an extra encryption step involving my secret parameter--and requiring the receiver to take an extra step involving my public parameters after decrypting it--then it can be proven that the message received *could not have been sent by anyone but me!* So not only do we have reliable secure message transmission over an anonymous unsecured communication channel, *we can also positively authenticate the sender of every such message!*

Of course, these are exactly the concerns that are today tormenting the Soviet Union about the whole question of personal computers. On one hand, they recognize that American schoolchildren are *right now* growing up with computers as common as slide rules used to be--more so, in fact because there are many things computers can do which will interest (and instruct) 3-

and 4-year-olds. And it is precisely these students who *one generation hence* will be going head-to-head against their Soviet counterparts. For the Soviets to hold back must be as suicidal as continuing to teach swordsmanship while your adversaries are manufacturing rifles. On the other hand, whatever else a computer may be, it is *also* an exquisitely efficient copying machine--a 25-cent floppy disk holds upwards of 50,000 words of text, and can be copied in a couple of minutes.

If this weren't threatening enough, the computer that performs the copy can also encrypt the data in a fashion that is all but unbreakable. Remember that in the Soviet society publicly accessible Xerox machines are unknown. (The relatively few copying machines in existence are controlled more intensively than *machine guns* are in the United States.)

Today's political "conservatives" contend that we should not sell personal computers to the Soviets, because they could put them to military use. "Liberals" assert that we *should* sell them, in the interests of mutual trade and cooperation--and anyway, if we don't make the sale, there will certainly be some other nation willing to.

As a libertarian cyberpunk, I claim that we should probably give them to the Soviets for *free*, and if necessary, *make* them take them...and if that doesn't work maybe we should load up an SR-71 Blackbird and *air drop them over Moscow in the middle of the night*. Paid for by private subscription, of course, not coercive taxation...

I confess that this is not a position that has gained much support

among members of the conventional left-right political spectrum, but, after all, in the words of one of *Illuminatus's* characters, we are *political non-Euclidean's*. The shortest distance to a particular goal may not look like what most people would consider a "straight line." Breaking totalitarian governments' *monopoly on information* is tantamount to breaking the back of its ability to oppress. Computerization will enhance the freedom of every man, woman, and child on the planet--and do so without overtly or

abolish it ourselves!

Looking around us, additional applications of *technarchy* to solve what would otherwise be political problems immediately suggest themselves: The Saudi Arabian who wishes to enjoy the illegal psychoactive drug *alcohol* would be much wiser to study the chemistry of fermentation and distillation than to spend time lobbying his rulers to repeal the Islamic laws against it. The East German who would rather be a West German would be better served by studying

"As nanotechnology provides the peripherals, any thing composed of any substance will be buildable in anyone's garage..."

covertly firing a shot!

We recognize that history has been shaped by people with names like Washington, Lincoln, ... Stalin, Nixon, Marcos, Duvalier, Noriega, and the like. But we should also recognize that it has *also* been shaped by people with names like Edison, Curie, Marconi, Deforest and Wozniak. And this latter shaping has been at least as pervasive, and not nearly so bloody.

In his book *How I Found Freedom in an Unfree World*, Harry Browne makes the telling point that the probability of success in any venture is inversely proportional to the number of people who must be persuaded to bring it about. So while it may be an impossible task to persuade government to abolish the practice of censorship and wiretapping, *it is a trivial task to employ encryption technology to*

the aerodynamics of hang-gliders or balloons than by wishing or begging for an exit visa.

Not for nothing was the Wild West's .45 revolver called "the equalizer." It enabled the most petite dance-hall girl to defend herself against the burliest rough-neck cowboy. (Some say the "gun control" movement was born when it was realized that it also allowed her to repel aggression by the government-armed sheriff, but that's another story.) The personal computer is today's equalizer in terms of *information and idea processing*, not brute force.

As nanotechnology provides the peripherals, any thing composed of any substance will be buildable *in anyone's garage* once the thing and the substance have been modeled mathematically. As a result, governments will no longer be able to outlaw things or sub-

CROSSBOWS... (continued from page 15)

stances--and will be forced back into the only legitimate role they ever held: that of protecting citizens against others who aggress against them. *The tiger will be caged, for good and all!*

Consequently, the next time you gape in astonishment and outrage at the antics of those who claim to be your "leaders," and think, "Well, if 51% of this nation, and 51% of this state, and 51% of this city have to wise up before I'll be free, then somebody might as well cut my fucking throat now, and put me out of my misery!"--recognize that *the situation is not nearly that bleak*. Technology--and particularly computer technology--can help you to *unilaterally make yourself free!*

WEIRDMAIL... (continued from page 9)

receive copies of Factsheet Five, and for the next couple of days, their world is turned upside down. As they pour over hundreds of 'zine, book and tape reviews, the mail-freaks forget to eat, they call in sick from work, they ignore their spouses. I love this 'zine. There's one heck of a lot of creative people churning out some wonderful 'zines, comics, music tapes, and poetry, and Factsheet Five is the world's access center for addresses and information. Send for a copy and expand your consciousness!

TRAJECTORIES (\$20/4 issues, The Permanent Press, P.O. Box 700305 San Jose, CA 95170) Robert Anton Wilson has his own newsletter that he puts out with the help of his wife and a few other friends. Each issue features an original article by RAW, and several articles about RAWish-type stuff. A

well designed and educational 'zine, if you like BOING-BOING, you will like TRAJECTORIES.

EXTROPY (\$6/4 issues, T. Bell & M. O'Conner, 1129 West 30th Street #8 Los Angeles, CA 90007) Rounding off the list of six 'zines reviewed in this column (five from California and one from New York!), comes EXTROPY (the opposite of entropy), a mighty nifty little newsletter with a strong science-fiction/ libertarian/ cyberpunk bent. EXTROPY claims to be the vaccine for future shock. The first issue is mostly an introduction to the subjects that will be presented in future issues: artificial intelligence, cognitive science, neuroscience, intelligence-increase technologies, life extension, cryonics, biostasis, nanotechnology, spontaneous orders, psychochemicals, extropic psychology, (a)morality, mindfucking, space colonization, economics, politics, memetics and aesthetics. And they do a pretty good job of explaining it all in twenty-two pages.

RAW... (continued from page 5)

Five guy, had a part in High Weirdness in the Mail. Have you met Ivan Stang?

RAW: Several times. He appointed me a Pope, so now I'm a Pope twice, a Discordian Pope and a SubGenius Pope. That's not bad, especially since that old queen in the Vatican thinks he's the only one.

BB: Do you think that your writings were the inspiration for the Church of the SubGenius?

RAW: You know that's a funny thing. I didn't think that when I first saw their stuff. I thought I might

have been a minor influence, but later on Ivan told me that I had been a major influence.

Arlen: He's the "Bob" part of J.R. "Bob" Dobbs.

BB: (Laughs) I've wondered about that before!

RAW: Getting back to COINTELPRO, I was involved in the peace movement at that time. I later learned at the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago they had 5000 agents provocateurs. And they wanted everybody in the peace movement to know that they were infiltrating them in order to spread paranoia within the group. Everybody suspected everybody else of being a government agent. It happened in the Leary defense committee too; everybody in the committee thought everybody else was a narc. I'm sure Allen Ginsburg suspected me at one point. But now he's very friendly to me; I saw him recently in Boulder, Colorado.

