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Happy Halloween!
by Steve Stiles

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In the only love story he [Kilgore Trout] ever attempted, “Kiss Me Again,” he had written, “There is no way a beautiful woman can live up to what she looks like for any appreciable length of time.” The moral at the end of that story is this: Men are jerks. Women are psychotic.

-- Kurt Vonnegut, *Timequake*

THIS ISSUE OF *eI* is for the J. Lloyd Eaton Collection of Science Fiction, Fantasy, Horror, and Utopian Literature, housed in the Special Collections & Archives Department of the Tomás Rivera Library at UCRiverside.

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As always, everything in this issue of *eI* beneath my byline is part of my in-progress rough-draft memoirs. As such, I would appreciate any corrections, revisions, extensions, anecdotes, photographs, jpegs, or what have you sent to me at earlkemp@citlink.net and thank you in advance for all your help.

Bill Burns is *jefe* around here. If it wasn't for him, nothing would get done. He inspires activity. He deserves some really great rewards. It is a privilege and a pleasure to have him working with me to make *eI* whatever it is.

Other than Bill Burns, Dave Locke, and Robert Lichtman, these are the people who made this issue of *eI* possible: Bruce Brenner, Melissa Conway, Chris Garcia, Jacques Hamon, Rob Latham, Richard Lupoff, and Jerry Murray.

ARTWORK: This issue of *eI* features original artwork by Steve Stiles and Ditmar, and recycled artwork by William Rotsler.

We are here to help each other get through this thing, whatever it is.
-- Mark Vonnegut

...Return to sender, address unknown.... 30

The Official *eI* Letters to the Editor Column
Artwork recycled William Rotsler

By Earl Kemp

We get letters. Some parts of some of them are printable. Your letter of comment is most wanted via email to earlkemp@citlink.net or by snail mail to P.O. Box 6642, Kingman, AZ 86402-6642 and thank you.

Also, please note, I observe DNQs and make arbitrary and capricious deletions from these letters in order to remain on topic.

This is the official Letter Column of *eI*, and following are a few quotes from a few of those letters concerning the last issue of *eI*. All this in an effort to get you to write letters of comment to *eI* so you can look for them when they appear here.

Thursday July 31, 2008:

Dick Lupoff: Well, anudda great issue. Congratulations. An honor to be part of it...

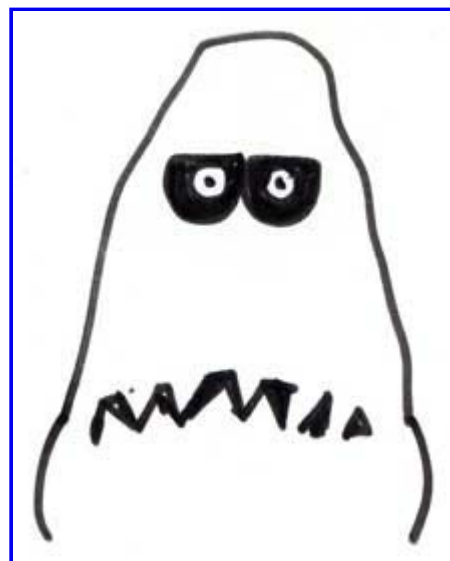
One small clarification to "I. Curmudgeon." The Steve Stiles cover is on the 2008 reissue of the Triune Man. The original 1976 hardcover had jacket art by Vincent di Fate. That artwork was reused on the subsequent US paperback. There were editions with other covers in several countries, but of them all my favorite is Steve's.

And, of course, I loved Steve's cover for *eI39*. Gorgeous!

I was also highly impressed with Ditmar's back cover illustration.

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Chris Garcia: I've got so much going on for WorldCon that I can barely manage time to pretend to be doing actual work here at work, but I had to drop a line about the Iris Owens article. I'm not sure how you do it, but you've managed to evoke every possible image I have ever thought of the 1950s and '60s and put them into a single article and then manage to make it very Kempian. Then it swings again and there's the devil that I expect to find in *eI*, and then it swings again and we're back at a soft-glow present-day sentimentality that almost seems foreign in with the rest and yet seems to back up the story by moving into a present that feels like a well-loved past. It's easily the most impressively personal article I've read in ages. It's also the first one that feels bigger on the inside, as it were. There's so much going on that I can hardly wrap my head around it all.



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Linda Krawecke: Thanks, Earl. Enjoyed your “Hot for Harriet” article. I wonder about all those years she lived in Manhattan, what did she think of her years as a writer? Was she proud/ashamed of her writing? Her Parisian lifestyle? An interesting person and well done for writing this tribute to her and not letting her go forgotten.

Earl Kemp: Linda, thanks for this generous response. And to top it all off, I’ve just received an enormously flattering email from Chris Garcia focusing on just that article and I am still reeling from the shock of the positive reaction.

It is not at all the article I began writing. I had an entirely different plan all worked out, plotted, and backed up with supporting data. That was six emails from Marilyn Meeske and one from Patrick Kearney all dealing with Iris’ death and the immediate aftermath, the memorial service, etc. Then there I am writing away on the piece and I get to the point where I need to move on to Marilyn’s input and I go to my email inbox and all seven of those messages were gone. Disappeared, not in my trash, not anywhere on the PC that I can find, just plain evaporated. A message from stronger powers...? And, to top matters off, none of those seven emails were rewritable.

So I was faced with no backup at all with my planned ending of the piece, plus I was already two weeks behind schedule, and I decided to abruptly end it right there, and I did.

#

I couldn’t find out anything about how she lived her quiet life in NYC. I know that immediately after Iris returned to NYC, Girodias came along also, bringing with him Olympia Press New York, and for the entire run of that business (until Girodias was nicely “asked” to leave the country and not return), Iris steadfastly refused any contact with any person related to OPNY, especially Maurice.

I also know that she was singled out (one of four) NYC female writers who had made significant contributions to literature by the NYC public library and that there was some form of appreciation fete in which Iris was presented to her public....

I also know that she was singled out in some similar form by some major British library or museum.

But no person anywhere wrote an obituary for her. Not in NYC, not in Paris...but only me...in Kingman....

#

Wednesday August 6, 2008:

Graham Charnock: Earl, your article on Iris Owens in your latest *eI* touched me enormously, especially because of your obvious tender feelings for her. Loved the way you managed to maintain a level of ingenuity throughout, though, whilst being boss of a publishing conglomerate. This was obviously a love story from the start and your love affair with her, at a distance, came over superbly. What a shame she seemed to run out of steam creatively. I would like to think she kept up with some kind of life until she died, although possibly not as we know it. Made me want to seek out her novels and pay whatever the price. As you say, stupid that her death has not been more reported/celebrated.

Sunday August 17, 2008:

Jay Gertzman: I've been haunted by Ditmar's painting on *eI39* and therefore need to give it a context. I would entitle it "The Apotheosis of Globalism." It reminds me of the "Planet of the Apes" theme. Something happened on this planet that transformed anything organic and mutually dependent into a machined depredation. Living creatures became objects who chilled out while their own children died for ideals that called for mass murder and thus were parasitic upon their own life. The sheeple of this planet were told about "mushroom clouds" and alien philistines whose terror was about to hit them where they live. Meanwhile their own freedom to see themselves was eroded, and the leaders they turned to when they sensed a "wrong direction" turned out to be cowardly drones mainlining from the same green juices as the original agents of machined transformation. No one died. They were left behind on the Day of Pentecost as the agents of Globalism ascended, right out of their clothes, to the otherworld. There they are boiling away, each themselves a boil on the blistered red skin of their godhead: raygun, kristolbill, bigtimeDick, greenspun, murderdoc, tumbledown George. The left-behind had eaten the lotus and were slowly transformed into the metal and plastic shapes the painting depicts, yearning for release by stretching to touch the ascended.

Thursday August 21, 2008:

Mary Ann Greene: Last night I found your article "Maurice and Me" on the Internet. It was of particular interest to me as I own all the remaining artwork of Norman Rubington, which I inherited.

Although he passed away 18 years ago, I haven't disposed of Rubington's erotica. The manuscripts of the books that he wrote for Olympia Press have been gifted to the Bienecke Library at Yale. As for his fine art, which many people are not aware of, I have been acting as his agent in showing and selling his work. There is a web site that you would enjoy seeing. www.normanrubington.com

I would also appreciate so much if you could direct me to anyone else who would like to know more about this original and exceptional man. Did you know that Girodias wrote about Rubington in his autobiography Vol. II *Les Jardins d'Eros* from *Une Journee Sur la Terre*? I don't think it has been published in English.

Friday August 22, 2008:

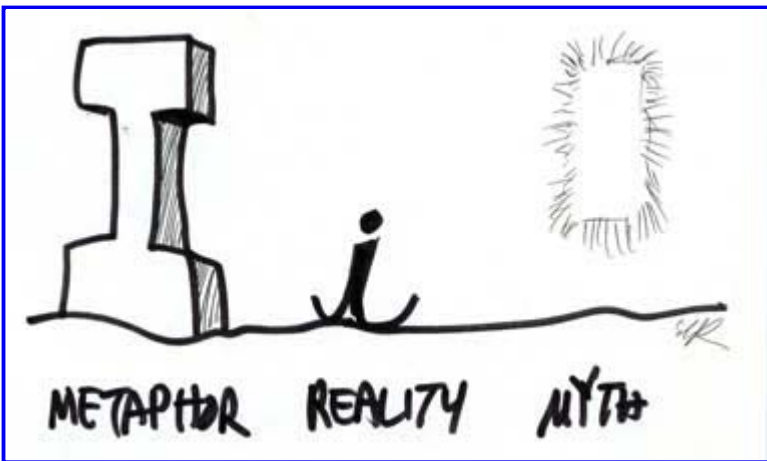
Patrick Kearney: Many thanks for pointing me in the direction of Ms Greene's website, which is very interesting. I was of course aware of "Akbar's" artwork and seen some examples of it, and greatly appreciated his 'montage' books for Girodias. But who can forget the great novels he wrote for Olympia? Wonderfully Gothic extravaganzas, funny as hell. There seems to be a tendency, though, to cast *The Fetish Crowd* as a separate work whereas in fact it is simply a reprint, in one volume, of three of his earlier novels that were first published separately. A portmanteau work, if you will.

Maurice's memoirs are a bit of a mess, bibliographically. There was first *Un Journee sur la terre* (Paris: Stock, 1977) which took his story up to the Occupation of France. This was Englished as *The Frog Prince* (NY: Crown, 1980). In May 1990, Gid published a reworked and greatly expanded version of *Un Journee sur la terre* (Editions de la difference) which was subtitled "*L'Arrivee*." Simultaneously, Editions de la difference published a second

volume, this one subtitled “*Les Jardins d’Eros*,” which covered the Olympia Press years in both Paris and New York. In September 1990, the same publisher issued *L’Affaire Kissinger*, a short work of 106 pages, in which Gid recounts his *ennuis* at the hands of the Scientologists, the US State Dept. and sundry other tawdry organizations and individuals, events which led eventually to his deportation from the US. None of these latter volumes have to my certain knowledge been translated into English. My editor, Angus Carroll, engaged the services of a student to translate the relevant portions of “*Les Jardins d’Eros*” for the purposes of our research, but as students will she took the money and ran. I did hear a rumor that Gid’s widow was going to translate the books, but nothing came of it.

Friday September 19, 2008:

Don Lee: I just wanted to write you a thank-you for all the online website material you’ve posted over the years. It has been a never-ending source of enjoyment and amusement to me, whether the topic is sf fandom, paperback original erotica of the Sixties, Mexico, Mike Avallone, whatever! I wish more people knew about your website. It’s all very splendid.



I am a 45-year-old newspaperman in Eureka Springs, Ark. I have always wanted to be a professional writer, a novelist, but so far the best I’ve done has been writing short porn stories for the *Bay Area Pleasure Guide* back in the day, a lot of fanzine stuff, poetry, and now the newspaper work. It’s all fine but admittedly not on the level of a paperback original from Greenleaf Classics! Where are

today’s Ed Woods? Ron Haydocks? Where are the BeeLine Double Classics I used to hunt for when I was 18 and horny?

Anyway, I hope all’s well with you and that you continue posting material for many years to come. Question: Do you know Charles Nuetzel or Jim Harmon? Nuetzel is a friend of a friend who’s given me some fine writing advice, and several of Harmon’s old paperback original sleaze paperbacks (including *Rape Ape* and *Wanton Witch*) have recently been reprinted by Ramble House, about whom I cannot say enough nice things, nor about its publisher, Fender Tucker.

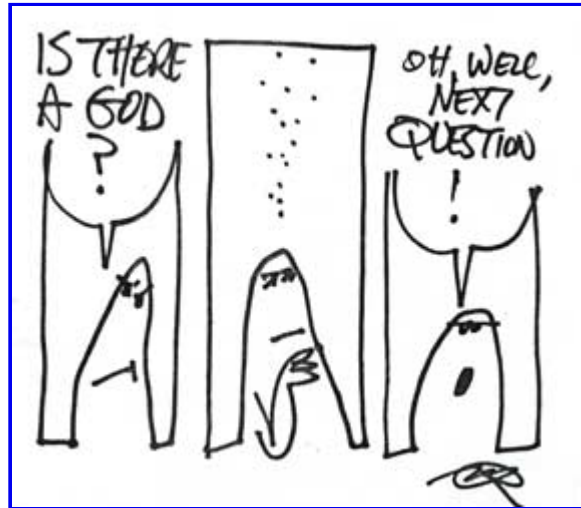
Saturday September 20, 2008:

John Purcell: Another fine issue. Love that cover by Steve Stiles. As you probably know by now, *Askance* #10 (just recently posted to efanazines) has a Stiles cover. His black and white stuff is classic - hell, anything Steve does is wonderful - but I think his playing around with color gives his work added dimension. Such fun stuff.

In your loccol, Lloyd Penney asked me if I have heard anything new about the Warner collection. Not yet, Lloyd. However, in a couple weeks when I’m up in Dallas for FenCon V, Greg Benford and I might be visiting James Halperin to see Harry’s zine collection. If

anything of note is learned, I will pass the knowledge along. But so far, nothing of note to add.

Words fail me when I attempt to comment upon Tony Jacobs' essay about the Luros publications. (Shouldn't that be "publications"?) This is really good historical commentary, and is also quite a statement about that publishing industry. Again, fascinating stuff; all I can say is that I found it entertaining reading - and the cover scans were entertaining, too. The styles of the various publications were quite different, and the scans complemented the essay very well. Good job, Earl.



Victor Banis contributed another entertaining piece - if you don't mind me making that pun, I won't mind either. Other than that, no real comment, except that it was well written.

For that matter, I have to admit that I really can't find much else to say anything about except that the entire issue was splendid fun to read. I thank you for putting it together, and that lovely Ditmar art on your last page is exceptional. All throughout, a wonderful zine. Thank you for keeping up the marvelous work. Since I have already written about *eI* in *VFW*, there is no reason for me to review another issue, but they certainly are worth waiting for.

In the third edition of *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, the English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772 - 1834) speaks of "that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith." This acceptance of balderdash is essential to the enjoyment of poems, and of novels and short stories, and of dramas, too. Some assertions by writers, however, are simply too preposterous to be believed.

--Kurt Vonnegut, *Timequake*

The Fanzine Lounge

By Chris Garcia

It all starts with an idea. *Hey, how about running a Fanzine Lounge at BayCon?* I said to Kitty Crowe, the chairman of the 2005 BayCon. She said yes, which started the ball rolling. In 2006, I did it at BayCon again. In 2007, I had BayCon, Westercon, and LosCon Lounges under my belt. In 2008, it was BayCon along with Westercon, but there was a new party that asked me to bring my kit along: WorldCon. So, at Denvention 3: The Revenge, I was going to have a Fanzine Lounge to run...for 4k people who may, or may not, give a damn about fanzines.