BB: Not only did COINTELPRO destroy groups from the inside, it manipulated the public into demanding police state tactics to quash the peace movement.

RAW: Yes. Was the Weather Underground really that crazy? Or was the Weather Underground just another CIA operation? I often wonder. You can't be sure, that's the whole point. Once they start a game like that you're never sure how many are real crazies and how many are government agents.

BB: Sounds like your game, Conspiracy.

RAW: Well, I think it's probably what inspired my novels and the game. I learned to live with that without getting paranoid.

Modern Beastiality

R.R. GOODWIN '88





reviewed by Dr Fredric Wertham

Don't let your teacher catch you reading this trash!

LOVE & ROCKETS (\$2.25 + .75 from Fantagraphics Books, Inc. 1800 Bridgegate St. #101, Westlake Village, CA 91361) Currently experiencing itself as issue #29, Love & Rockets is a large-format black & white comic that comes out once every two months or so. You'll have to read this L&R from the first issue on up to really enjoy the completeness and verity of the Love and Rockets world. Gilbert and Jaime Hernandez, the young creators of L&R, have invented a universe full of people who come to life when you open the pages of an issue and begin reading. It's almost eerie how real the characters are, Maggie and Hopie and Luba. How can these two

guys write about the lives of women in a way that seems so real? Were they once women themselves? Take it from me, a person who's wasted an average of an hour a day for 15 years reading comics, the people who live between the covers of this mag are more alive than any other characters I've ever come across in comics. Although issue number one commands as much as \$100 in collectors shops, fortunately, Fantagraphics has decided to reprint this enormously popular comic book's past issues in a bunch of different formats. You can buy *Mechanics*, which is a three issue-mini series reprinting a long story from the second issue of Love & Rockets for about three bucks and you can get it at any comic book specialty store.

They are available in the US edition or the British edition (they differ from one another slightly) and contain several stories from various issues of L&R. They cost around twelve dollars each, paperback. Or, you can buy Love & Rockets Books One, Two, and Three, which reprint issues one through six. This is the way I'd go. They cost \$9.95 each, and feature the original covers (in color) reprinted inside the books.

NEAT STUFF (2.25 + .75 from Fantagraphics Books, same address as Love & Rockets) Peter Bagge is responsible for this sardonic look at adolescent living. I think of a very warped version of Leave it to Beaver when I read the antics of the Bradley family. The parents fight like crazy with the kids. The kids almost kill each other while the parents are at work, and then quickly make vows of secrecy pacts after destroying the house and they can hear their mother pulling into the driveway. Bagge also writes one shot stories lampooning a variety of subjects. *The Rise and Fall of Zoove Groover*, chronicling the career history of a rock and roll star in a documentary format, captures the truth better than reality. Zoove starts out in 1962 as an Elvis Presley type hepcat with a string of 87 consecutive hit singles. In 1968, Zoove goes psychedelic and he puts pictures of himself meditating on his album covers. Later he moves into the wilderness and calls himself Mahtaguru, putting out an album called *Air, Water, and Dirt, an Ode to Nature*. After a period of silence, Zoove is arrested in Jerkwater, Colorado on a num-

ber of charges such as disturbing the peace, the random slaughter of neighboring rancher's livestock, bigamy, tax evasion, and growing marijuana with the intent to sell. He's found to be insane and sentenced to a mental institution for several years. Upon his release, Zoove Groover becomes a Born-



Again Christian rock & roller and spreads his message of faith via MTV videos. You can get issues 1-9 from comic book stores for two to three dollars each. What a deal!

WATCHMEN (\$1.50. DC Comics Inc, 666 Fifth Ave, New York, NY 10103) Watchmen was a twelve-issue mini-series that came out in 1986-87 but has been reprinted in a 300 page-plus book also titled Watchmen. Go for the book, it has a great cover and it's nice to have the whole story in one volume for convenience. Study every panel of this superbcomic book. Nothing is trivial here. In my opinion, Watchmen reaches as high a literary watermark as a superhero based

comic book can. The story was written by Alan Moore, an Englishman who established his career in the United States with Swamp Thing. The artwork by Dave Gibbons is very tight and consistent. Look at every drawing very closely and you will discover an underlying richness, creating a powerful gestalt that sends the reader into another dimension. I won't attempt to describe the plot. You'll have to get it and read it to see what I'm ranting about.

DOLL (\$2.00. Rip Off Press Inc, P.O. Box 4686, Auburn, CA 95604) Guy Colwell, the creator of the 1970's underground comic book Inner City Romance, has started drawing comics again after a ten-year hiatus. And he's in top form with Doll, both with drawing and his writing. Doll is about a fellow named Evergood Crepspok who looks a lot like the Elephant Man. Evergood has never had a girlfriend or even kissed a woman before, because his physical features repel other people. But Evergood is very horny. So he hires a sculptor to help him create a lifelike rubber sex-doll to satisfy his carnal urges. The artist assembles a staff of specialists to help in the creation of Doll: an engineer, an anatomist, a gynecologist, a cosmetologist, a crash-test dummy designer, and others. The first issue has somewhat of a cliffhanger ending, and I'm looking forward to number two.