It turns out that maybe they did.

Here is my complete and unauthoritative guide to putting on an awesome Fanzine Lounge. Let us start with preparations. You have to figure out what kind of Fanzine Lounge you wanna run. There are several kinds of Lounges you can run. The one that most folks think of is the one where you have a bunch of zines out there and folks come in and read them and you might be around acting as a Librarian. It's not a terribly fun concept, actually. It's the kind that a lot of folks have done at cons over the years.



The handmade Denvention Fanzine Lounge Letters done by Espana Sheriff- photo from Howeird

There's the loud, explosive party concept where you throw a party and call it a Fanzine Lounge. This can be a hard one too, but it's also the kind that draws the newest kind of fans. The strange version is what I call the Corner Case. This one makes a Fanzine Lounge a part of another function area, like the ConSuite. This was the kind that they did at places like Norwescon. It's weird, and it sorta makes things cluttered. Then again, it was that sort of Lounge that made me find Ed Meskys' *Niekas* and that got me interested in zines again.

The final sort is what I tend to do. During the day, it's a place to come and chat, read and rest and at night, it pretty much turns into something of a party. It's a sort of programming soft space. There's a plan, but not overly so. The late night soft space, where you won't have anything planned but folks can gather and get away from the more crowded parties and maybe find a drink.

Okay, you've decided to have X type of Lounge, now you gotta make sure you can get the committee to let you do it. That's not always an easy thing, but here are some tips. First off, make sure they know you. I had been Toastmaster for BayCon the year before I ran my first Lounge, so I knew they knew me. You can volunteer a year prior, or you can go through someone you might know on the committee to vouch for you. That tends to work. Maybe you can just drop by one of their meetings and be charming. I've done that a few times. Once you're in, they'll put you in one of the bigger divisions most often. Sometimes,

it'll be in the Exhibits Division, because you're showing off Fanzines and that's a kind of Exhibit, yeah? It could be in Programming, which is because you can be used as a place to have panels or do a Fanzine in an Hour. I've been in Hospitality a couple of times, which is most likely because it's called a Lounge and Lounge is a place for Hospitableness. I like being in Programming because folks in Programming can usually get the hotel to do things for them easier than any other division.



Chris Mugs for the Camera on the outer wall at the Denvention Fanzine Lounge- photo from Howeird

Okay, you've been placed in the committee and now it's time to be placed in the facility. This is a very very important thing and too often it's held off until the last moment by the Powers That Be. They don't want to commit to a location that might be better used by one of the other divisions. Also, if there are money issues, you get pushed to the cheaper location, usually because you can run a Lounge in almost any location. I've been in tiny rooms, rooms with beds, rooms with huge tables that leave almost no space, even rooms where you had to go through another room

to get to it. That's a tough one.

This year's WorldCon was the example of a perfect location...sorta. The Fanzine Lounge was in the Middle of the Colorado Convention Centre, right past the Registration area. There was a long, curving low wall. Folks wanted to put standing boards along the curve to create something of a closed off area, but I figured that would be a terrible thing. I wanted people to see in, to see that folks were having a good, or at least restful, time. Other thought that we needed a space that was away from everything in as many ways as we could be.

There's a precedent for that. Many WorldCons have put their Fanzine Lounges in locations that are out of the way. Milt Stevens ran a fine Fanzine Lounge at LACon, but it was off the beaten path, across the courtyard from the Convention Center and up an escalator. It was a nice location, the room was big and light and there was food and wine, but it wasn't the kind of place that someone would just stumble across. The Noreascon 3 Fanzine Lounge was right next to the bar and got a lot of traffic. I wish I had been there. We were in the middle of things and though we did place a couple of the boards up to be able to post notices and signs, there were long stretches of open side so that folks walking by could see us, swing by for a chat with those who were standing along the edges or whatever. It worked out really nice.

There is another way: a room on the party floor. You know, there's a lot of good things to be said for that. You can expect heavy traffic in the evening and being that soft space. During the day, those that want a bit of separation from the rest of the goings-on can have it since it's not right there in the flow of things. It can work very well and it was perfect for the Westercon Lounge in 2007.

Okay, now you've got your space and you've got the whole thing planned. Now you've gotta figure out what you need to provide. If it's a Fanzine Lounge, you need a stash of Fanzines. I have a rule: bring one suitcase full. It's not a lot of zines, but rolling a suitcase from the airport to the hotel is so much easier. You should choose your stash wisely. Here's a fact: some of the stuff's gonna walk with an attendee or two. There's no way around it, especially if you've got a sign anywhere in the Lounge that says that some zines are for free. No matter how many signs you put up saying that the Library zines are only for in-Lounge reading, a single sign saying a selection of Free Zines is available will make people think that the entire Lounge is fair game.



Fred Moulton, Chris Garcia and Jason Schachat at the 2008 BayCon...between drinks.

It happened at Westercon, where the only remaining copy of the original version of my Corset issue left with some lucky fan. At WorldCon, I only lost one thing: the *Proceedings of the 1962 WorldCon*. That was a bummer, but it's bound to happen. The last person I saw reading it was Art Widner, so that's okay. I like to bring recent zines along with a selection of older zines. *Holier Than Thou* is a fave, as is *Mimosa*. I like to bring all the Hugo nominated zines as well as the winner of the FAAn Award for Best Fanzine. That's a good selection. I also always bring a few things that are expected by loyal attendees: a few *Drink Tanks*, *Askance*, a *Vegas Fandom Weekly* or two and lots and lots of British Zines. I also always bring the printout of *Who Killed Science Fiction?* that Our Man Earl ran on eFanzines.com not that many years ago. I rotate things, though all the stuff from Westercon went to Denver because the suitcase traveled to LA so it could be delivered by Mr. Christian McGuire.



The random dance party that broke out in the 2008 BayCon Fanzine Lounge- Photo from Jean Martin

Okay, you've picked the stuff you want to bring, and not, there's a special thing you need to think of: decorations. You might wanna go with the theme of the con, and that's easy. Often, John Hertz, that master of all things awesome, will bring a few pieces for the Lounge and they are always makers of Festividad. John, along with folks like Mike Glycer and Milt Stevens, have been nice enough to grace our Lounges with their attendance. That's the best form of acceptance. For Silicon, we've planned on a Mexican theme, which is strange, but we're looking forward to it. WorldCon had a few places to put up decor, so we printed out some fun Fan Art,

Rotsler, Kurt Erichsen, España Sheriff, Miko, Brianna SpaceKat, Robert Hole, and Selina Phanara. We were lucky to get as much as we did. It gave the Lounge a bit of Flav-R,

which is always a plus. At BayCon this year, Jason Schachat brought all sorts of theme-appropriate items, pirate stuff that we flung around the Lounge.

And there's another thing: you need friends, or at least people who are willing to help. I've got Leigh Ann Hildebrand, España, Jason, The Lovely and Talented Linda, and a few others who lend a hand. You don't need to be there every minute, but it helps to have someone around to keep stuff from walking and to monitor any special activity.

By special activity, I mean booze. There are places you can't do booze, in fact the WorldCon Fanzine Lounge was one of them until we managed to con our way into a Cash Bar at night. When you have a con on the party floor, most of the time you've got Corkage waived and that means that you can serve booze. You gotta card and stuff if you're gonna go out to the public, but it's still good stuff if you work it right. The best thing to do is to find a corner where folks can drink in privacy. If you've got a bathroom attached to the Lounge, you can use that as a liquor location. It's effective and some have called it the Champagne room, not only because we sometimes serve champagne, but because it's a good way to get a happy ending. After-hours Lounges thrive on booze, but it's not required for a good time. Also, you have to make sure that no one uses zines as coasters. That's a tough one.

Okay, once you're loaded in, likely with the help of your foolish friends, you can start things going right by engaging the various people who wander into the Lounge. We had Michael Swanwick wander in, and we greeted him and said hello, but it was obvious that he was there to rest up, do a little reading. He picked up a copy of *Other Magazine* that I thought was interesting and right up his alley. When folks like Milt or Glycer or Neil Rest came around, we sat down, chatted, sometimes for far longer than we expected. It was also possible to have conversations with folks outside the Lounge because of that wall. Connie Willis, Lee Martindale, Carrie Vaughn, and Steve Silver all had nice long conversations over the wall. It was the best method for talking because you could pull people off the main flow between the Dealer's Room and the Programming rooms. I talked a lot, and it was never difficult to find if I was in the Lounge because you could see it.



The Denvention Official Fanzine Lounge Sign.

The fun happens when things are moving. People come by and chat, they read, they might even think about doing their own zine. I've always had various computers that make that possible and recently Kevin Roche and Andy Trembley brought a printer that we could use, so we've put out more and more zines. Unofficial Newsletters that are just this side of Dadaism. There was a fun Point-Counterpoint zine that was really fun. We've done all sorts of printer things, including signs and such. We love doing that stuff.

And there's one more thing, and it really does separate the Lounge from the Rooms with Zines in them, and every time it's different. I like to have some sort of challenge for folks

to partake in. Maybe it's a guess the number of words that I'll write in the Lounge, or maybe it's telling people to draw on some paper hanging on the wall. In the WorldCon Lounge this year, it was the Scarf. Leigh Ann made a Dr. Who scarf and brought it out. Since we have a year before the next big TAFF auction, we figured it'd be great to pimp it for a year. We had the Scarf in the Lounge and people came by and played with it, took photos, did Jump rope, or even just talked about it. It was very cool and a very distinctive attraction. That's what makes a Lounge memorable. It's been a Jenga game in the past, and at one point it was See Who Could Come Up With the Best Yo Jawa joke, which turned in some great *Star Wars*-inspired fun.

Now, if'n you're thinking about running your own Lounge, you should get to work. I'm only doing them on the West Coast, though I'm gonna help out the Penneys with their Lounge at Anticipation at Montreal. So, you can go and make it happen, have your own Lounge and do it your way, making the need for me nil!

There is no reason why good cannot triumph as often as evil. The triumph of anything is a matter of organization. If there are such things as angels, I hope that they are organized along the lines of the Mafia.

--Kurt Vonnegut, *Sirens of Titan*

The J. Lloyd Eaton Collection of SF, Fantasy, Horror, and Utopian Literature

By Rob Latham and Melissa Conway



Rob Latham



Melissa Conway

Following the first national search for a senior academic position in science fiction studies, Rob Latham accepted an offer from the University of California at Riverside to join the English Department faculty beginning in fall 2008. The Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, Stephen Cullenberg, has committed to hiring two more people over the next two years to build a concentration in SF studies: in 2008-09, the Department of Creative Writing will mount a search, and in 2009-10 there will be an additional search in a discipline yet to be determined. The long-term prospect is a degree-granting unit in SF and Technoculture Studies, augmenting and building upon the existing Ph.D. track in Science Fiction, Science, and Literature in the Department of Comparative Literature.

Part of Rob's new position involves serving as an informal liaison to the J. Lloyd Eaton Collection of Science Fiction, Fantasy, Horror, and Utopian Literature, housed in the Special Collections & Archives Department of the Tomás Rivera Library at UCR, which is overseen by Melissa Conway.

The Eaton Collection originated in 1969 with the acquisition by then-University Librarian Donald Wilson of the personal library of Dr. J. Lloyd Eaton, an Oakland, California physician, whose collection consisted of about 7,500 hardback editions of science fiction, fantasy, and horror from the late nineteenth century to 1955. This acquisition was a controversial decision at a time when even public libraries were not collecting speculative fiction. After Wilson's untimely death, development of the collection was stalled until 1980 when University Librarian Eleanor Montague, with the encouragement of Borgo Press publisher Michael Burgess, created the position of Eaton Curator, hiring George Slusser, a leading scholar in the field. For over twenty-five years, George worked closely with the Collection Development Division and the heads of Special Collections & Archives to build the collection, bringing its holdings in hardback and paperback books to over

100,000 items.

Foreign works of science fiction have been added systematically, including works in Chinese, Czech, French, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, and Spanish. During these same years, outstanding collections of fanzines were acquired, including those of famed collectors Terry Carr, Bruce Pelz, Fred Patten, and Rick Snearly, bringing the fanzine holdings to almost 200,000 items.



The empty reading room, just waiting for researchers.

The collection has also moved in multimedia directions, acquiring movies, film scripts, illustrated narratives, and comic books. It is the repository for manuscripts by prominent science fiction writers such as Richard Adams, Gregory Benford, David Brin, Michael Cassutt, Robert L. Forward, Anne McCaffrey, Lewis Shiner, James White, and Colin Wilson. From the outset, the intention of UCR Libraries was to make the Eaton Collection an outstanding resource for research and study. As part of its scholarly mission, the Eaton Collection hosts a J. Lloyd Eaton Conference, launched in 1979 under Eleanor Montague and George Slusser. Over the years, the Eaton Conference has attracted a number of famous writers, including Brian Aldiss, Ray Bradbury, Gregory Benford, Samuel R. Delany, Harlan Ellison, Frederik Pohl, Robert Silverberg, Theodore Sturgeon, and Roger Zelazny. It has attracted an equally distinguished group of critics and scientists including Harold Bloom, Leslie Fiedler, Fredric Jameson, Harry Levin, Marvin Minsky, Eric Rabkin, and Robert Scholes. The Conference has produced more than twenty volumes of critical essays, published by various university presses.

Today the Eaton collection is the major resource for research in science fiction, fantasy, horror, and utopian literature worldwide. It is visited by scholars from around the world. Beginning with the 1517 edition of Thomas More's *Utopia*, its range and wealth of material from early utopian fiction to science fiction film ephemera and comic books offers a formidable resource for anyone working in this area of modern culture.

The Eaton Collection is also a compendium of the history of the book and publishing for five centuries. All covers are kept intact, with original dust jackets. The wealth of visual

materials covers an entire period in the development of space and fantastic art; this repository of images is constantly consulted by publishers and producers including Disney Studios, the Encyclopedia Britannica, and electronic publishers like Grolier.



Making a copy of the dust jacket.

Other noteworthy parts of the Collection include: 500 shooting scripts of science fiction films; a 3,500-volume collection of proto-SF “Boy’s Books” of the Tom Swift variety; a collection of taped fan conventions from the Morris Dollens’ estate; a large collection of taped interviews with American, British, and French writers; reference materials on topics such as applied science, magic, witchcraft, UFOs, and *Star Trek*; and the largest holdings of critical materials on science fiction and fantasy in the United States. With the donation of the collection of Fred Patten, it became the largest repository in the United States of *anime* and *manga*.



The comic book archive is shown at the left and the pulp magazine archives to the right.

To maintain its pre-eminence, the Eaton Collection needs donations and gifts-in-kind to continue to grow in significant areas such as its early utopian collection and its fanzine collection, and in new areas, such as Japanese science fiction, *manga*, and *anime*.

Preservation of its unique holdings is also of the highest priority, and donations are necessary to underwrite the salvaging of brittle materials. Another goal is to produce an archival database of SF/Fantasy covers and art. This is among the artwork that shaped the world we live in; the production of such a web-accessible archive will be of great value to future researchers.

Beyond acquisition and preservation, the Eaton Collection sets as its final goal the dissemination of materials to scholars and the general public. To this end, UCR has created an Eaton Endowment Fund, the purpose of which is to raise funds for new facilities, to create an endowed Eaton Chair, to establish a research and fellowship program to bring researchers to the collection, and to underwrite colloquia and guest speakers. Most recently, *Science Fiction Studies* has agreed to endow the R.D. Mullen Research Fellowship, beginning in fall 2009 and named in honor of the journal's late founding editor, to support Ph.D. students working in the archive.