ロツテガム ブラックブラック

★★★ **BLACK BLACK** ★★★

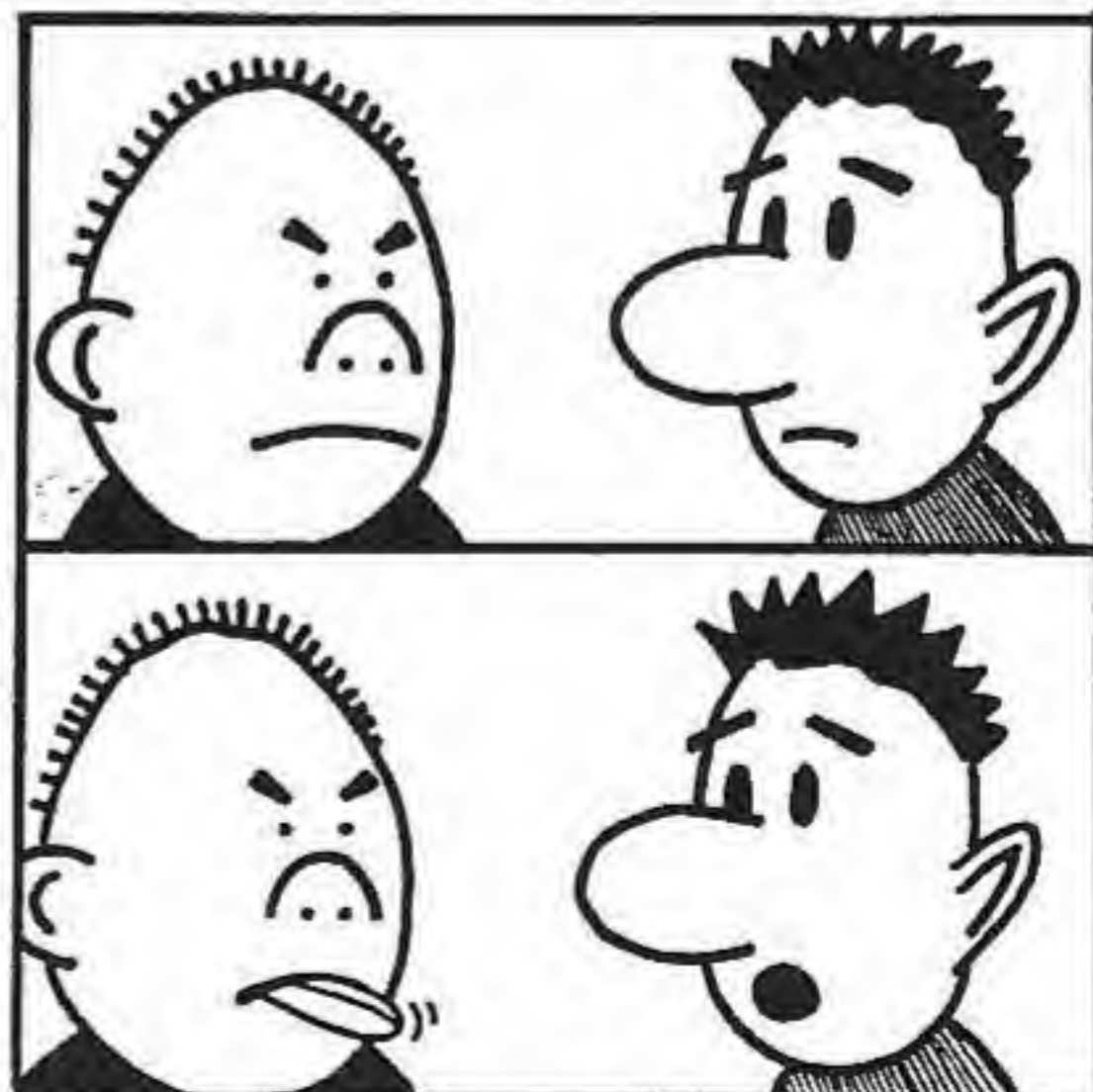
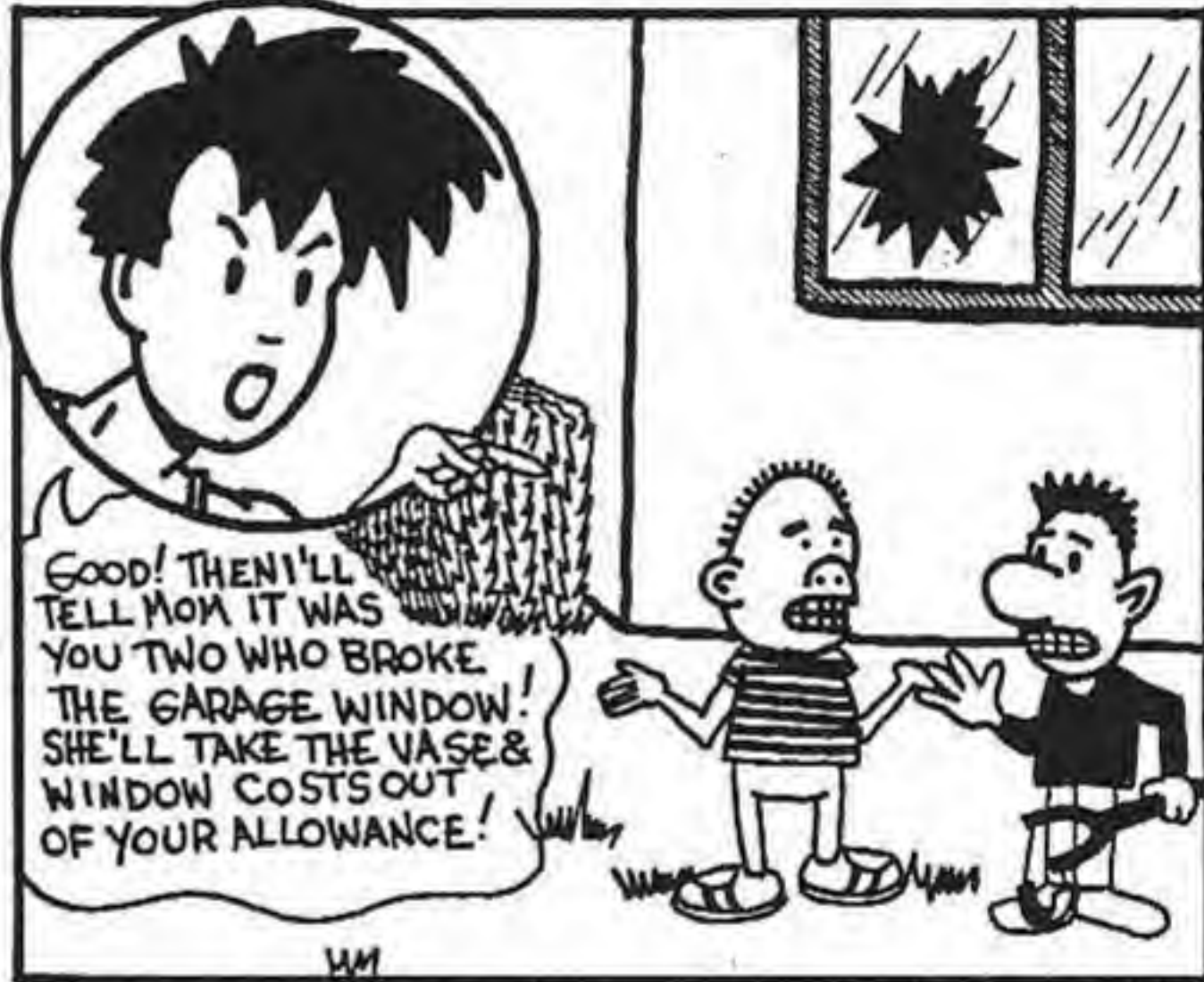
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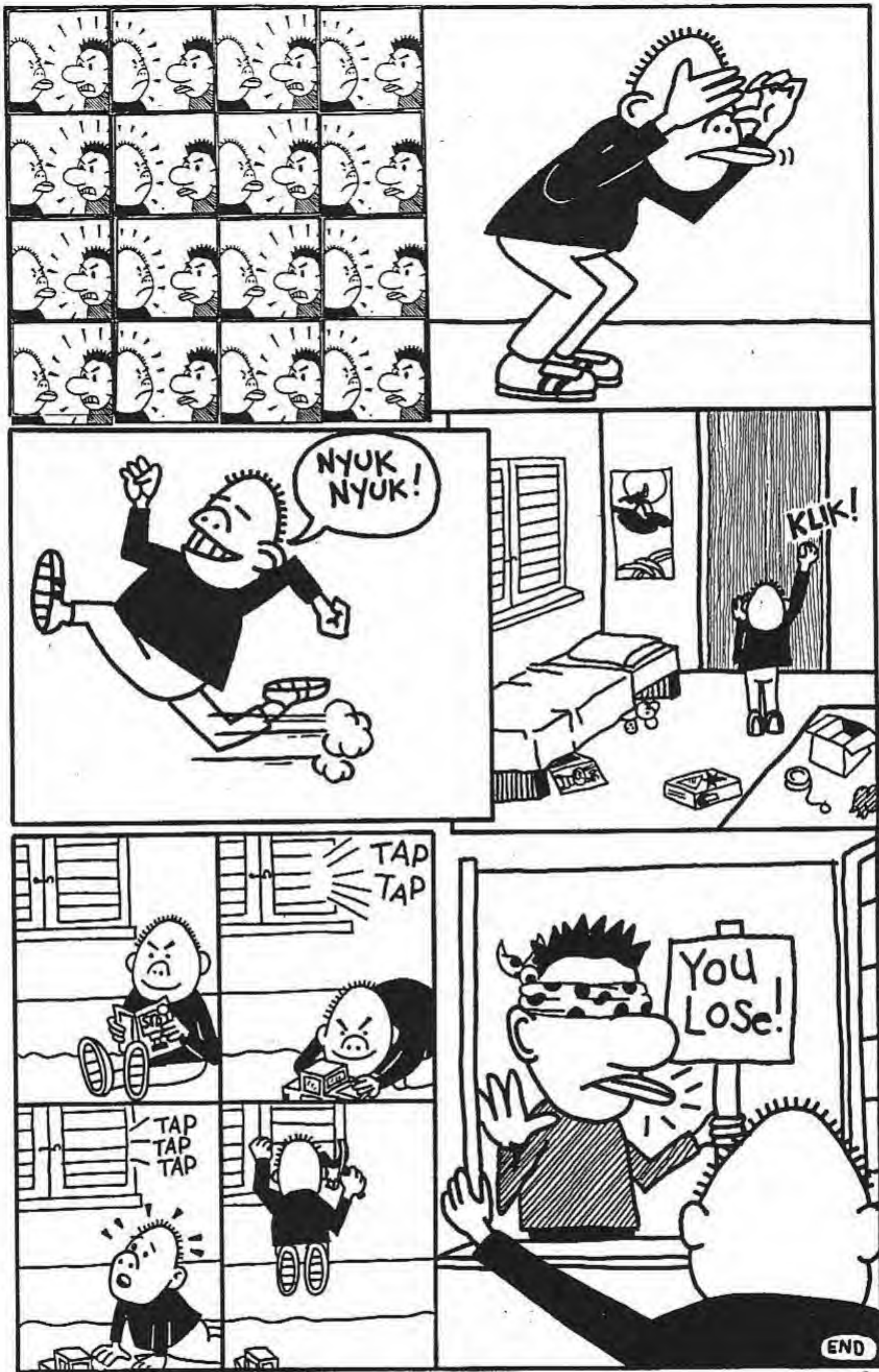
ALL-TRUE SIBLING RIVALRY

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slipping out of your skin



by Anonymous Borsh

Waking up inside a dream, yet remaining fast asleep is known as lucid dreaming. Most people have experienced lucid dreams in their weakest form- they suddenly realize they're having a nightmare and force themselves to wake up in order to escape. But lucid dreams can offer much more than that.

Stephen LaBerge, Ph.D., from the Stanford University Sleep Research Center, has invented the word *oneironaut* (composed of Greek root words meaning "explorer of the inner world of dreams") to describe people who train themselves to wake up inside their dreams, create their dream environments, and control their dreams' course of action. For even a novice oneironaut, the experience of a lucid dream can be spectacular, with vividness and clarity far exceeding that of normal waking experience. I bought LaBerge's book *Lucid*

Dreaming (1986, Ballantine Books) a few months ago and I began to have lucid dreams as soon as I started reading it. I recommend it as an excellent lucid dream catalyst.

I never would have believed that they could be so detailed and rich, had I not experienced these lucid dreams myself. The sense of wonder and control I feel in my lucid dreams carry over into waking reality, and I now look at things differently (especially if I've had a L.D. the night before) and I question whether the reality of my dreams is any less valid or meaningful than the reality of my waking state. In fact, during a lucid dream, I am more aware of myself than I am 90% of the time during the day! From my nocturnal experiments I've discovered that I need to practice my "lucid waking!"

Sensory function such as sight, taste, & smell all work wonderfully in the lucid dream. I ate a terrific spaghetti dinner not long ago while sound asleep, yet not one calorie did I consume. I've run my hand across stucco walls while floating outside twenty feet above the ground next to my apartment building. I've stood on alien planets, feeling cool rain drip on my face, and dove a thousand feet into a cold pool of water!

Attempting to read in a lucid dream is difficult, though, a phenomenon many lucid dreamers report. If I look at a book cover or a letter, I can

usually read it, but if I stare too hard, the characters on the page always squiggle up and look like spiders or Viking runes. This quirk provides me with a way to induce a lucid dream. Sometimes while dreaming, I'll wonder if I'm awake or dreaming. (It's hard to tell!) I look around and talk to people and feel my face and look in the mirror, but there isn't any way to determine whether I'm dreaming or not. Since I usually begin my lucid adventure by diving out my bedroom window and sailing through the skies, I want to be quite certain that I am dreaming before I leap! That's where the reading test comes in handy. I'll look hard at a page of text for a while, and when it looks like animated Chinese characters, I jump out the window. LaBerge gives other methods in his book for inducing lucid dreams. During the day, you should periodically ask yourself if you are dreaming or not. This will get you in the habit of asking the same question while you're asleep. A friend of mine came up with the idea of setting his digital watch chime to beep hourly, and to pop the reality question every time it goes off. I've tried this method with good results. After you ask yourself, you should try to read something or jump in the air to feel the pull of gravity. Another way to bring on lucid dreams is to imagine yourself back in a dream from which you just woke up, but pretend you're lucid in the dream. When you

fall asleep and begin dreaming again, you just might have a L.D.!

Recently, dream researchers and entrepreneurs have been making electronic devices that help trigger L.D.'s. (If any *Boing-Boing* readers have experimented with equipment like this, please write in with your experiences. - ed.) Most feature pair of goggles wired with light-emitting diodes that are worn while sleeping. An infrared beam detects when the sleeper is experiencing REM. This causes the light-emitting diodes inside the goggles to blink on and off, thus reminding the sleeper that she is dreaming.

So the next time anybody hassles you for sleeping until noon every day, tell them you are conducting important scientific research!

BOOKS RECEIVED, PENDING REVIEW

by Steve Posner

Yes, Dear...: The Wimpy Husband in American Culture, by Silas Entenmann. Stickleback Press. A look at the development of a modern American archetype, seen through the eyes of one. 430 pages, hardcover.

Just Say Nyet: The War on Drugs in the Soviet Union, by Len Kiev. Smelt & Sons Press. An examination of the drug problem in the Soviet Union and how the government is dealing with it, with comparisons to similar phenomenon here. The author has been a political prisoner in Siberia for over 20 years. 89 pages.