The Anne McCaffrey section of the Literary Archives.

An electronic exhibition surveying the Eaton's fanzine holdings, entitled "FANAC," can be viewed at: <http://eaton-collection.ucr.edu/fanac/Index.htm> . The Pelz Fanzines Collection can be searched separately at <http://lib.ucr.edu/cdd/spcol/fanzine.php> Other holdings in the Eaton Collection, including the Terry Carr fanzine collection, can be searched via UCR's online "Scotty" system <http://scotty.ucr.edu/> . Anyone with photo identification is welcome to use the Eaton Collection, which is open 9 AM-5 PM Monday through Friday. The stacks are closed, but assistants will bring requested items to be viewed in the comfortable reading room. Materials can be pulled in advance by writing to specialcollections@ucr.edu or by calling 951-827-3233.



In the fanzine section, pulling items from the Bruce Pelz collection.

We are very eager to continue to strengthen our connections with the fan community during the coming years. One of our long-range projects—in partnership with other research libraries with major fanzine holdings, such as the University of Iowa, Texas A&M University, and the University of Liverpool—is a searchable database that includes an index of SF zines from the 1930s to the present. We are also interested in putting together an historical anthology of fan writing, reprinting essays, interviews, letters, reviews, and other materials that represent the extraordinary range and excellence of fanzine criticism. We would welcome specific suggestions for items to include in such a volume. In sum, the future of SF studies at UCR is very bright indeed—and we hope that SF fans will join us to bask in the rays!

We are working with Earl Kemp and Chris Garcia, current active fanzine editors, to carry our message directly to fandom in the hope that they can help us build our archive and our connections with the community. When you see any of us at conventions, fan lounges, and especially at Corflu, please do stop by and say hello.

Participation in an art, although unrewarded by wealth and fame, is a way to make one's soul grow.

--Kurt Vonnegut

Help Yourself to Eaton!

By Earl Kemp and Chris Garcia

The J. Lloyd Eaton Collection, housed in the Tomás Rivera Library at UCRiverside, is the single largest such collection of science fiction related material, and it is accessible and usable for many areas of research by all interested parties.

It is, essentially, *us*. From the past, now, and forever. Everything you ever wanted to know about us but didn't know where to look. We are us; we are science fiction fandom with a heavy emphasis on fanzine production.

The Eaton Collection itself isn't restricted to fanzines, and that's the important part.

In an effort to bring the Eaton Collection forward, Chris Garcia and I have accepted temporary consulting positions with some definite chores facing us. It is our task to help in the following areas:

Fill in gaps in the existing fanzine archives.

Bring those fanzine archives up to date and current.

Project them into the future through donated subscriptions to ongoing fanzines.

And, along the way, help all possible to further more of the Eaton Collection's long-range goals.

Toward those ends, Melissa Conway, overseer of the collection, and Rob Latham, liaison from the English Department, are moving into a significantly closer relationship with fanzine fandom itself. Plans are underway to network directly with fanzine fandom at conventions such as Corflu, in Seattle in March. To have an in-person and hands-on relationship that will hopefully benefit us all.

They will contribute selected material for the Corflu benefit auction. They will contribute additional material to Fan Lounges for display purposes.

We will have Eaton Donation Boxes at each Fan Lounge and Corflu con suite. That way you can simply drop off your zines for Eaton and whatever other donations you feel like making, and they will be handed on directly to Eaton after the conventions.

It is helpful to keep in mind that the Eaton fanzine archives are accessible for any legitimate research purpose. Your zines will not be lost in the crowd, ignored, or forgotten. Whenever you need to research anything sf fanzine related, just make a list of what you need to examine and hand it to an Eaton archivist. That archivist will pull the zines, books, or whatever it is you request and bring them to you inside Eaton's comfortable reading room. Uninterrupted and unannoyed, you can do your research, make your notes, get photocopies, or whatever is necessary for your project at hand.

Eaton will establish firm liaison with other accessible university archives (such as the University of Iowa, Texas A&M University, and the University of Liverpool) and work out mutual problems together such as duplicate copy routing protocols, interlocking Internet connections, and other matters of significant interest to those archives.

I need to take a moment out here in favor of national loyalty. The University of Liverpool collection is probably first choice for you Brits. I have personally sent fanzines to that collection myself and I know how truly excellent it is. However, Eaton is still first choice for me. Even if it is not for you Brits, crank out one more copy of each issue anyway and mail it off to Eaton at the address below. It is *your* archive also and don't forget it.

They will maintain PCs to connect with Bill Burns' incomparable www.efanzines.com and Jacques Hamon's spectacular www.noosphere.com/showcase/ and Joe Siclari's www.fanac.org huge fan photograph collection, and other similar websites.

Matters of immortality and mortality

Do you have a will? Don't be a Harry Warner! If you do, rewrite it; if you don't, get it done! Spell it out clearly "all science fiction related material" or however you want it to read but do it before it's too late.

Do you know someone close to you who is eagerly awaiting the opportunity to cash in on those special treasures of yours and is already talking prices with potential buyers?

Do you know someone else close to you who is watching that person closely because their objective is to incinerate all of that "awful trash" before anyone can discover it's even in the house...oh, the embarrassment of it all...!

Do you want to have some say in what happens to the most precious things you've managed to accumulate that most others think foolish and a waste of time and money?

Do it while you can because you're the only one that can do it the way you want it done.

Eaton is for you, for your now and your future...with or without you.

Pack them up and ship them out

One way to start is to sort out whatever fanzines you can spare, keeping only the ones you can't do without, and ship them off to Eaton. Ship them by Media Mail and, if it matters to you, the cost of that shipping is tax deductible. Send them to:

Melissa Conway, Ph.D. Head, Special Collections & Archives P.O. Box 5900 UCR Libraries
University of California Riverside, CA 92517-5900

And then, when you're producing the next issue of your fanzine, and the one after that, as long as the run continues, crank out one extra copy for Eaton and mail it off to the same address.

One more for Eaton!

Tellers of stories with ink on paper, not that they matter anymore, have been either swoopers or bashers. Swoopers write a story quickly, higgledy-piggledy, crinkum-crankum, any which way. Then they go over it again painstakingly, fixing everything that is just plain awful or doesn't work. Bashers go one sentence at a time, getting it exactly right before they go on to the next one. When they're done they're done.

-- Kurt Vonnegut, *Timequake*

Eighty Pounds of Paper

By Earl Kemp

When it was obvious that I (and Chris Garcia) would be acting as temporary consultants with the Eaton Collection (the J. Lloyd Eaton Collection of Science Fiction, Fantasy, Horror, and Utopian Literature, housed in the Special Collections & Archives Department of the Tomás Rivera Library at UCRiverside) in an effort to bring their science fiction fanzine collection up to date, I had to make a difficult personal decision.

While I only returned to fandom some eight years ago, after a long, exciting gafiation, I returned with something sounding a bit closer to a firecracker than a whimper. Right away I was welcomed back into fandom as if I had never been away. That felt real good. And along with that acceptance and that feeling, came the fanzines. *Thank you, god of all worthy fen!* And they came and came, the good ones, the exceptionally fine ones, and the crudzines, and several stops between. The stacks began accumulating inside the glass-front bookcase in my living room.

Eight years of them. Eighty pounds of them, only I didn't know that to begin with.

So, the dilemma I was faced with was: Should I keep those wonderful, dearly loved and fondly caressed fanzines for a bit longer? Should I take the first measure of advice that I

would be expected to say on behalf of the Eaton Collection, and do the right thing? Donate my fanzines to the Eaton Collection. The answer finally arrived in stark clarity: I must do the thing that I say you must do. Do as I do not as I say, to reverse the well-worn cliché.

For me, the confusion began in earnest. How to go about the task? The only advice I asked for from Melissa Conway, Director of the Eaton Collection, was where to send them. And she told me exactly where and how to send them. "Media mail," she said, "and keep a record because those expenses are tax deductible."

I bought corrugated cartons, sticky tape, mailing labels, and all the usual, and then set about attacking my accumulation of fanzines. *A lot of them.*

First I sorted through them for the items that I simply could not part with right at that moment but would send along later...hopefully before it would get too late for me to still do it for myself. While I sorted them, I stacked them according to physical size, ending up with four sizes for the entire bunch. Then I began experimenting with fitting the fanzines into the corrugated cartons until I had the best arrangement that I could make to completely fill each of three parcels.

And off I went to the post office, juggling those heavy, heavy boxes of dead weight lead sinkers. Imagine the fun that was, standing in line, moving slowly forward, arms falling off from the strain of trying to look strong enough to be doing what I was doing.

"Eighty pounds of paper" ...that's what the postal clerk told me, and did I ever believe it. And off went my eight-year accumulation of superb fanzines. *Ten pounds of fanzines for each year.* I wonder how that stacks up as an average.

When the parcels arrived in Riverside, Melissa Conway told me they contained 550 individual items. Not bad for eight years....

With those zines safely in Eaton's hands, I then had a clear conscience to proceed with all possible vigor spearheading (with Chris Garcia; there is no way to describe his capable help) Eaton's campaign to bring their fanzine collection up to date and to extend it forward into the future through routine donated subscriptions to each new fanzine issue published.

Piece of cake...? Only time will tell.

This issue, *eI40*, is dedicated to the Eaton Collection. The issue contains a detailed tour of the Eaton Collection with numerous photographs of the Archives of our Lives. There are other articles from Chris and me on our projected duties for Eaton and about Fan Lounges in general, and how all of them protect and serve all of our intangible efforts to hold the fanzine family together now and forevermore.

#

We've done our bit. We signed on. We begin our tasks. The rest is up to you.

Those fanzines that I sent to the Eaton Collection were mine by right of possession but more than that, they were *your* fanzines, too. Your very best, containing your own hopes and expectations of now and the future. The fanzines that you had been sending me for the last eight years.

After a fashion, my having done so makes it easier for you to fill in the gaps in your own production for the Eaton Collection archives. Then, after that has been done, you continue with your fanzine production producing one extra copy for Eaton of each issue and mailing it along to Riverside.

Never forget that those fanzines are in a working, active archive. You can call up any one of them on request. The archive is a living, incomparable research resource.

And don't think it was an easy decision for me to make, to give those fanzines up...but then I'm already at the age where most of my contemporaries have died and been through the terrible ordeal of having their most precious possessions trampled upon, discarded, dumpstered, or sold for ten cents on the real value dollar.

I needed to avoid all that. *I hope you do too.*

I urge you to follow my lead, sort out your fanzines and anything else science fiction related that you can in all honesty pass along to the future in safe, secure hands. One form of rebirth, at least, that is available to us all. *Do it now, before you forget.* Pack those gems and send them off to:

Melissa Conway, Ph.D. Head, Special Collections & Archives P.O. Box 5900 UCR Libraries
University of California Riverside, CA 92517-5900

Remember Harry Warner!

Don't let the same thing happen to you and to the things that are valuable to you. Rewrite your will. If you don't have one, make one right away and be specific. As I've said elsewhere and will repeat often for the next year: be specific, spell it out, "all things science fiction related" or your own words to express only your own wishes for your fannish things.

And, be sure to read the other Eaton Collection articles in *eI40*, October.

We'll be checking on your progress, keeping notes, and taking names. Look for us at Corflu...

What we have created instead, as customers and employees and investors, is mountains of paper wealth so enormous that a handful of people in charge of them can take millions and billions for themselves without hurting anyone. Apparently.

-- Kurt Vonnegut, *Timequake*

It Just Took a Little Longer Than I Thought it Would

By Richard A. Lupoff

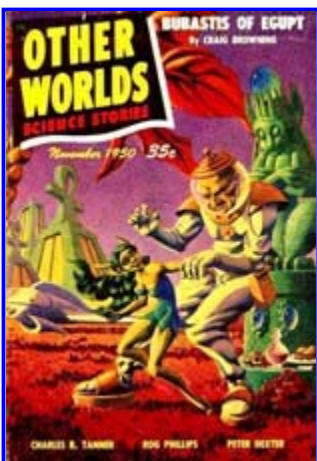
The date on the cover was October 1950, and that's when I laid out twenty-five cents—half of my weekly allowance—for the first issue of *Galaxy Science Fiction*. I was already reading science fiction—Judith Merrill's *Shot in the Dark* and Groff Conklin's *The Science Fiction Galaxy*, two of the earliest and best little anthologies in the field, and *The Avon Ghost Reader* and Don Wollheim's *Avon Fantasy Reader*, so as not to draw too fine a distinction between science fiction and fantasy.



But something about that first issue of *Galaxy* really made my antennae quiver. Maybe it was the other-worldly cover painting, printed on super-glossy Kromekote stock. Maybe it was the stories. I was fifteen years old and ready for fiction with content and relevance, not just adventure stories. Or maybe it was the editorial, chastely signed, *H.L. Gold*. I had no idea what the initials stood for. And it didn't matter. Something about that editorial drew me in, made me feel as if I was in on something special from the start. I remember one feature that particularly caught my fancy, "Next Month's Table of Contents." Now *there* was science fiction made real!

On one sunny September afternoon in a small town in central New Jersey, H.L. Gold—I later learned that his full name was Horace Leonard Gold—became my hero.

Before that day I was a science fiction enthusiast. After that day I was a science fiction fanatic.



I read the stories and quickly developed a list of favorite authors. Not surprisingly, the list was heavily tilted toward *Galaxy* regulars: Clifford Simak, Edgar Pangborn, Heinlein, Pohl and Kornbluth, Ray Bradbury, Isaac Asimov. I read and enjoyed other magazines. The early issues of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* ran a strong second to *Galaxy*. Tony Boucher and J. Francis McComas sent me two of my earliest rejection slips, and while that would not normally make a writer a fan of said editors, they were both totally encouraging, an important factor to a teenage wannabe.

When Howard Browne brought out the first issue of the upscale, digest-size *Fantastic*, I was blown away. I liked Ray Palmer's *Other Worlds* and Bill Hamling's *Imagination Stories of Science and Fantasy*. I think I enjoyed the editorials and the fanzine reviews and the letter columns as much as I did the stories. Maybe even more. The early 1950s marked the last hurrah of the pulps, too, and I got in on the final years of *Amazing Stories*, *Fantastic Adventures*, *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, and *Startling Stories*.

I admired the artwork on and in those magazines. The great paintings and drawings of Hannes Bok, Virgil Finlay, and Ed Emshwiller in particular. Of course I regarded the

authors as if they were on a par with my favorite baseball stars. But the demigods of my pantheon, the titans whom I hoped someday to emulate, were the editors.

I imagined myself sitting behind the editor's desk in the office of a science fiction magazine, stacks of manuscripts everywhere, piles of proof sheets looming, pretty secretaries scurrying in and out, an art director consulting me about plans for the next issue, or the issue after that, or the one after that.

Somehow it never quite happened. I went from high school to college to the army to the world of Big Business. When I doffed my uniform in 1958 I put in my resumé at a number of book and magazine publishers but at first there were no takers. I wound up working as a technical writer on the payroll of one of the early computer manufacturers, and I figured that was that. My foot was firmly planted on the first rung of the corporate ladder.

Then I had a phone call from Hearst Magazines. They were offering me a job. But I was already earning a staggering \$350 a month at Sperry Rand, and Hearst's offer was for a few bucks less.

I turned 'em down flat.

I've wondered about ninety nine gazillion times since then what my life and career would have been like if I'd taken the job, even though it would have involved a pay cut. If I had it to do over again, I know I would have taken it.

*My name is Might-have-been;
I am also called No-more, Too late, Farewell.*

A prize to the first reader who identifies the source. No fair looking it up!