Oh, Xanthan Gum! by Etiwanda Ebersole. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich. The author, considered the dean of modern food science, details the exciting and suspenseful race to develop what is now one of the most popular thickeners used in the snack food industry. 1,031 pages.

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Jack Dean. We are amazed that he lost the election.

JACK DEAN: So what do you know about the Libertarian Party?

BOING BOING: I've been interested in it for several years. I was introduced to it by reading Science Fiction by L. Neil Smith.

JD: Sure I think Science Fiction is a natural lead-in.

BB: And Ayn Rand was an influence as well, although I'm not an Objectivist by any means.

JD: Neither am I; I find a lot of her stuff rather ponderous. She had some good thoughts and had a major impact on this whole generation.

BB: How do Ayn Rand and Libertarianism correlate?

JD: Ayn Rand was never really excited about being called a Libertarian; she wasn't too fond of the Libertarian party. But basically she preached the Libertarian philosophy: You shouldn't sacrifice yourself for the good of others. Just by being yourself and acting in your own best interests will benefit everyone else. No one should be particularly forced to sacrifice themselves. But the state forces you to do it, religions preach that you should do it, that you're going to be a good person and go to heaven. There's a whole bunch of different aspects to it. Objectivists are very much opposed to any kind of coercion like that; they're interested in mental or psychologi-

The Libertarians are the third largest political party in the U.S.A. But they're number one when it comes to letting folks have fun. Whereas the Republicans and the Demopublicans are determined to prescribe strict codes of behavior and enforce them with Spanish Inquisition-style punishments, the Libertarians vigorously defend our right to live life however we may choose, as long as we do not interfere with another's right to live as they choose. This interview took place on 16 August 1988 with Jack Dean, the 1988 California Libertarian candidate for the U.S. Senate.

a **BOING-BOING** interview

cal coercion, whereas I think Libertarians are interested in eliminating all forms of coercion.

BB: Such as eliminating government intervention in an individual's life.

JD: Right. The government should be there to protect, not to coerce or to subjugate.

BB: How much government do you think is really necessary?

JD: I don't know, that's one of those questions I used to ask when I first got involved in this about ten years ago. We'd like to stay up late at night discussing those kinds of things, but I haven't given it much thought anymore because we're so far from anything I'd like to see that it's almost like asking questions about "how many angels can dance on the head of a pin?" I say the less government the better, and if we reach the point where we about to achieve all our objectives then an anarchist society would be possible; we would indeed end up with no government.

BB: Do you think that's possible, to just have anarchy?

JD: Sure.

BB: Do you think that would work?

JD: It depends on what you mean by anarchy of course. The politicians define anarchy as being chaos, but it's not that at all. Anarchy is just a lack of govern-

ment. I mean you have anarchy generally in a home owners association, where the agreements are entered into voluntarily and people handle getting the lawn mowed and getting the streets paved, the street lights, and things like that. It's done through a voluntary association. They do elect people usually to represent them, but ultimately that's what you have because there is no coercive power, it's a voluntary arrangement.

BB: How many states have the Libertarian Party on their ballot?

JD: Right now about 47. We weren't able to do it in West Virginia, North Carolina; in Indiana they changed the law and didn't tell anybody about it, so we ended up with only one congressional candidate there and we won't get our presidential candidate. I think we may be going to court there because they did it obviously with the goal to trick us. In many states you can't register as anything other than a Republican or a Democrat or a "decline to state." Some states make it impossible for a third party to permanently qualify. You have to keep requalifying every time.

BB: How did you get involved in the Libertarian Party?

JD: In 1970 I was in Orange County. I was getting fed up with government interference and there was some red tape I had to go through at one time with the state of California and I finally just had it up to my ears. I started looking around-

BB: Were you a Democrat before?

JD: I really wasn't much of anything. I guess you could say that I was, coming from Massachusetts

and Connecticut, so my leanings were more liberal. I had been a registered Democrat at one point. But I started looking around and just before the election in '76 I watched Jimmy Carter for a half an hour walking around his peanut farm, and Gerry Ford for a half an hour sitting with his family around the fireplace, and listened for a half an hour to Lyndon LaRouche rant and rave and still didn't know what the guy had said. Then when Roger McBride came on for five minutes before the news, I listened and he made more sense in five minutes than those other guys made in an hour and a half. So I called the next day and found the Libertarian Party.

BB: Do you think you'll get more votes this year than in the past?

JD: That's hard to tell. A lot will depend on the last two months, what kind of breaks we get. So much of our time and energy and money goes just into getting our candidate on the ballot in all the states that there's not a lot left that we can throw into advertising. It would be nice to get lots of votes and indeed if people get really bored and decide they don't like either of the candidates, they're going to look for an alternative. And if the press would help a little bit that would be good.

BB: A lot of people just don't know anything about it. When Ed Clark was running for president in 1980, it seems that the Libertarian party was much more well known than it is today.

JD: The difference was that for the Clark campaign there was five times as much money. In that particular campaign the vice presidential candidate was a multimillionaire and put in two million

dollars of his own money. It definitely made a difference.

BB: Have you thought of any alternative methods of getting the word out such as computer bulletin boards, and the underground network of hackers?

JD: We have people using computers. There are several bulletin boards around that we use. There's one in San Jose that gets a couple of hundred inquiries a month. But again that's pretty limited, and most computer people don't talk a lot to other people. It's sort of a secret society, most other people don't know very much about it. I don't see too many folks coming down saying, "Hey look what I read on the bulletin board!" It just never happens. I'm not too sure what they do with the information; I guess they stay up late at nights reading it and then store it away in their minds.

BB: They archive it. Have Libertarians ever been elected to an office?

JD: In Alaska we've had two or three legislators who were elected. In fact one of them is now running for vice-president. What they discovered in Alaska is that all the legislators who were afraid to express particular points of view would come to him knowing that "you're a Libertarian; you could introduce this and nobody would criticize you, because this is something I'd like to do but my constituents would be upset and I might not get re-elected." So they ended up calling him the conscience of the Alaskan legislature because he helped to lead the fight to repeal the state income tax; a whole bunch of things that were very individual-liberty oriented.

BB: Was he able to get re-elected?

JD: No. What usually happens is that the Republican and the Democrat will figure out a way to gang up on the Libertarian and paint him to be some kind of ogre or an uncaring, unfeeling individual. Kind of like what Jerry Fallwell's doing to Michael Dukakis right now, not that I'm a Dukakis fan coming from Massachusetts, but this comic book he's putting out, you know, that has pictures of Dukakis dressing in woman's clothing, having sex with animals-

BB: I haven't heard about that!

JD: Oh it's just a wonderful thing.

BB: Is Fallwell actually promoting this book with his blessing?

JD: I think his son produced the book. I was kind of startled because I knew that he'd sued Hustler magazine about this kind of thing and ultimately lost.

BB: Oh yeah, the comic they did about Fallwell's mother losing her virginity in an outhouse.

JD: Once he discovered what the rules were, that this is how the game worked, he decided he'd been playing it wrong and now he's going to play it the way the other guys played. Well gee, that's sort of an Old Testament attitude about it - an eye for an eye. That is somehow the way people view Libertarians, as if we're advocating all kinds of perverted approaches to life; that we'd let anybody do anything they wanted to, which is not the case. Basically we advocate your right to do what you want to do, as long as it doesn't bother me and doesn't hurt or defraud anybody.

BB: How did Libertarians get elected in Alaska in the first place?

JD: For one thing, there are a lot

fewer people living in Alaska compared to other states, so with just a couple of thousand votes you can win a seat in the legislature with the small districts that they have up there. They're small numbers-wise but large geographically. They're also more individualistic up there and more accepting of the Libertarian philosophy.

BB: Were the Libertarians responsible for the legalization of marijuana in Alaska? (The Alaskan Supreme court ruled in 1975 that the constitutional right to privacy allowed one to possess any amount of marijuana in one's home and up to one ounce in public.)

JD: I don't know to be honest. They may have been involved. I'm sure they were probably supportive if they weren't instrumental.

BB: Currently, the government is raging about drugs. It has reached McCarthyesque proportions. I know the Libertarian party favors freedom of choice concerning drugs and drug use. Are you downplaying the issue this time as compared to more tolerant election years?

JD: No, I think it's great. It's perfect timing. A lot of it will depend on what we can do in the next couple of months before the election. We really haven't gotten into the campaign yet. I did a kickoff talk the other night. I started out by saying "I think America is a great Country. We want all the same things that other Americans want. Good jobs, we want nice homes, we want good education for our children, we want to stop all these problems that are created by drugs." I could have probably given the same speech Mike Dukakis gave, except that the program I would have proposed would have been radi-

cally different from what he had in the back of his mind. As far as drugs go, it's a good issue because it's really related to a number of side issues. It gets into the areas of your civil liberties, the right to privacy, privacy of your home, privacy of your car, financial privacy. AIDS is a parallel issue. I'm for legalizing syringes. Anybody ought to be able to go into a store and buy them. I know that one of the reasons that they are illegal is that people are afraid you're going to buy them to take drugs. Well of course! What else, unless you happen to like vodka in your oranges or something. But that aspect of drug suppression is helping to spread AIDS. Then you get into the crime question. What about all those violent crimes against person and property. What about the purse snatchings, the muggings and the robberies? If you legalize drugs, people don't have to steal anymore, and you're going to cut down on the number of repeat criminals who continually rob and steal, the ones who are creating the problem. It's not as though there are a whole bunch of new people doing all this stuff. It's a small group of people who are doing it. I look at this as a great opportunity to express that position and this year it's being looked at as a serious potential solution.

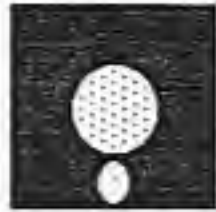
BB: A lot of influential people have endorsed the Libertarian position on drugs, such as William F. Buckley.

JD: Milton Friedman has been advocating it for years. About two months ago, time magazine published a fourteen page story about the legalization of drugs. That same week, Newsweek had a section on it. Right around that

continued on page 31

SOFTWARE

reviews by Bill Grates & Steven Gobs



The brain is an information-craving organ. It will eat and digest data at a breakneck pace, provided the data is presented in a manner appetizing to the nervous system. One way to accelerate brain functioning is through the use of a computer and the appropriate programs. Instead of wasting your valuable meatware on sifting and sorting lists of numbers, why not let an uncomplaining robot slave brain do the dirty work and present you with a visual or auditory interpretation of the raw data fed to it?

Here at Boing-Boing, we are mainly concerned with one thing: having fun. The flotilla of computers in our HEADquarters provide us with a whole lot of fun. They make the usually more gruesome aspects of running an organization quite entertaining by eliminating the drudgery of repetitive grunt work.

Presented below are a few software items worth checking out.

SENTINEL WORLDS (\$50 Electronic Arts, PO Box 7578, San Mateo, CA 94403-7578) This is a game, not a productivity tool. You are the leader of a team of trained spacepeople who have been hired to seek out and destroy an unidentified evil enemy that has been attacking grain carrying cargo ships. In the course of your adventures, you will explore planets, encounter aliens and humans, investigate undersea caverns, and settle tribal disputes.

The graphical user interface of Sentinel Worlds is superb, offering a multi-window system to present information about the adventure in different formats. The "photos" of the characters and other beings encountered in the game are exciting and clever. For the IBM, an EGA monitor is recommended.

Many games of this ilk turn into unimaginative hack and slash fests. Sentinel Worlds avoids this problem; it plays more like a detective story.

Be prepared to invest a good deal of time with this game if you intend to solve it- at least a month if you play it an hour or so every day. For the lazy, a cluebook is available for \$12.95.

This game, in my opinion, represents the latest in game technology for IBM-based computers. Get it (*it is not copy protected*) now and start having fun!

BLACK MAGIC (SHAREWARE One source \$9.00 + \$3.00 postage, Best Bits & Bytes, P.O. Box 8245, Van Nuys, CA 91409 (818) 764-9503) Black Magic is a hypertext word processor for IBM-based computers. This sophisticated mouse-compatible, menu-driven program is perfect for designing on-line tutorials, instruction manuals, multi-level novels, trouble-shooting guides, etc. Maybe a special issue of BOING-BOING will be prepared on Black Magic one day.

Black Magic can incorporate both text and graphics (created on any standard painting or drawing program). Information can be linked in three ways internally within the same document and can also link to other DOS applications. The three-disk package includes three examples of hypertext documents to give the user an idea what Black Magic can do.

At \$9.00, the price can't be beat. Keep in mind, however, that this is shareware, and upright citizens who use shareware always pay the registration fee.

PUBLISH-IT! (\$295.00 from Timeworks) Publish-It! was used to lay out BOING-BOING, and I hardly had to read the boring manual that came with it. Publish-It! (isn't that a stupid name; say it out loud for a scatological pun) runs under the GEM desktop user-interface (as does the more expensive VENTURA PUBLISHER), which is a lot like Microsoft Windows. While not as powerful as Ventura Publisher, or Aldus Pagemaker, Publish-It! is a whole lot cheaper (you can buy it for around \$140.00 mail order), and just as useful for producing most documents that aren't too terribly complicated (such as BOING-BOING).

Publish-It! makes use of the grid-system for layout, in which rectangles are drawn over columns, and text and graphics are "poured" into these areas. The program will accept text documents created on most major word-processors and can incorporate graphics created on all the standard graphics packages. You can also create your own drawings from within Publish-It! with the bare-bones drawing tools included. Kerning and line-leading are features that come in handy under certain circumstances, as well as word-count, find, and global search-and-replace.