#

In the years that followed I had a few brushes with editing.

In the late 1960s I worked as an editor at Canaveral Press, and if things had played out differently I might still be there—and Canaveral Press might still exist! But that didn't happen either. Besides, at Canaveral Press my work was mainly that of a managing editor—sequencing titles, dealing with galleys and with artists—and very little to do with acquisitions or rubbing elbows with authors while we struggled over clumsy expressions or overlong manuscripts.

Well, I did get to edit books by Doc Smith, Sprague de Camp, and of course Edgar Rice Burroughs. I put together a couple of collections of Burroughs' shorter works and I had some dealings with the Burroughs estate in the person of Hulbert Burroughs. We were publishing hardcover books and the paperback rights were a bone of contention between Ace Books and Ballantine Books, and I found myself performing shuttle diplomacy between Don Wollheim and Ian Ballantine. They wouldn't talk to each other, but both were willing to talk to me.

What a fun assignment that was!

I also got to talk shop as a colleague of Larry Shaw, Don Wollheim, and Terry Carr. I learned some things about fending off unqualified wannabe's, and how to deal with authors both talented and cooperative (Doc Smith, Sprague de Camp, James Blish, Ed

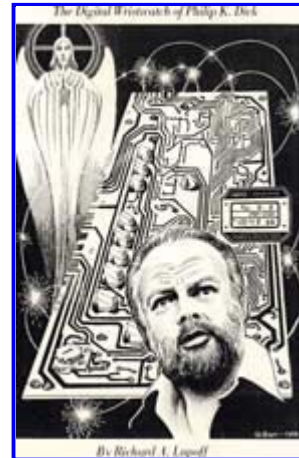
Ludwig) and abrasive (a thug named John Burton Thompson, now deceased).

But working at Canaveral Press was never more than a moonlight job for me while I toiled in the bowels of megacorporations from nine to five, Monday through Friday.

A few years later I sold several novels to David Hartwell at Berkley/Putnam. We got along well, and when an editorial job opened at Berkley, David phoned to ask if I was interested. I was no longer living in the New York area and asked him if I could work from my West Coast home. No, David said, I'd have to move back to New York if I wanted the job.

It was tempting. I was attracted by the idea of editing a book line, and I wouldn't have minded living in Manhattan again. To twist an old proverb, *you can take the New Yorker out of New York but you can't take New York out of the New Yorker*. On my rare visits to the East Coast I found myself jumping effortlessly back into the rhythm and spirit of Gotham. But I had three children in elementary school in California, Pat was building a career with a local business establishment, and the thought of uprooting home and family and dogs and cats and relocating to the East Coast was distinctly unappealing.

A few years after that, a local fan named Jim Purviance started a publishing company called Canyon Press. The first book they produced was a novella of my own called *The Digital Wristwatch of Philip K. Dick*. The book went over well. Jim invited me to come into the company with him. He would be publisher and I would be editor. This one, I snapped up without hesitation. I planned to develop a line of science fiction books, and one of mysteries.



At a mystery convention in San Francisco I found myself a co-panelist seated beside a highly talented editor named Meredith Phillips. She was there to announce a new imprint, Perseverance Press. I was there to announce Canyon Press. Meredith's taste, it was obvious, tended toward what mystery people call "cozies."

"We want to avoid vulgar language," she intoned, "excessive violence, and gratuitous sex."

"And at Canyon Press," I put in, "we are seeking manuscripts with vulgar language, excessive violence, and gratuitous sex. That way, Canyon can split the market with Perseverance and we'll both get rich."

Alas! Jim Purviance encountered a string of family problems just as his employer went belly up. Jim found himself out of a day job at the worst possible moment. End of Canyon Press.

#

Just for the heck of it I did an Internet search today for copies of *The Digital Wristwatch of Philip K. Dick*, the one and only Canyon Press release. I found three copies for sale. A paperback at \$108 and two hardbound copies, one for \$242.50 and the other for \$275. Don't you wish you'd bought a few of those when the book was published? For that matter, don't I wish I'd stocked up on copies!

Hang in there, gentle reader. We're getting closer to the present.

There's a great editor and literary historian in England named Mike Ashley. I've written a few stories for Mike, whose has produced a fine series of theme anthologies. *Royal Whodunnits*, *Shakespearean Whodunnits*, and the like. Mike asked me for a locked room mystery and I found the notion challenging. I wrote a story called "The Second Drug," aka "The Case of the Vampire's Victim." In this story I introduced the detective team of Abel Chase and Claire Delacroix. Mike bought the story, I found that I enjoyed working in the form, and I wound up writing a cycle of novelettes about my detectives.

Eventually there were enough stories to fill a book, but I knew that it was devilishly hard to sell collections like this. Pat and I talked it over and decided that this was the time to publish the thing ourselves. At first we contemplated a series of chapbooks. Then our friend Jacob Weisman, of Tachyon Publications in San Francisco, suggested that we would do better to put the stories together as one "real" book instead of a series of chapbooks.

Hmmm.

Out of this came Surinam Turtle Press, named for a fabulously ugly and lazy creature we had encountered at the Steinhart Aquarium in San Francisco.

While we investigated the perils and intricacies of starting a publishing company, I decided to make a wild cast of my book to half a dozen specialty houses in the mystery field. Back came several of the expected responses, typically: *Sounds nice but we're overstocked right now, sorry.* But one startup offered to take on the book, and while I mulled their minimal offer, in came a second bid, this one from Douglas Greene, the editor at Crippen & Landru, *the* prestige house in the field!



Pat and Dick Lupoff. Photo by Earl Kemp, LAPB, Mission Hills, CA, 2006.

Crippen & Landru!

I felt as if I'd won the World

Heavyweight Championship, been chosen as the next Dalai Lama, and been elected Homecoming Queen—all in one! The *Yes* that I gave Doug Greene came faster and more enthusiastically than the *Yes* of a desperate virgin when she finally hears The Big Question.

#

Pat and I decided to keep Surinam Turtle Press anyway. We used it for marketing copies of my own books and a few others at book shows and conventions. Our favorite event turned out to be an annual affair in Mission Hills, near Los Angeles. I get to play celebrity guest, signing autographs alongside the likes of Mickey Spillane and Ray Bradbury and Ann Bannon. Then I head back to the Surinam Turtle Press table in the dealer's room and

sell books. Fun and egoboo and profit all in one happy basket!

Three years ago at the Mission Hills show I bought a very odd book from Greg Ketter, the great Minnesota bookman. It was *The Man Who Changed His Skin*, by Harry Stephen Keeler. Keeler was one of the strangest authors of the Twentieth Century. Bill Pronzini considers him the king of alternative classic writers. Anthony Boucher said that you either “got” Keeler or you didn’t, and in either case there was no point in trying to explain him. Boucher himself was a major Keeler fan.

The Man Who Changed His Skin was published by an odd little company called Ramble House, then headquartered in Shreveport, Louisiana. (They’ve since moved to Vancleave, Mississippi.) The book was in a peculiar format, no bigger than a deck of pinochle cards. I was intrigued. I wrote to the publisher and got an email back from the owner of Ramble House, one Fender Tucker. We hit it off at once, and before very long Ramble House was publishing *Marblehead: A Novel of H.P. Lovecraft*, a book that I’d written in 1976 and that had got caught up in a tangle involving a variety of editors and publishers. I’d long since given up hope of its ever being published, but—*lo! and behold!*—there it was in print at last, all glorious 476 pages of it.

The book got brilliant reviews in publications ranging from *Locus* to *Publishers Weekly* to *Bookgasm* to *Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine*. Fender Tucker told me that it was a bestseller. Bestseller, of course, on the very modest scale of a micropublisher. Still, I was delighted with the experience. I’d got a monkey off my back after thirty years, gained some nice notices, and even made a few shekels into the bargain.

Ramble House went on to publish several more of my books: *The Universal Holmes*, *The Compleat Ova Hamlet*, and *The Organ Reader*, a compilation of material from a long-defunct periodical to which I’d been a frequent contributor. I also did some copy-editing and proofreading for Ramble House, and even a little discreet (and calculatedly anonymous) ghost-collaboration on one or two books that really needed help.



By which time Fender Tucker floored me by suggesting a private label, an imprint of my own under the umbrella of Ramble House. I hesitated momentarily, until my beloved spouse threatened to leave me if I didn’t take Fender up on the offer.

What to call it? Lupoff Books? Nah! I don’t have the ego for that. Lexington Review Press? I liked that but nobody else did. Surinam Turtle Press? Everybody loved that. Gavin O’Keefe, the art director and chief designer at Ramble House created a nifty logo for us. All I had to do was rent an office suite, hire a staff, and start buying manuscripts. But—*whoops!*—there was one tiny problem. No budget.

I don’t mean a limited budget. I don’t mean a very limited budget. I mean, *no* budget. Not a nickel.

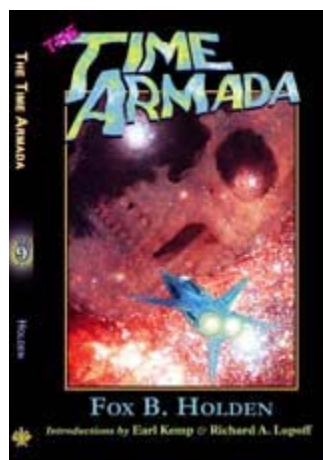
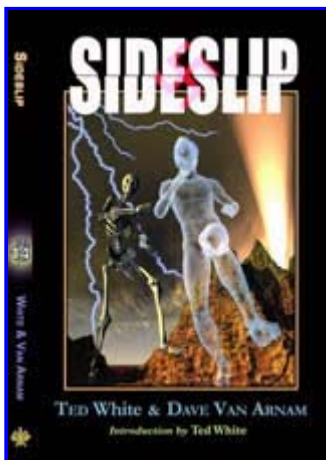
Take note, please, that I am not accusing Fender Tucker of being a cheapskate. He is anything but that. However, Ramble House—and now, Surinam Turtle Press— works on the narrowest of margins. All books are published via POD—Print on Demand

—technology. All marketing is done via a couple of websites, that of Ramble House itself and that of its POD provider. Well, I've managed to get the books into a few bookstores, and Fender has sold 'em to several on-line dealers, but that expansion is just getting started. There are no sales reps, there's no catalog, there's no advertising.

It takes some real capital to get a publishing house going, if you want to do it the way I would have hoped. But that isn't the way we've done it. Not a matter of choice. It's just the way things are.

We do pay standard royalties to authors, but in all honesty, the money anyone makes writing for Ramble House or Surinam Turtle Press will never attract the scrutiny of the Internal Revenue Service.

The first few STP books are a set of reissues of works by Gelett Burgess, a once-famous, now largely forgotten, American author. He was really good, and I hope that we'll spark at least a small revival of interest in his works. We're reissuing *Sideslip*, a truly fine and unjustly overlooked 1968 novel by Ted White and Dave Van Arnam.



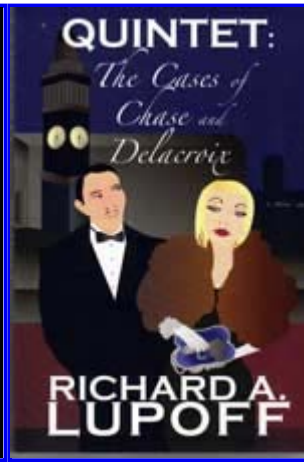
After considerable effort we obtained the rights to *The Time Armada*, the one and only novel by Fox B. Holden, a pulpster of the 1940s and '50s. Holden wrote for *Astounding Science Fiction*, *Super Science Stories*, *Planet Stories*, *Space Stories*, *Startling Stories*, and *Worlds of If*.

All of his fiction was in the short story to novelette range except for *The Time Armada*, a serial that ran in *Imagination Stories of Science and Fantasy* in 1953.

We were incredibly lucky to get *A Shot Rang Out: Selected Criticism*, by Jon L. Breen, by far the premier reviewer in the mystery field today.

And I'll confess that I yielded to pressure by certain unnamed parties to reissue one of my own early novels, *The Forever City*. Our art director, Gavin O'Keefe, does some of our covers himself. But we've been lucky enough to get some by Steve Stiles and Dick "Ditmar" Jenssen. I've been working with Gavin to upgrade the physical design of our books, and I think they're pretty handsome.

There's lots more coming up, including a couple of books concerning which I really don't want to tip my hand, lest another editor swoop down and snatch 'em away from me. But they're going to be great fun.



Surinam Turtle Press. I'm running a publishing house at last. It's only been 58 years since I spent half of my weekly allowance to buy that first issue of *Galaxy*. Fifty-eight years since Horace Gold became my hero, the man I wanted to emulate. Maybe the long wait made the meal all the tastier.

I'm lovin' it!

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For additional information, contact Ramble House / Surinam Turtle Press at:
www.ramblehouse.com Magazine cover scans courtesy Jacques Hamon Collection
http://www.noosfere.com/showcase/pulps_magazines_america.htm .

Epitaph: "The good Earth—we could have saved it, but we were too damn cheap and lazy."
—Kurt Vonnegut, 10/99 *Salon* interview

SLODGE

By Jerry Murray

Part 1: Slodge—Extinct, or Merely Dormant

In a 2005 book titled *Sin-A-Rama*, subtitled *Sleaze: Sex Paperbacks of the Sixties*, Earl Kemp described me as “one of the all-time, least-known, best-selling writers...” of pornography, A.K.A. porn, erotic fiction, adult entertainment novels, dirty books, smut, and currently sought by collectors as Sleaze.

I freely admit writing a good deal of sleaze at the beginning and end of my brief tenure as a popular paperback writer, which spanned an era of important cultural revolution. But while writing this piece for *eI*, I belatedly realized that in the course of my fondly remembered literary career, I inadvertently created an entirely new literary genre.

When I first started writing for money, my literary education was so limited that I hardly knew the meaning of the word, and from then on, I was enjoying myself too much to analyze what was driving the continuing demand for whatever emerged from my well-traveled sausage grinder, A.K.A. typewriter. Now, in the aftermath of my energetic youth and the dawning of my perceptive abilities, I have given my genre a title of its own. Its acronym is based on the fact that the best of my bestsellers were simple stories about ordinary people, tastefully packaged within a structure of Sex, Love, Obsession, Desire, Guilt, and Eccentric sexual behaviors. Put all these fascinating human foibles and frailties together in an energetically seething grab-bag, and my genre was, and may rise again as SLODGE.

I might never have sold a word of any kind of fiction if it hadn't been for the Gilbert Toy Co. chemistry set I got for my ninth birthday from one of my mother's boyfriends. A suit and tie chemical engineer from Texaco, Doc Emmons brought fruit baskets and conversation to our L.A. bungalow while we were quarantined for three weeks in the polio epidemic summer of 1939, after my sister Jean was taken to Children's Hospital with infantile paralysis. Not allowed near us, Doc would leave his gifts on the porch and talk with Hedy through the screen door, while I happily stunk up the house with chemicals that were still seething within my vacuous cranial cavity a decade later, when I was at L.A. City College taking everything from shorthand to organic chemistry to Greek philosophy, and still not knowing what I wanted to be when I grew up.

Jobs were plentiful and education was cheap, but if I didn't get serious about getting a BS degree, I'd be drafted into the Korean War. But instead of taking calculus or drafting, I had enrolled in a creative writing class taught by a pompous old windbag with a habit of launching into extemporaneous lectures about the rewards of teaching the proper use of the English language to boobs like us. In one of his blabberings he got around to belittling majors like history and business administration, and went on to say, “The worst of all possible majors is chemical engineering, which should be called comical engineering, because the curriculum is so difficult that nine out of ten aspiring chemical engineers drop out before their junior year, and those who graduate and actually work as chemical engineers die of exposure to poisonous chemicals before they're forty.”

“I'll show you!” I muttered, and enrolled in USC's chemical engineering school before I got caught in the draft.

I soon realized the old geezer was right.

I'd been living rent-free at home and working part-time jobs throughout my four years at LACC, so I figured I could afford USC's \$16/unit tuition for two years. But in my haste to start making professional money, I signed up for a full load of sixteen units before being informed in a letter from the registrar that most of the classes I'd taken at junior college would not be transferable to USC. That academic earthquake was followed by aftershocks, like the cost of university caliber textbooks, breakage fees for laboratory classes, a landslide of homework, and to top it all off, a blown engine in my classic '41 convertible Buick Roadmaster.

A junk yard took it in exchange for a '35 Ford, whose growling transmission told me I'd soon be out of my good paying job as a process server and probably dropping out of USC before the end of my first year. I was so discouraged I was even thinking about transferring to UCLA, and settling for a degree in stodgy old chemistry, until a double-barreled salvo of luck hit me in an otherwise tedious laboratory class called quantitative analysis.

The first lucky blast came from a Portuguese chem student named Manny, who got me a well-paying job to replace him as a lab assistant in a chemical company near the USC campus. Then, in that very same class, I met George, a Mexican/Greek chem. e. major who invited me to join a study group that met every weekend to help one another get through USC. Thanks to that quaint class, the three years I spent at USC were the epitome of college life at a major university as a member of a private fraternity of four guys who enjoyed football games, wine dinners, study sessions, and girls. We remain close friends now, over sixty years after getting our chem. e. diplomas.

In the twelve years that followed I earned a good living by working all over the country as a chemical engineer, married and fathered two kids, divorced, changed jobs several times and enjoyed every one of the jobs I held. Except for the one in Long Beach, CA, which began as my dream job.

For two backbreaking years I was fully immersed in the inspirationally rewarding career I'd yearned for ever since getting that damned Gilbert chemistry set. When the scales were jerked from my eyes, my dream job turned out to be an international con job, complete with industrial espionage, corporate greed, and pharmaceutical felonies, all interwoven with mundane personal matters like divorce, suicide, and remarriage to Dianne, substance abuse, and righteous anger. I was so goddamned mad I felt like writing a book about those terrible years, which in fact, I did.

But as I had experienced at the start of my great years at USC, life often rewards survivors of bad times with good, like getting my new wife and me out of gloomy old Long Beach and into bright new jobs in sunny San Diego, where I was hired to start up a brand new pilot plant for synthesizing sodium cellulose sulfate, and Di easily found secretarial work in the linguistics department of UCSD. The liberal attitude of the grad students made her job quite enjoyable, and while mine was a piece of cake compared to the one before it, I continued to simmer with anger at my former employer's corporate turpitude and its total disregard for innocent employees like me. With time on my hands and rage in my soul, I started listing the incidents that might provide grounds for bankrupting the entire pharmaceutical industry.

But to get some redress, I had to deliver my message to a mass audience, perhaps in the form of a best-selling book, like the one by Sinclair Lewis that made the meat packing industry clean itself up. The obvious route to revenge was a novel about industrial espionage, featuring a private eye like Mickey Spillane, who opens up a Pandora's box of corporate theft, collusion, price fixing, and insider trading that sends the executives of the world's most respected industry to jail. Or maybe he'd be an undercover agent for the FDA, fashioned after James Bond, President Kennedy's fictional favorite. In my blockbuster novel, he'd be an idealistic young chemical engineer, duped into being party to his employer's international chicanery before wising up and revealing the festering scope of its vile sins against the sick and the weak and the naïve, like he once was. I'd call him Hal Munday. And after cleaning up the pharmaceutical industry, in his sequel he'd put an end to industrial pollution. All I'd have to do was change the names in my story so I wouldn't be sued for liable, and if I put my heart and soul in it, and got lucky, I might even sell it.

But first I had to write it.

I picked up a yard sale Remington portable for ten bucks and started banging away at it two hours every morning and two more after work. Di was a big help. She knew the story from the inside, while I knew it from out in the plant. The pages poured out of us and we finished it in six months and sent it off to Crown Books, a New York publishing firm we'd chosen at random.

My anger flew away with the mail, and Di and I went out for a lavish dinner at Mr. A's, drinking and talking about the good times we were going to have now that we'd purged ourselves and were carefree San Diegans.

Her post grad students were heavy partygoers, and we drank and smoked pot with the best of them. They liked to talk about their theses, and were unimpressed to hear I'd submitted a manuscript for a novel. No matter, we were content with our jobs and having a good time until I got a letter from Millen Brand, Senior Editor at Crown Books, who said my book was powerfully written, but needed appreciable editing before it could be seriously considered for publication. He further said he was retiring, and would take my MS on as a personal project at no charge until it was accepted for publication.

It was a bombshell that blew us apart. It sent me back to my morning and evening writing regimen, frantically trying to keep up with Mr. Brand's professional editing suggestions, while Di's literary interest was eclipsed by her effort to get a private pilot's license. My work was still boring and we didn't have time for a lot of fun, and after several months of mailing the latest revisions to New York and immediately getting Mr. Brand's latest suggestions, I told him I appreciated his generosity, and would try to sell my book elsewhere.

Every publisher I sent it to returned it with a rejection slip. I was crushed, but not defeated.

Determined to salvage something from a year of writing and rewriting, I rationalized that, if nothing else, I had acquired enough of the discipline skills of writing fiction to have another try at it. But on this go-round, lowered my sights and did my market research at the corner liquor store.

Now it's supermarkets, then it was liquor stores that had display racks of paperback novels categorized into western, detective, and sex themes. I bought copies of all three, and not knowing much about stagecoaches and branding irons, or cop cars and fingerprints, I would eliminate any research by writing a sex novel.

A novel is simply a book-length story, but the permissible extent of sex mentioned in the story has continually changed with the times. Explicitly sexual graphics showing hetero- and homosexual congress had long been seen in museums displaying ancient Greek and Roman art. And a few years later, when I was a teenager, a very popular novel called *Forever Amber* had been so scandalously written that, even though its sexual happenings had been inferred rather than described, public libraries refused to handle it. The content of the sex novels I was studying lay somewhere in between, with a luridly libidinous cover illustration to draw the reader into a story about people who, for one lame reason or another, got together for sexual events with bulging loins, heaving bosoms, and yearning thighs rather than the four-letter words used to describe the anatomical equipment employed by characters in the fiendishly arousing two-page dirty stories passed from hand to sweaty hand when I was in junior high.

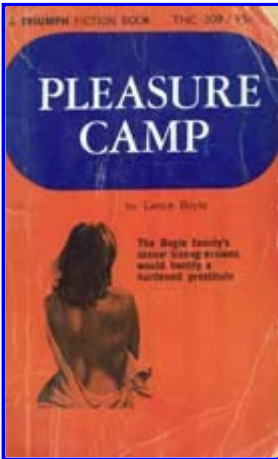
Getting caught with one of those dirty stories could get a guy expelled from school for a few days, and twenty-five years later, I was under the impression that the U.S. Post Office was responsible for prosecuting people for writing and publishing novels using too many naughty words like penis, vagina, and breasts, or just one or two obscene words like cock, cunt, and tit, in describing everyday behaviors like fucking, sucking, and whatever else energetic people do together. So to play it safe, I would write my novel under the same pseudonym I would use to rent a POB, thus avoiding arrest and disgrace if I overstepped the limits of Puritanism and stumbled into prurience. When the clerk at the Post Office asked me for my I.D as Lance Boyle, I left, badly flustered, and came back and rented a box for J. Murray, figuring they'd never catch me on my one and only stab at mailing a manuscript that might in any way be construed as obscene.

I loaded it with as much sex as possible, and a minimum of love. To set it apart from the paperback samples I'd read, I wrote it in the first person as the confessions of a beautiful young virgin seduced by a lesbian, and then very guiltily feeling obsessed to seduce other innocent young women before losing her old-fashioned heterosexual virginity to a guy she comes to love. Without a carbon copy and plenty of typos, I knocked the MS out in three weeks and mailed it to one of the several New York publishers of sexy paperbacks. I didn't send it to Greenleaf Classics, the publisher of most of the liquor store sex novels, because Greenleaf was headquartered in San Diego, and I wanted to be as far away as possible from anything that might connect a respectable family man and engineer like me with the pornography business.

I waited a week before checking my PO Box, but not before walking past it several times to see if I was being staked out by the Smut Patrol. A few weeks later I was thrilled to find a letter postmarked New York and addressed to Miss J. Murray, saying they liked my story but found it to be too explicitly sexual to publish without some editing, and they were sending me samples of their more acceptable books together with my rejected MS. Two weeks later I wrote to tell them I hadn't received the package, and when they didn't answer that or my following letter, I realized the east coast sonsabitches had screwed me out of three weeks of hard work, which they would publish under a title and pseudonym of their choice.

Stubbornly, and in the end very thankfully, I refused to give up, and started on a more mainstream sex novel, about a discontented married couple with a rebellious teenage daughter whose collective unhappiness stems from unfulfilled sexual yearnings as they leave for a vacation in the family trailer. I still have a copy of the book, called *Pleasure Camp*, by Lance Boyle, priced at 95 cents, its front cover illustrated with a rear view of a near nude woman, with a blurb promising that, “The Bogle family’s sexual transgressions would horrify a hardened prostitute.” To forestall any possible legal problems, like the statutory rape of a fictitious minor, the back cover blurb says the daughter is eighteen years old and “already an expert in the many varieties of love-making,” and goes on to mention her father’s erotic fantasies and her mother’s passionate desires.

The cover is a distortion of a farcical tale of how the Bogles experience the sexual obsessions and desires they’ve been secretly yearning for, only to find that their partners in forbidden sex are people with personalities they can not stand, and they return from vacation as a unified, happy family.



I sent it off to a publisher called FAME in Van Nuys, California, partly because their paperback sex books were fairly well written and contained some humor, but mainly because they were within an hour and a half from San Diego, so I could drive up there and raise some personal hell if they tried to rip off my work as the New York sonsabitches had.

I waited to hear from them with my anger on simmer, and was ready to head north at high speed when a letter came saying they liked my work well enough to buy my MS for \$200, check enclosed!

I was thrilled, Di astonished, and we spent a fourth of my two-year literary income for dinner at the Hotel del Coronado, the fanciest place in town. If I could keep up the pace, the two hundred bucks boiled down to less than a hundred bucks a week for being a paid author, not enough to live on, but getting paid anything at all put me in the ranks of real, honest-to-God professional writers, which had its own rewards. Like my increased prestige at the UCSD parties, for now I was not just the engineer who could roll joints and try to write a serious novel, but a published author of a dirty book. My far more important reward was my ability to escape at any time to another world, populated with people of my own making, doing whatever bizarre things that popped into my head.

I sent FAME another MS, and another and another, and for the fourth one they bumped my pay to \$250 and told me to hold off on sending more until they could catch up with their backlog of MSs. Our letters had been increasingly cordial, so I wrote them to say I’d be up to L.A. on business and wanted to take them to lunch. They said fine, so I took a day off and excitedly headed north, anxious to see the inner workings of a dirty book publishing house.

FAME was an office over a drug store on Lancaster Boulevard, crowded with bundles of paperbacks stacked against the walls and two typewriter desks piled high with MSs, at which Charlie and Jack, FAME’s sole proprietors, worked.

Charlie was a middle-aged bachelor with a polio limp who worked nights to be a

playwright, and Jack was a family man in his thirties, writing the great American novel from midnight till dawn while his infant kids were asleep. A far cry from the crooks I expected, they were very nice guys who spent their days writing some of the MSs they published, buying a few others from amateur writers like me, arranging for the cover art and the printing, and in their spare time, hustling liquor stores and porn shops to carry FAME's line of dirty books.

"This business is all a matter of distribution," said Jack over hot dogs at The Tail of the Pup.

"And good distribution" added Charlie, "means convincing more stores to carry your books, and getting more space in the bookracks of stores that already do."

After paying the author, the cover artist, the printer, gofers to restock liquor store racks and get rid of the books that hadn't sold, Jack and Charlie kept FAME's overhead low by not being dragged into court for violating state obscenity laws. It followed, they said, that bigger porn publishers enjoyed very profitable sales while the smaller ones struggled to stay alive.

I explained that I truly enjoyed writing sexy pulp fiction, and asked what they thought of my chances to make a living at it.

"None," they replied. "Even writing porn full time, nobody can turn out a book every week and expect to sell everything that comes out of his sausage grinder."

Sausage grinder—that's where I picked up the term for a typewriter. I've often wondered how Charlie and Jack fared as porn publishers in pursuit of their loftier literary goals.

I refused to let myself believe their expert opinion, and having already started on my next book when they temporarily turned off the FAME tap, I searched the bookracks for another California sex novel publisher that might buy my effort. Star Books had a POB zip code in Hollywood, so I sent them my unsolicited MS with a letter saying I came to L.A. almost every week and would appreciate meeting with them to talk about exactly what kind of sex books they were buying.

BAM, within a week I had Star's check for \$200 and a scribbled note on the firm's note pad from Larry Ross, the firm's president, telling me to call him to set up a meeting in Hollywood. He was a tall, brash New York Jew, a loud-mouthed version of my boyhood pal Jake, and we got along fine over lunch at a Hollywood diner, where he showed me the girlie photo magazines that were his primary publications. He said he liked my writing style, and although he couldn't promise to buy more of my MSs because he was still testing the paperback market, he'd keep our business relationship alive by paying me to write humorous captions for the pictures of thinly clad women in his girlie mags. I didn't get paid much for doing it, and forged on with another sex book in which I exercised all I'd learned about writing for money. And after having groveled enough with the small-timers, this one would be submitted to the big guy, Greenleaf Classics.

They were not just big, but bold and published their street address in San Diego, which turned out to be in an impressively modern building in Mission Valley. Jack and Charlie had told me that Greenleaf and other big paperback publishers had well established stables of writers, but be that as it may, I figured I might get some encouragement to keep trying, if not an actual offer for my 40,000 word submission.

It wasn't long before I got a letter from Earl Kemp, Greenleaf's Editor-in-Chief, thanking me for sending Greenleaf my manuscript and hoping to see more of my work, with a check enclosed for \$600!

Part 2: The Birth of the SLODGE or The Genesis of the Genre

When the check didn't bounce I spent a hundred bucks on an Olivetti electric with built-in correction ribbon and started on another sex novel before Mr. Kemp could re-read my MS and change his mind. And Greenleaf sent me \$600 for *that* one, along with a letter from Mr. Kemp asking me to call him to discuss Greenleaf's future needs. After talking with a soft-spoken man with a velvety southern accent, I went to meet him at San Diego's big bad porn factory in the middle of fashionable Mission Valley.

Greenleaf occupied the first two floors of the building (and the big boss, William Hamling, occupied the entire fourth-floor penthouse suite) in which an elevator whooshed me up to a stylishly modern lobby, where the firm's girlie mags and paperbacks were on proud display, with cover art looking artistic and literary rather than pornographic. When I told the pretty young receptionist who I was, she said Mr. Kemp was waiting to meet me.

He was a slender man of my age, with sandy hair long at the nape of his neck and receding from the fair skin of his forehead. He put a hand on my shoulder to guide me through the pleasantly busy suite of sunny offices where clean-looking young folks were talking on phones, typing on IBM electrics, and smiling as they hustled past us with what I thought might be galley proofs, which I'd heard of but never seen.