If you want to create your own 'zine on your computer, but you refuse to shackle out big bucks for Ventura or Aldus, and the idea of using a crippled "toy" program like First Publisher makes you shudder, Publish-It! is a mighty fine product to acquire

time there was a five minute segment about it on the CBS evening news where Dan Rather interviewed a couple of people discussing that issue. And on Nightline they've done one or two shows devoted to the issue. The Mayor of Baltimore is favoring it. They're favoring it on practical grounds, which is fine by me because it's a start. The Libertarians favor it on moral grounds. In other words, the government has no right telling me what I can stick in my body. If I want to put a needle in or pop a pill or kill myself, that's my choice. Nobody has the right to tell you what to do, morally. But if people want to look at it from a practical perspective, you can make a very good case for legalizing it that way too. One of the biggest reasons for keeping it illegal, is immigration. They want to stop immigration. I talked to an immigration officer and he told me that huge amounts of drugs were being smuggled, by "wetbacks" across the border. I don't know if you've done any reading about it or have seen it on television, but they usually come across carrying only these little knapsacks, if that. If they're bringing drugs in, it's only going to be enough for one smoke or a couple of pills. I think they're

using this as a kind of scare tactic.

BB: It also keeps the budgets up for the drug enforcement bureaucrats.

JD: Sure. They get battering rams, helicopters, submachine guns, SWAT teams. All the undercover teams getting these huge budgets.

BB: Ad it's a great way for the government to generate additional income by confiscating the property of suspected drug users and dealers.

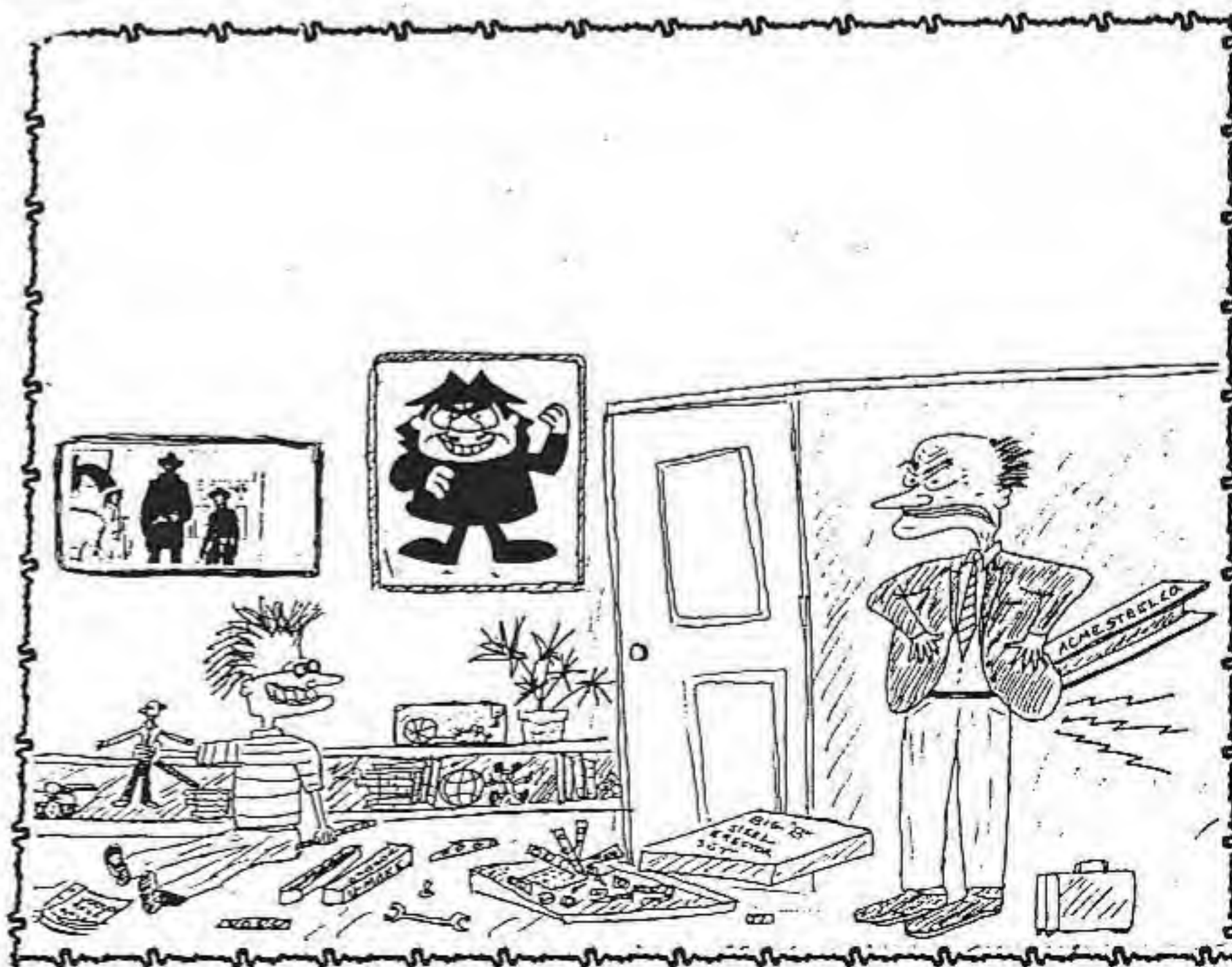
JD: Now they're into the bounty system. They get a cut of everything they can confiscate. They can sell your car, sell your home. Really, to me, it's Un-American. The Miami police force just had a ton of people that were indicted for smuggling drugs and helping out in drug operations and getting payoffs. It's really sad because I think you ought to be able to trust your police force.

BB: What are your feelings about international trade?

JD: Basically the cornerstone of my campaign revolves around free trade, eliminating tariffs, and eliminating government barriers to business. One of the areas government has found difficult to regulate

is the computer industry. If you look at things like digital watches, and pocket calculators; a few years back an HP pocket calculator cost five hundred dollars. They've managed to improve the miniaturization of these things to the point where this watch I'm wearing costs twelve dollars. And it's great, I love it. I'm in marketing and I recently saw an ad where you can get a digital watch with your company's logo on it for a dollar thirty-five in lots of a thousand! Had the government figured out a way somehow to tax these, or to figure a way to somehow increase the tax for smaller and smaller watches, we wouldn't see these watches. And that's the problem we have with - take anything, transportation, for example. One of the reasons we have problems is not because we have more people; it's because we have the government running transportation. Look at the subway they're building. Talk about pouring your money into a hole in the ground. But some people think that the money for the subway is free because it's coming from a federal grant! It brings to mind that quote: "The state is that fictitious entity whereby everyone expects to live at the expense of everyone else."

As a youngster, Keuoac experimented with Haitian voodoo. The results were pleasing as Father came home one evening with a steel beam stuck up his ass



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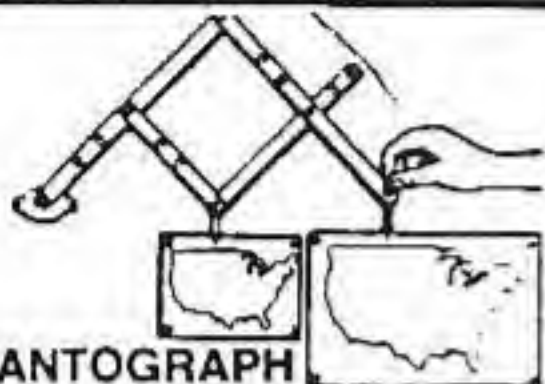
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EXCITING

News

Now that fusion is all the rage we can all expect to stop working one day. Food, space stations, and air conditioning will be available at no charge to anyone for the asking. Just fill out request slip J90789-KJg0 and send it to the Department of Fusion Control, Washington, D.C. and be prepared to wait between six to eight decades before your request is honored. All requestors are subject to urine testing, and must sign a form consenting to perpetual hassling from the IRS, the CIA, and the FBI. The Boing-Boing board of directors want to extend a hearty handshake to our friendly government servants for this act of kindness!