I was shown Greenleaf's layout department, and their voluminous files of sexy photos on the way to his office, which looked out on a magnificent view of Mission Valley to the Pacific, and on its walls were framed originals of the cover art for a few of Greenleaf's many published books. He learned I was a fully employed engineer, just starting to write sex novels on the side, and I learned that Greenleaf had recently relocated to San Diego from Chicago, where it had published only science fiction before joining the growing wave of demand for erotic fiction.

"Greenleaf didn't start the wave, but we caught it at a very opportune time," he said. "In the early 1950s, fifty years of very strict censorship imposed on publishers by a self-appointed anti-vice crusader named Anthony Comstock was ended when an unscrupulous father and son team named Kahane somehow got hold of a huge collection of erotica in Paris known as the Travellers Companion Books.

"The collection included novels like Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, and other highly respected literary works that had been banned from most of the English speaking public. Without bothering with permissions or observing copyright laws, the Kahanes reprinted the best of the collection and sold millions of copies of the erotica of previous eras, like Ovid's *Art of Love*, and *My Secret Life*, the sexual autobiography of an obscure Victorian gentleman, and the hugely popular *Fanny Hill*, the story of an innocent 18th century English girl who copulates and otherwise screws her way to fame as a highly paid courtesan.

"Other publishers followed the Kahane's lead, and Bill Hamling, our owner, incorporated Greenleaf Classics to capitalize on the rage for erotic fiction by publishing the copies the Kahanes had made of the Travellers Companion Books. By then the legality hardly

mattered, because the copyrighting confusion had thrown a great deal of the world's published erotica into the public domain. Bringing the old erotica out in the open was so profitable that a generation of new erotic was born, exemplified by Hugh Hefner's *Playboy*, Vince Miranda's chain of Pussycat theaters that showed explicitly sexual movies like Linda Lovelace's *Deep Throat*, and Greenleaf Classics.

"We had all the resources needed to take the lead in erotic paperbacks—a good editorial staff, reliable printing firms, good distribution through the same outlets that handled our science fiction publications, and access to sf authors who wanted to try their hand at writing porn. Put it all together and it's worked so well for us that Greenleaf is America's most successful publisher of erotica.

"That's our story, Jerry, and from what little we've seen of your work, we'd like you to write for us on a regular basis, if you're interested."

Heck yes, I'm interested! I almost shouted, before Earl went on.

"Greenleaf counts its success not only in terms of profit and loss, but also in defending the Constitutional rights of America's citizens as defined by the First Amendment, which guarantees America's citizens freedom of speech and freedom of the press. A constitutional attorney we keep on retainer keeps us current on federal and state rulings differentiating obscenity from entertainment, and in turn, we keep our writers up to date the latest dos and don'ts in erotic wordage and photographs. By constantly going one small step beyond whatever the law of the land is currently defining as pornography, our authors' literary output is instrumental in putting an end to government censorship.

"But enough of today's lesson in the life and times of commercialized smut," Earl said from behind his lazy smile. "I've been yakking too long," he went on from behind his lazy smile. "And I'm sure you're anxious to get back to your job at Kelco. Before you go, I want to give you two books that should be helpful in your career as a writer."

One was *The Elements of Style*, by Strunk and White, a slim volume perennially beneficial for writers of everything from business letters to hard core porn to blurbs on cereal boxes. The other exemplified the currently acceptable language used in a sex novel authored by John Dexter, which Earl said was a widely used pseudonym on loan to writers who needed a payday or two while trying to sell their first serious novel. Some of them became best selling authors, some vanished into obscurity, but all of them wrote some porn and were glad to get the money without the notoriety.



"If you do write books for us, you won't continue to write as Lance Boyle, because that's just a tad too corny for a big shot porn publisher like Greenleaf. The name I'd like you to use when you write for Greenleaf is Ray Majors. And if it isn't too much trouble, instead of mailing it to us, I'd appreciate your dropping your next manuscript off with me and letting Greenleaf take us to lunch."

I left Greenleaf's offices elated. I had a well paying new career ahead of me for doing work I truly enjoyed, plus the considerable benefit of striking a blow for the Constitutional rights of Americans. As a base for getting more deeply involved in a second career, I held a

responsible engineering job with one of San Diego's most respected chemical manufacturers, and as insurance against financial disaster, Di was drawing a good salary at UCSD.

But in the reality, I had only a foot in the door of the best in the porn business, so when I wasn't keeping my wonderful Olivetti busy, I was devouring every word in the *Elements of Style*, though it made me wince at some of the clumsy English I'd used in my novels. Since then I've given several copies of its later editions to aspiring writers. I also sought out and found advice from authors like Dostoyevski, who told his brother to tear up the first page of his fiction stories and get right into the action. And Flaubert, who said, "If a shotgun is hanging over the mantel of a living room described on the first page of a novel, somewhere in the book the gun must be taken own and fired." And throughout my two careers as a professional writer, I read and reread the mystery/adventure novels of John D. MacDonald, the John Grisham of forty years ago.

Greenleaf was steadily buying my output, but with no illusions about my extra paydays going on forever, and with real estate prices low, Di and I bought a nice three bedroom, one bath house in Normal Heights, with two cozy rentals units in back.



My lunch meetings with Earl continued, beginning with him giving me pointers about writing readable porn, and segued into planning family excursions into Baja California, with the Kemps in their 4WD Chevy Blazer, the Murrays in our old CJ5 Jeep, and other new friends in whatever vehicles they had that could handle Mexico's back country roads.

Sometimes Earl would be out of town on business for weeks at a time, ferreting classic erotic literature out from bazaars and flea markets all over the world, and he always came back successful in his task, and asking what I'd written while he was gone. Di and I were seeing more of my kids and our families and friends in L.A., and with the exception of a deepening tedium with my work at Kelco, our move to San Diego continued to be very good to us.

The problem at Kelco was that every pilot plant reaction we ran was the same, except for the cotton fiber we sulfated, which was found to be the determining factor in the viscosity of the final product, a rather important property in a thickening agent. Long staple cotton fibers sulfated into a high viscosity thickener, which was of considerable interest to Kodak, and short staple cotton produced an SCS that Kelco's salesmen could hardly give away.

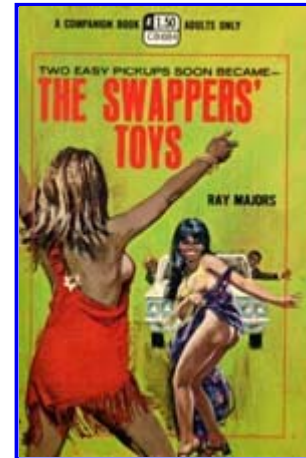
A respite from this techno-tedium came when Carl Hauck, head of engineering, announced that, in addition to extracting agar, Kelco was also going to extract mannitol from the giant kelp it harvested. I was disappointed that I wouldn't be part of the team that was going to develop the mannitol process because I was needed to somehow diversify the SCS reaction to include every cotton fiber known to man and beast. Kelco had already patented two of my improvements on the process, but seeing my name on a patent wasn't nearly as exciting as seeing Ray Majors' pseudonym on the paperbacks at the corner liquor store racks.

After talking it over with Di, I turned in my resignation. When Carl asked what my plans were, I told him I was going to try to make my living writing pulp fiction, and he exclaimed, “I can’t let you quit your job and see you pin your hopes on a pie in the sky career as a writer!”

“Sure you can,” said I. “It was great working for you and for Kelco, and I hope we can keep in touch.”

I said a few goodbyes and was outta chemical engineering forever and on my way home—after a short stop at Beasley’s Friendly Corner.

At the corner of 12th and Market, Beasley’s was a convivially crummy old saloon where you could gab with cab drivers, hotel maids, produce workers, prostitutes, retirees, and other characters who couldn’t afford a car or a spacious apartment. But I was about the only one at the bar in the early hours of that afternoon, and as I sat in the quiet and sipped my beer, I heard myself mutter, “You fucking idiot, what in the name of God have you done!”



Seven years of hard-earned college and fourteen years of experience as a highly paid chemical engineer, and I’d thrown it all out the window. How could I have been so stupid, so rash, so disgustingly conceited as to give it all up in the ridiculous hopes of becoming an author of any kind of novels. Maybe if I hurried back and crawled up the stairs to Carl’s office...

“NO!” I exclaimed, slamming my beer bottle against the bar. “I know how to write books that sell, and I am going to make a good living at it!”

But could I stand to live with myself if I made my living writing dirty books? I’d never written one containing any four-letter words, and Earl would keep me from straying into obscenity in writing erotic literature in Greenleaf’s crusade for freedom of the press. But if I kept at it, it might not be long before I was using words like fuck and cunt in my books, and perhaps in conversations. A little of that kind of language might be okay in Dianne’s liberal college crowd, but my USC friends would scorn me and my mother and sister would disown me if they knew I wrote dirty books for a living. And what about Dianne’s church-going parents, who already hated me for luring their daughter into marrying a man fourteen years her senior?

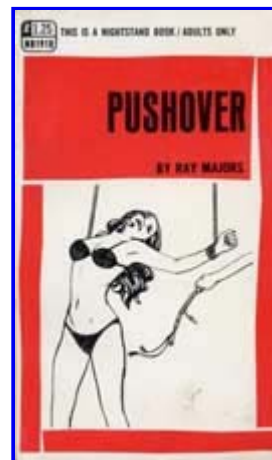
Too many questions and no answers beyond getting on the typewriter and tastefully but pornographically writing my ass off, and still not being able to make a decent living by turning out a book a month for Earl and maybe another for Larry, or for FAME, bringing my monthly income to maybe eight hundred bucks—providing I sold every word that came out of my extravagant new Olivetti sausage grinder. I went home almost sick at my stomach with self-doubt and depression.

Dianne took the disastrous news with equanimity. She was always good about things like that. She ignored my boozy maunderings and said, “It looks like its time for you to get serious about being a writer. While you’re writing for Greenleaf, are you going to do a rewrite on your novel about the pharmaceutical industry?”

I knew that good writing consisted of rewriting, but I hated rewriting, and was sick of that damned book. So I committed myself to writing solely for Greenleaf until I was sure I could have a steady income, with a little extra to be on the safe side. But I still had my doubts, and when Earl and I got together and I told him I may have been premature in deciding to quit engineering and make a full-time living as a porn writer, he just smiled and said, “Good. There’s a photographer I want you to meet. I’ll ask him to drive down from L.A. next week.”

There were two photographers waiting for me in Earl’s office. The bearded one was Stan Sohler, a big, jolly man some ten years older than me, who shot and packaged monthly nudist magazines for Greenleaf. The big handsome guy some fifteen years my junior was Stan’s son Gary, who shot and packaged girlie magazines for Greenleaf.

Earl said both were very successful at their specialties, and went on to say, “The pictures Gary takes for his packages are in two or three page sequences that tell a simple little story about what the model likes to do when she’s not modeling. He uses props like a tennis racket or a basketball to show she’s athletic as well as beautiful, or a book to show she can read. Now that you’re out of your forty-hour job, I’d like to see what you and Gary can come up with in the way of some photo-illustrated novels with sexual themes.”



Intrigued by the idea, and flattered as well, I took Gary to our house to talk about the logistics of our venture, and we worked out what seemed like a viable plan of attack.

I’d write an outline in which a limited number of characters engaged in progressive foreplay in a story that took place in one location, with no complete nudity and no all-the-way sex. I’d mail it to Gary in Manhattan Beach, and he’d find a suitable setting, get any props we might need, and hire the models. We’d meet at the scene of the story, where I would direct our actors and Gary would shoot the action in 35 mm black and white, with a few color 2¼ x 2¼ shots for the cover and a possible centerfold.

Our first shooting was in a luxurious Hollywood home with a pool table, where our actors would be playing strip pool. While they were showing more and more naked flesh from interesting angles, they’d be discussing racial issues, because one of the two couples was African American. The story developed as their conversations synchronized with Gary’s photos showing them overcoming their inhibitions about interracial sexual relations, until each couple is shown wandering off to separate bedrooms, and is now of mixed race.

Through the modeling school he regularly used for his girlie magazines, Gary hired the actors and location. Each of the models cost us ten bucks an hour, plus lunch, and I think we paid fifty bucks for the use of the empty house, complete with the pool table and cues as props. The models were young, good-looking, and feeling good about making some money, and we finished with the shooting in half a day.

As we were paying them, the white girl said, “I want you to do me a very important favor. After almost a year here in Hollywood, I know I’ll never make it anywhere close to big in either movies or modeling, so I’ll be using my forty dollars for a bus ride back home to Ohio. What I want you to do—and I’ll pay you for it—is send me ten copies of the book

you'll be writing, so I can show my grandchildren what I looked like and did when I was young and wild." By now she'd be in her sixties, and I'm sure her kids and grandkids are properly proud of her.



At a photo shoot in *Canyon de Guadalupe*, Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico, Jose Loya (in his 90s), who originally homesteaded the mineral-spring resort, is shown (right photo) showing Indian relics to Earl Kemp and Harold Butler. In the left photo, two of the models hired for *Hang-up Canyon*, enjoy one of the many hot-water baths.

For our first joint effort, *Winner Takes All*, Earl paid us \$2,200, and asked us for more of the same!

By refining our shootings we were able to do two in a day, and the writing and back and forth mailing added up to several days for each finished product, so each of us was netting about a thousand bucks for a week's work. Doing two of these double shootings every month left me time to also write a non-illustrated novel for Greenleaf every month, for which I was getting about eight hundred bucks.

Di and I went a bit crazy with all that money...but not completely insane. In the course of the next few months we bought a magnificent FWD International Harvester Travelall with AC, a spotlight and a luggage rack, a 16' ski boat, and a nice clean triplex in midtown San Diego. That last was an investment in our future, because we still knew very well that my recognition as a paid author of anything at all couldn't last.

But last it did, and along with the money came a lot of fun with Gary and Gloria.

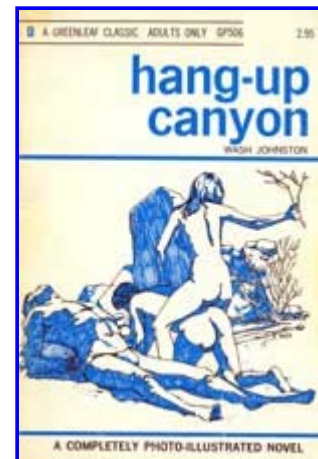
The breaks after the morning shoot were always great fun. Di and Gloria put some fine lunches together, which our models always ate in the nude, feeling good after a job well done with new friends. I also remember an afternoon shoot where the ranch house setting got cancelled out at the last minute, so rather than send the models home, we decided to do it in Gary and Gloria's house in Manhattan Beach.

Much of the action was in their back yard, well screened from their neighbors by thick hedges as the models cavorted and chased one another, laughing and tickling and rolling around on the grass. We'd no sooner paid the models off and bade them goodnight when a knock at the back door announced the presence of the Sohlers' next door neighbor's wife, and her housewife friend from next door to her. Gary and Gloria had been almost paranoid about the neighborhood finding out that pornographers lived on the block. And

now we laughed with them when their neighbors asked if they could star in the Sohler's next naughty epic.

This incident illustrates the very mixed attitudes people had about the emergence of then current erotica. Open marriages and explorational sexual behavior was peeping out of the guilty closet, in keeping with the attitudes and feelings people had about the hippie movement that was changing virtually every aspect of life, music, art, fashion, politics, and protest in America.

Another last minute model substitution illustrates how quickly various peoples' perceptions of sex can change. This one took place high in the Silverlake hills, in a splendid old mansion that had long been abandoned and taken over by squatters, who had trashed everything but the master bedroom, with an oversized bed completely surrounded by mirrors, more on the walls and ceiling, every place but on the floor. Our story line called for two girls and one guy model, and although the girls arrived right on time for the early morning shoot, the guy didn't show. We waited. We discussed Gary or me subbing for him, quickly abandoned that idea, and were creating an ad hoc two-girl scenario when off in the distance a cloud of dust materialized into a guy on a motorcycle, racing up to announce that, "Jim can't make it, so he said to go ahead without him."



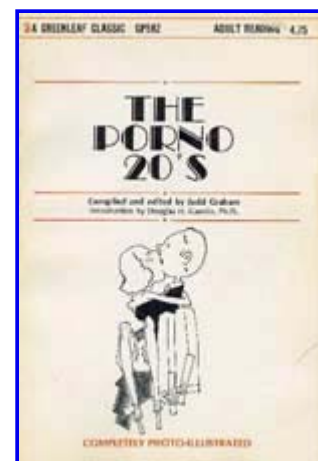
And as he started to leave, Gary said, "Hey, wait a minute. Who are you and what are you doing this morning?"

"Who, me? I'm Jim's cousin. Just got here from Missouri, and today I'm gonna have me a look at Hollywood."

"Hollywood'll still be there tomorrow. But the forty bucks you can earn this morning won't be."

"What do I have to do?"

All the kid from Missouri had to do was gradually take off all his clothes and, at our direction, roll around on the bed with the increasingly naked girls, always keeping his erection—if he had one—out of view of the camera's all seeing eye. He did indeed have an erection, strictly forbidden for viewing by that era's gentle readers of porn, but it remained at least partially visible no matter how hard he tried to hide it. We were about to have him masturbate himself into a more legally acceptable condition when the girls discovered they were each three months with child, and from that point on, as they discussed every detail of their pregnancies, the boy's excitement was easily concealed.



Our attitude about matters sexual also changed. In this regard, Gary still reminds me of the day of the cucumber. It began with a morning shoot of a lesbian story in which a cucumber was brandished but never quite used as a dildo. For the afternoon shoot, the cuke was positioned inside male model's Jockey shorts, very clearly indicating, but never really showing, the huge erection at work

in the guy's bulging underwear. And that evening at the Sohlers' house, the cucumber, peeled and sliced, successfully encored in the dinner salad.

Working with Gary and Gloria was tons of fun for Di and me, but that wasn't the only fun we were having in the salad days of the brave new world of pornography.

As long as I typed my daily quota of pages I was free to do almost anything I chose at any time it suited me. I aimed for fifteen double-spaced pages before noon, leaving afternoons free for working around the house, managing our apartments, shopping, visiting friends, or just messing around. If I failed to hit my quota I could make it up in the next few days, and I always did. This sort of discipline is rare among porn writers, and made me valuable as Earl's reliable source for at least one of the fifty titles Greenleaf published each month.

Thirty years later, in my second career as a writer, I was equally reliable about meeting deadlines, but then I was substantially helped by the computer, that miraculous machine that enables the addition, deletion, or relocation of a word, sentence or paragraph with only the touch of a couple of keys. But computers are not truly portable because sooner or later they have to be wired to a printer, a phone line, or sent to an IT person who can straighten out a glitch and get the user back in the business of writing.

As a writer in the seventies, I could take my job with me in the form of some paper and my sturdy old Remington portable typewriter. Keys would jam and ribbons had to be replaced, but with nothing attached to it, my writing tool came along with us on every trip we took, and Di and I took a lot of trips, almost all of them with the kids.

We trailered our boat to Lake Powell the first year it was opened, and did it again a few years later, both times with my daughters Susan and Claudia in their subteens, and with Di's fun-loving, nature-loving brother Rick, in his mid teens.

Several times we drove to Washington, where Di's parents had taken early retirement from a Long Beach aircraft plant and bought ten acres on Whidby Island, in Puget Sound near Seattle, where Bob went to work at Boeing while Lucy kept house in a trailer and supervised the construction of a very nice A-frame home.



We took my girls with us to Washington, and sometimes my nephew Ross, once over a wonderfully snowy Christmas. But we couldn't take him on all our trips because he was often forbidden to join us by his stepfather, Kelly, as punishment for low grades at school, or disobedience, or a poor attitude. Kelly was a big, seemingly affable guy who worked with my gentle sister Jean at putting away a couple of liters of vodka every day, and regularly made life difficult for Ross.

Ross was a wonderful camper, never complaining, and always appreciative of the natural wonders of the world. I remember one night we were camped in a canyon in Idaho, with a thunderstorm raging around us, and Ross sat up all night on the tailgate of the Travelall to look at the bolts of lightning, which he'd never been able to see through the L.A. overcast.

To give us further incentive to head north to visit Di's family, my long lost boyhood pal Ralph McConnell and I rediscovered each other. We often we stayed with him and his wife Ann in their splendid house in the pines on the southern edge of Carmel, overlooking the sea.

Within this busy time period, ex-wife Margo called to inquire about getting married in Tijuana. I'd known she'd been dating a man named Tom Barley, a court reporter for the *Orange County Register*, but I was surprised and somewhat concerned to hear they were getting married. My concern was about the presence of man in the house where my two daughters were being raised, but after meeting Tom and finding him to be an altogether nice guy, with a good education, a responsible job, and that great British sense of humor, I felt he would be an entirely wholesome stepfather.

Di and I enjoyed discussing current events with Tom, and getting his views from a British point of view. "Enjoyed" isn't quite the right word in this context, because Martin Luther King's assassination seemed to signal a general decline in mankind's morals and behavior toward others.

His death triggered race riots in four major cities that caused dozens of deaths, millions of dollars of property damage, and the call-up of thousands of National Guardsmen. Right after that, France was nearly paralyzed when millions of its citizens went on strike, and called for the overthrow of the "capitalist establishment," the end of colonialism in Algeria, and a higher minimum wage. Shortly after this, Bobby Kennedy was assassinated by a lunatic Arab who had nothing to do with the ongoing battles between the Arabs and the Israelis. Several thousand Soviet troops crossed the Czechoslovakian border and invaded Prague to put down the country's bid for self rule. And back in the US of A, thousands of protesters against the Viet Nam war and politics in general battled club-swinging Chicago police at the Democratic convention. Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew won the Republican convention and the November election. One of America's spy ships, the *Pueblo*, was captured and its crew imprisoned by North Korea. Back home again, a young senate aide named Mary Jo Kopechne drowned coming back from a party when a car driven by Senator Ted Kennedy fell off a bridge, and Kennedy was only able to save himself. Anti-war protests spread across the U.S. British soldiers fired tear gas to disperse Irish militants in Belfast. Charles Manson and his hippie followers were arrested for wantonly murdering Sharon Tate and several people. Paul McCartney split, breaking up the Beatles. The National Guard fired on and killed protesting students at Kent State, while in New York City, thousands of gays protested their discrimination.

I didn't even want to hear about some of these current events, especially the ongoing news from the war in Viet Nam. It seemed as if the entire world was festering, though there were some current events that provided some good news, or at least had some entertainment value, like Haight-Ashbury's becoming a haven for flower children.

Other good news of that era was that the Olympics in Mexico City were only slightly marred by a quiet but prominent black protest. Our astronauts landed on the moon and safely returned. The supersonic Concorde went into service. Timothy Leary's conviction for marijuana possession was overturned in the Supreme Court, voiding two federal anti-pot laws. Nixon ordered 25,000 troops out of Viet Nam, which wasn't enough to satisfy protesters. Tens of thousands of whacked out kids made the Woodstock festival a great success, and the sixties ended as a decade of challenge and change.

The bad news far outweighed the good. And as the public's fascination with sex grew, I was gadding about the western states with my wife, kids, and portable sausage grinder, energetically squirting out variations of novelettes laced with sex, love, obsessions, destructive desires, and morning-after guilt.

A trip we made without the kids to Ivanpah, in the desert near Baker, resulted in a pilot film for a TV show about the joys of four-wheel driving around L.A. It never sold to a network, but we greatly enjoyed our week in spent making the film, which we couldn't have done if I'd still been working as an engineer.



Our most daring trip was a rerun of a disastrous Baja California trek I took with an adventurous college friend in 1954. This time we did it right, using two FWD vehicles to transport Gary and Gloria, Dianne and me, and a tent and plenty of supplies on a journey that zigged and zagged several times between the rocky coast of the Pacific Ocean and the pristine beaches of Gulf of California as we made our way down the long peninsula. The only slightly foolhardy aspect of this trip was that

we took Susan and Claudia with us, and they survived our three weeks in the Baja wilds with vivid memories of crossing the Vizcaino Desert, reaching the oasis town of San Ignacio, dining on a lavish dinner of *caguama* in La Paz, and seeing giant cactus and other strange vegetation native only to Baja California.

It was an arduous trip, which was just fine with Di, who often mourned the fact that she was born a hundred years too late to be a pioneer crossing the country in a covered wagon. Throughout the trip we were several times welcomed like intrepid explorers, and justifiably so, for very few passenger cars and even fewer *gringos* with children made the motor trip to the tip of Baja California. Driving our dust-covered FWDs into the posh tourist motel in the town of Mulege, where its guests arrived either by yacht or by private plane, we were waved at and cheered by the guests and the help alike. We were given comfortable *jalapas* as our quarters for the night, and told that dinner would be served at seven. We showered, changed into clean clothes, and stopped at one of the hotel's bars for a couple of drinks. When we trooped into the dining hall several minutes after seven, the other guests were already seated at the tables, smiling, lightly applauding, and awaiting our arrival before anyone's dinner would be served. Our welcome made us feel like celebrated adventurers, but much of the hospitality shown us stemmed from the fact that Gary and his father Stan had flown into Mulege a few years earlier with a gaggle of models to do a nudist shoot at the hotel.

We drove on to La Paz for a good dose of civilization, enjoyed several great restaurant meals, and a day of fishing on a rented boat before driving a wide loop to the tiny commercial fishing community of Cabo San Lucas, north up the Pacific Ocean side of Baja, and back to La Paz. From there we sailed across the Sea of Cortez to Guaymas on an overnight ferryboat and raced north to the border, got to El Cajon near midnight, and slept on the front lawn of the Youngs' house.

Another memorable trip was to Canyon De Chelly, the Indian reservation in northeast Arizona. This was over an Easter vacation, and with Bob and Suzy Youngs both working, Di and I took Bob Jr., 12, Vickie, 10 and eight-year-old Jamie with us in the Travelall.

Di and I were seeing quite a lot of the Youngs family, and as Gary and Gloria became our closest friends, we gradually learned how they got where they were in the porno lifestyle.

Gloria came from an ordinary middle-class family in L.A. She the family rebel, marrying young but not happily, and leaving her husband to raise their little boy by herself.

Gary was also raised in L.A. The paternal side of his family was affluent, his father Stan, an outstanding high school athlete with brains enough to get a degree from Cal Tech in mechanical engineering just after the start of World War II, and then a job at Northrop managing the production line where P-51 Mustang fighters were made, which exempted him from the draft. At the end of the war, Stan had unlimited potential in managing and engineering American industry into post war prosperity, but instead he married a statuesque and utterly gorgeous riveter at Northrop and joined a nudist colony with her.

When his horrified mother cut off his inheritance, Stan built a thriving accounting business whose main clients were race tracks around California, became president of Southern California's nudist association, raised three boys, and kept Marge happy with her lot in life until she realized the amorous extent of her husband's friendships within the nudist colonies.

The divorce was so bitter that Marge never got over it, but Stan bounced back by doing all he could to bring up his sons in the way he thought was best for them, and enlarged his income by publishing picture magazines depicting the happy life and times of America's nudists.

Living with Marge in Redondo Beach, but often spending weekends and holidays in nudist colonies, Gary, Mel, and Randy grew up as brashly rebellious California boys with a taste for adventure and humor. Randy was the electromechanical wizard, Mel the musician and inventor, and Gary the big, effervescent, natural born leader.

With the Viet Nam draft looming, Gary joined the Coast Guard and his brothers joined the Navy. Gary was in and out of the service with no problems, Randy saw some action aboard an aircraft carrier in Viet Nam, and middle brother Mel was found to have Hodgkin's disease and began a very long course of radiotherapy treatments.

Mel lived in San Diego to be near the Naval Hospital, in an apartment quite close to our house, connubially happy with lovely young Cathy. Di and I often got together with them, and though I would see far more of Randy in years to come, the only time I met him back then was a day when he was on leave, rapidly rolling scores of joints before returning to Bremerton, WA, to sell them to his shipmates on their way to Viet Nam.

And then it came to pass that Gary and Gloria journeyed to San Diego to announce that they've quit smoking, that Gary had sold all his cameras and photographic equipment, and they'd bought a small sheep farm in southern Oregon.

They had to be kidding, right? Wrong!

They'd discovered *The Whole Earth Catalog*, a thick catalog of everything needed to live

off the land, while ignoring such things as war, politics, punching a time clock, and getting drugged-out models to look erotically happy while frolicking in the nude. So they were dropping out, turning on to LSD and other psychedelics, and tuning in to the growing hippie movement. They didn't say that in so many words, but both they and we knew what they were doing wouldn't work, and while I told them I admired them for their honesty in facing our troubled old world with complete irresponsibility, I secretly thought they were crazy as a couple of bedbugs.

Their departure signaled the end of our illustrated novels. I couldn't work with anyone as well as I'd worked with Gary, and Earl knew it. I was tired of doing them anyway, and glad to get back to writing nice, clean, unadorned dirty books. They were gradually getting dirtier, in that more and more four-letter words were being allowed by Greenleaf's attorney, which mattered little to me, since I was working at becoming a better writer in terms of getting more deeply into my characters' motivations, and working out more plausible and suspenseful story lines and plots.

Thanks to Earl's policy of presenting Greenleaf's readers with variety, the settings in my books ranged from World War II espionage adventures to stories about using sex to climb the corporate ladder. I turned them out steadily, and each time I got to the last chapter in one of my books, I started looking for another setting and a new cast of characters tormented yet helplessly excited by their sexual weaknesses. All the while unknowingly developing most of the key ingredients of what would become SLODG.

For research I was spending too many late evenings in the bars in our neighborhood, chatting up my fellow boozers in search of characters with unusual tales about their sex lives. Some were immediately turned off when they learned I wrote sex novels, others opened up with surprisingly frank confessions, and still others expected me to come on to them like a horny character in one of my books. Dianne didn't much like my saloon research, which I justified by earning top Greenleaf dollar for my efforts.

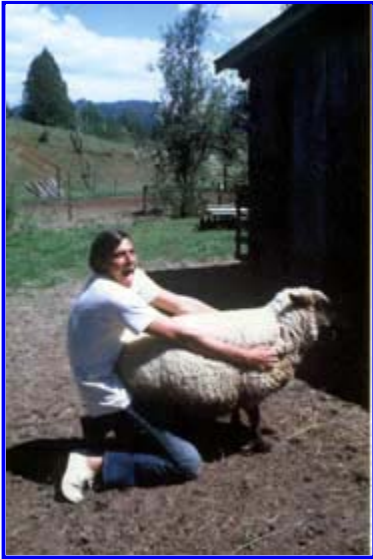
Every on the unknowing alert for the missing E in my unformed genre, I frequented bars like the Coo Coo Club in search of people who engaged in Exploratory sexual practices, and to a jollier saloon called Show Biz, San Diego's renowned showcase for female impersonators, most of whom were only too happy to tell me about their Excursions in and out of each gender.

While I wrote, I still cherished my freedom from routine, still worried about the erotic fiction industry suddenly sinking into the sunset, and kept an eye out for an investment in a small business that could provide our income when porn went in the tank. We looked at a mushroom farm in Escondido, coin-operated snack dispensers, truck-mounted vacuum cleaners for parking lots, and other no-talent businesses, whose only qualification was that they had nothing whatsoever to do with chemicals. But they all had their pitfalls, so we once again headed north to find our future fortune on the road to the Great Pacific Northwest.