How much energy does the human brain produce? We at Boing-Boing asked ourselves that question recently and decided to test it out in the field. For our experiment, we randomly selected individuals found strolling down the sidewalk in front of Boing Boing Headquarters. After asking the obliging folks to follow us into a secluded blind alley, we pushed the plugs of various electrical appliances through their craniums. By using a toaster powered by the brain of a delicatessen owner recently immigrated from Yugoslavia, we were able to toast two slices of bread in under a minute! As a bonus, his dachshund's brain provided the current to

run our video camera so that we could capture the moment on tape. Bandages were applied after the test and it appeared that neither man nor beast suffered much blood loss. A young woman became so nervous when she discovered what we were going to do to her that when we plugged a microwave oven into her head, the oven's door blew off. The electromagnetic radiation emanating from the oven was powerful enough to burn out a nearby police officer's radar detector. Drivers noticed the officer's dilemma and took advantage of the situation by driving very fast, causing several nasty traffic accidents. Shortly afterwards, we were approached by a score of lawyers representing people who claimed that we caused them pain and suffering. We plugged carrot juicers into the lawyers' brains and fled, setting up headquarters here in a geosynchronous LaGrange Point orbit. The experiment has been temporarily postponed, but will resume shortly when we attempt to harness the total wattage produced by Danforth Quayle's nervous system in order to make a light emitting diode glow for a picosecond.

Psychologists at Rice University in Texas have been studying a group of subjects that will not cooperate with them. They have been categorized as "bad folks" by Simon Firsik, Dean of Psychology at Rice. "These people are good for nothing, which makes them both fascinating and bothersome at the same time," says Firsik. "Initially we sent out invitations to several hundred people, asking them if they'd be interested in participating in a study of people who didn't like to participate in psychological studies. Then we secured a government

document giving us the power to break into the houses of those subjects most reluctant to participate in the study, and bring them here to Rice. And let me tell you, I find most of the people to be extremely repugnant. They are upset and angry most of the time, and we've had to chain many of them to their cots." The experiment is expected to continue for the next twelve years. The houses belonging to the test subjects have been auctioned and the proceeds will go toward funding the study. The editorial staff at Boing-Boing would like to commend the psychology department at Rice for putting up with such a detestable group of creeps.

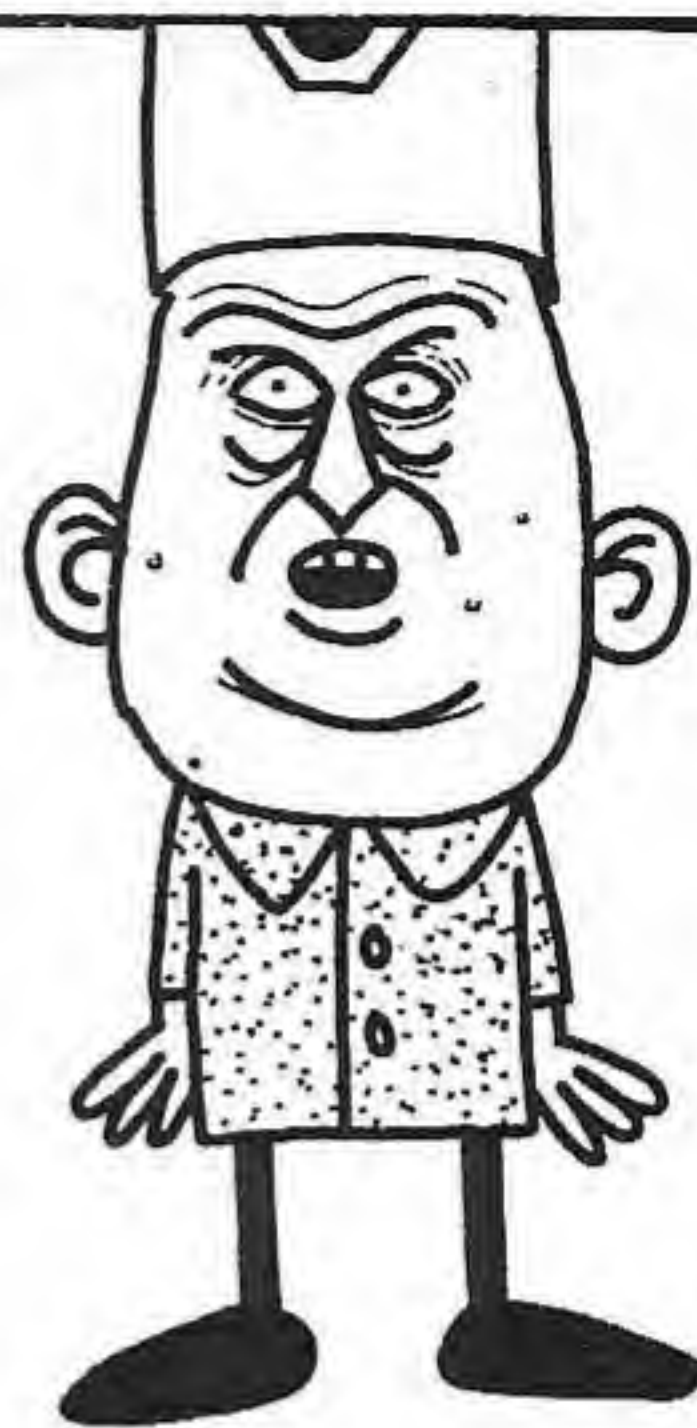
The art world has been turned on its ear once again. Eighteen year old Gorbaine Pfumtzt, of Canoga Park, California has been painting pictures of singing dogs and circus clowns that are selling like hot cakes at Salvation Armies and Goodwill thrift stores. While she was still in high school, precocious Gorbaine realized that many people buy paintings of rusted Model T's with flowers coming out of the radiator cap, only to get rid of them a short while later when their college-educated children come home for the summer and sneer at them. The majority of these paintings end up at second-hand stores. "So I thought to myself," says the spiky haired painter, "why not eliminate the middleman and sell straight to the Disabled American Veterans stores? We got this commission deal going and it works real well for the both of us." Indeed it does. Gorbaine and the thrift stores are making previously unheard of amounts of money from the sale of her work. Her most recent piece, "Kitty Stuck in a Length of Unraveled Yarn," sold for \$350,000 last month at a Culver City Goodwill. The established art community has taken notice. Several famous artists, including David Hockney, are now negotiating with thrift stores across the country in order to obtain a piece of the action. Who knows how long it will last, but we here in the Boing-Boing executive office give Gorbaine a big "Thumbs Up!"

"I WAS A DESPONDENT
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I AM JUST AN AUTOMATON
IN A CELLULAR UNIVERSE!
NOW I SIT BACK AND ENJOY
THE PROGRAM THAT RUNS ME!"

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