We found Ralph and Ann unchanged, drinking and enjoying themselves too much to worry about anything in the world. Gary and Gloria were also enjoying themselves in their life as country bumpkins, building an addition to the house trailer in which they were living, raising some sheep and some chickens, cultivating an extensive vegetable garden, enjoying the Indian sweat lodge they'd made, and casting about for other constructive ways to completely escape from the cruel realities of modern living and become one with

nature, as nature has been fictitiously described since the days of Adam and Eve.

They were baking their own bread, brewing their own beer, cutting their own hair, raising orphaned lambs, and making friends with the area's long time and short time farmers, many of the latter being equally ardent in their intentions to live an entirely self-sufficient life in rural America.



With many variations, adopting a rural existence was rather widespread in the late sixties. The infamous Manson clan represented the absolute worst side of communal living. Much more typical of communes was a group of societal dropouts that called themselves the Hog Farm. The remote property on which they were squatting was within a few miles of Gary and Gloria's place, near the village of Yoncalla. It was populated with a mixed bag of lumbermen, dropouts, dopers, and idealists living with their kids in tepees, geodesic domes, and other structures they'd built for themselves. They raised the chickens, pigs, and vegetables that comprised their diet, grew marijuana for their recreation, and sold what little was left over as a cash crop. Factors that made their idyll in the wild difficult were the lack of sanitation, medical expertise, and leadership, but when needed they stuck together enough to defend

their communal territory against its rightful owners.

Communal life wasn't for us, but we toyed with the notion of getting a few acres near the Sohlers in Oregon, where Di could find a job in town, I could continue to write, and we could live with a minimum of big city irritations and expenses. We decided to go to Yoncalla to have one more look for property before making a decision to stay with city life or go rural. We'd seen some of Oregon's rainfall, but not the torrent that came down the week before we got there, and we weren't at all prepared for the mud.

The rain we might have been able to stand, but the Oregon mud was too much for us. Back in San Diego, Di and I were not getting along as well as we once did. It seemed like the longer we lived together, the less we knew one another. Whatever it was that was coming between us, when Earl invited us to visit his getaway house in Mexico, we jumped at the chance for a change in our lives.

His rented *casa* was in small fishing village and tourist town called Ajijic, on the shore of Lake Chapala, some thirty miles south of Guadalajara. Earl had heard about it through a pair of his regular authors, Don and Betty Gilmore, who lived in dignified luxury in Guadalajara, presiding over the Americas Society, attending civic affairs, adopting a couple of Mexican kids, and paying the bills by writing dirty books. By their example, the Gilmores had already convinced a few other writers to migrate to the area and enjoy the excellent climate, the low cost of living, and the bountiful sociality of the expatriate community of Canadian and American artists, writers, and retirees.

We paid Suzy Youngs to look after our property and took off in Earl's Lincoln Continental, along with Gary, who happened to be in town, Earl's daughter Eydie, and Earl's assistant Petie Dixon, in search of a little vacation adventure.



(Left) Lake Chapala, by far Mexico's largest lake, has its inlet and outlet at the same end, which keeps its depths greatly fluctuating, sometimes flooding the streets of the town of Chapala with water lilies, and sometimes drastically receding. (Right) Upper class street scene in Ajijic, a semi-tropical village a bit over 5,000 feet elevation. Tuberos begonias and other glorious fauna originated in the area, where potent marijuana grows wild in the hills.

Earl drove like a demon, letting no one else behind the wheel of his hurtling car, and stopping only when absolutely necessary. Pemex gas stations were about fifty kilometers apart on the highway, and one gas stop was missed when he zipped past a Pemex station with his fuel gauge reading close to low, and arrived at the next Pemex to find it closed for the night. We could have waited until it opened, but he had to press on, though we might run out of gas in the darkness before dawn. The engine died on a long downhill slope, with the lights of a small town far off in the distance, so we coasted, and coasted and coasted, until the car came to rest directly across the highway from a dozen dimly seen taxicabs parked bumper to bumper in the lonely desert. We couldn't figure out what they were doing there, nor could their drivers figure us out as they held their ground and stared at us from out of the gloom.

Were they laying in wait to rob us? Had we stopped there to rob them?

The familiar scent of marijuana drifting across the highway made us get out and meet them halfway. Dianne spoke the best Spanish, and after a short conversation she reported that they were taxi drivers who worked in the town of the distant lights, and were waiting on the highway for the arrival of the town hearse, which they would escort to Tijuana, the birthplace of their deceased colleague in the hearse. Our explanation was much simpler and easily taken care of, and while the cabbies were siphoning gas for us from their taxis, Earl got some trade goods from the trunk of his car and gave them a couple bottles of whiskey and a stack of girlie magazines to read on their journey north.

We had another odd encounter in the evening hours of that day, when we stopped at a Denny's restaurant in downtown Guadalajara. On entering we were surprised to find a stairway that took us below street level to the restaurant. Once there, we were even more surprised to realize that almost all the other patrons, and there were many, were young male *mariposas*, homosexuals.

The final surprise when we reached Ajijic, and Earl was showing us the cobblestoned streets well after dark, with a full moon casting antique shadows of the Spanish colonial

dwellings in the peaceful little village on the lake. Cruising past the town's plaza, Earl stopped at the sight of a young man jauntily strolling by, and beckoned him over to the car.

"*Hay mota?*" Earl said, asking if the young Mexican man had any marijuana.

"Sure do," said he, in perfect English. "Give me five minutes and I'll be back with a nickel bag." This was Pepe, who would be our steady supplier of marijuana, and who that night delivered an amazing large bag of the stuff for five dollars.

The magnificent scenery we'd passed on the speed run south all but demanded that we see more of our neighbor to the south, and our odd encounters made us think that living in Mexico might be more interesting than we'd expected.

Part 3: E Stands for Expats, Too

For months we'd dithered back and forth about Oregon before deciding it wasn't for us, but after a week in Ajijic, we decided to move there for up to a year. It took no time at all to trade our three-unit properties for one eight-unit apartment house, find a property manager to look after it, sell the Travelall, buy a new VW van, get our tourist visas, pack and say *hasta la vista* to friends and family.

Anxious as we were to get to there, we took our time going south on Mexican Highway One. The names of the towns still excite me. Sonoita, Hermosillo, Guaymas, Ciudad Obregon, Los Mochis, Culiacan, Mazatlan, Tepic—we stopped in all those and many much smaller ones for gas, a *cerveza*, a meal, and a look around town before we went through the lovely old city of Guadalajara and got to little old Ajijic, which would be our home for months, if not years.

The village of Ajijic and its environs are best viewed by punching up Ajijic Jalisco on the web, except for the real estate prices being paid by the increasing number of U.S. and Canadian immigrants.

Though Di and I had recently spent a week there, we were charmed anew as we made our way to Earl's house, where we'd stay till we found a place of our own. Earl had given us a key to the wrought iron double doors, and as I rattled it into the lock, a shout from within said, "*Alto! Just a minute! Uno momento!*"

In a minute the door was opened by a short, plump woman of about fifty, who demanded, "Who are you?"

"We're friends of Earl's. I work for him, and he said...."

"You work for Earl?"

"I write for Greenleaf."

"I write porn for Greenleaf too. Come on in," she said, suddenly all smiles.

This was Vivien Kern, the first porn writer I'd ever met, and a woman, which surprised me. In the shaded patio was her husband Norm, closer to my age than Viv's, vainly trying to fan away the marijuana haze in the air.

She laughed as she said that, as far as the *gringos* who smoked marijuana were concerned, paranoia ruled the day in Ajijic, because the town's unpredictable sheriff had been known to bust those he caught using it and making them pay for their sin by either being deported to the U.S. or paying him a hefty bribe, known as *la mordida*. Safely out of his sight, we all lit up and Norm opened a bottle of wine while Di helped Viv rummage through Earl's kitchen to come up with an array of snacks for us.

Earl's tropical lovely house was largely outside, featuring a cool patch of green grass surrounded by flowering shrubs, ferns, and other lush vegetation shaded by a huge mango tree bearing fruit. L-shaped, it had 2 br 2 ba, plus a large guest bedroom, tiled floors, and a wrought iron spiral staircase leading up to a *mirador* furnished with lounges and chairs. From its parapet one could look down at any goings in the street and see over the wall across the street that concealed the small house and large yard of a Mexican family that kept pigs and chickens. Except for the psychedelic art on the walls of Earl's house, everything was Mexican, from the *equipale* chairs and tables, to the grass rugs to the kitchen, one of whose walls was completely opened out to the garden, putting the colorful clay pots, the wooden utensils, and the thick strings of garlic on display as they hung from the kitchen ceiling.

The four of us got along fine on that lovely warm day in early spring, smoking and drinking and laughing and talking about Earl and life in Mexico.

Norm and Viv lived in Guadalajara, having moved there from San Diego after she answered an ad in a writer's magazine for a pulp fiction writer willing to move to Mexico, a culturally and politically fashionable place to live at that time. A journeyman writer, she accepted the offer and wrote on a piecework basis before selling her MSs directly to Greenleaf, and Earl. She and Norm had been living in Guadalajara for several months, and Earl had given them the keys to his house so they could escape from teeming Guadalajara to enjoy the pleasures of tranquil Ajijic at any time. The picturesque little village wasn't so tranquil at night.



(Left) The ever-ready party gang, after a serious smoking session, select a water taxi to take them to lunch. (Right) Carefree *gringos* joyride on Lake Chapala for *corrida comida* on Scorpion Island, with Terry and Earl Kemp, and Gary Sohler saluting the cameraman as Dianne Murray gazes adoringly at him.

La Posada, the Inn, was the hub of the evening's activities, which often began with a fine dinner in the Inn's very good restaurant. It was a two-block walk from Earl's house, on the

beach of Lake Chapala, where strollers could hear the band warming up in the Inn's bar. This nightly happening called for an after-dinner drink, and by the time the second was ordered, the dance floor was filling up with *gringos* and Mexicans doing variations of the twist, the samba, the New Yorker, and the Mexican Hat Dance. It could get very sweaty out on the dance floor, but a cold *cerveza* or a margarita remedied that. And if a dancer or drinker got a bit sleepy, they could check into one of the dozen or so rooms at the Inn for the night. Pathways between the rooms and the bar led through a lush garden that looked so romantic by moonlight that couples had been known to smoke a joint while gazing at the stars before deciding whether to go back to the bar for a drink and a dance or continue on to a room for a shower and snooze.

Before we staggered home to Earl's that night, we met several expats whose faces and names were dimmed by the smoke and the music. Awakened by the smell of coffee and *huevos rancheros*, we breakfasted with Viv and Norm before hitting the cobblestones in search of a house for ourselves.

We were greeted by name by a slender blonde named Peggy, who directed us to a couple of houses she knew that were for rent. On our way to see them, a jovial bearded guy standing in a doorway also called us by name, and said, "Earl told me to invite you into my studio for a mixed drink. Come in and have one with me now." John K. Peterson, a local resident artist.

His studio, cluttered with half a dozen easels with paintings on them and uncounted half filled rum, brandy, and soft drink bottles. His mixed drink consisted of a little of everything, and after doing some sipping, he led us around the block to introduce us to the owner of two bedroom two bath house, with kitchen, dining area, patio and yard, and part-time gardener and maid. Current prices for an Ajijic package like that are over \$1,500/month; forty years ago we rented it for \$85/month on the spot, and as we were surveying our new domain before moving in, Pete said, "The first time I was in this house, there was a hundred bricks of *mota* stacked up against that wall."

Marijuana grew wild in the region, he told us, and for decades was cultivated commercially across the lake in the state of Michoacan and taken across the lake in boats, at night, for further transport by car or truck to the border.

Outside Guadalajara was the spectacular *canyon La Baranca* with several waterfalls. On this occasion Johnny Poling, Earl and Terry Kemp, and others made the excursion.

Other diversions in Ajijic included fine Mexican rum and wine at a dollar a bottle, but I stuck to my regimen of fifteen pages every morning, hangover or no, while Dianne turned away friends who wanted us to come out and play with them. This left afternoons free to go for a dip in the hot springs in San Juan de Cosala, a drive around the lake to see Michoacan, or a trip to dry Lake Santa Maria immediately after a rainfall had washed away surface soil, exposing artifacts thrown into the lake centuries earlier, when the Mexican natives discarded all their utensils and tools at the end of every sixty year period. A trip into Guadalajara would always included a long shopping stroll



through *Libertad*, the enormous, two-story, open air peoples' marketplace where you could buy anything in the way of groceries, hardware, food, clothing, utensils, music, musical instruments, leather goods, and, if you could find the dark little stall on the second floor, you could buy a kilogram bundle of *peyote*.

There was plenty to do in and around Ajijic, and placing a phone call to the States always made for a pleasant afternoon. The only public phone was in the *tortillaria* across the street from the town plaza. The procedure was to go to the tortilla factory, chat with its owner, connect on the old wall mounted telephone with the long distance operator, place your call, and hang up.

Then you'd tell the *tortilleria* proprietor you could be reached having lunch at Hermalinda's, the restaurant behind the police station and jail, catty corner from the corner grocery store. You don't dawdle too much over lunch because there's a very slight possibility that your call might go through quickly, though this is doubtful since all long distance calls in Mexico were routed to Mexico City, where they were relayed to numbers in the other countries or other Mexican states. You take your full belly back to the *tortilleria*, picking up a cold beer at the grocery store on the way, and sit in a conveniently placed chair on the sidewalk and watch the world go by.

Your new world includes quite a few people you've met and others you'd like to, so you can have many conversations about everything and nothing while you sip a beer or two with passersby on the sidewalk. You might wave or say hello to the sheriff if he's hanging around the police station, but you don't even want to have eye contact with him if he and his two deputies are drinking beer on the tailgate of his pickup truck.

The sheriff was not allowed to drink beer by the terms of his probation for murder, but nobody was brave enough to turn him in for it, and I don't think there are any parole officers in Mexico to catch him at it. He was a tough looking mustachioed guy who certainly looked like he could murder someone, and he had spent five years in jail without causing any trouble before he was offered the job of sheriff in Ajijic, or some other small town. I understand this was fairly common practice in our Old West, the idea being, that crimes are less apt to happen in a town whose no-nonsense lawman knows he'll be sent back to jail if he lets anyone break a law. His two deputies were on similar paroles for lesser crimes, and the three of them were quite enough to maintain law and order in Ajijic. Except when they were drunk, and had trouble maintaining themselves.

One night Di and I were awakened by gunshots being sporadically fired all around town. There was no reason to go out and try to find out what was happening, so we stayed comfortably in our bed until well after dawn, and then tiptoed out and looked up and down *Calle Juarez*, and saw nothing amiss other than a dead dog down the block. We soon learned that dead dogs were all over town, thanks to the sheriff, who answered the complaints of his North American constituents by saying, "I don't understand you *gringos*. All the time you complain about too many stray dogs in Ajijic, so me and my deputies drive around town and shoot them from the back of my truck last night. And now you complain about that!"

Only once that I know of did the sheriff have to call for help. It was at the time of the annual *chareada*, the Mexican style rodeo that goes on for three weekends, pitting one team of *charros* against another to prove which are the best *caballeros* in the area. The events are quite different than those seen at our rodeos, consisting of more skill than brute

force, and the arenas are small circular rings, made of shoulder high adobe blocks, on which people can sit or lean to watch the action from very close up. One of the different events is a bullfight in which the bull isn't killed, just teased and tormented by a *torero* with a cape. There is a lot of drinking going on at a *chareada*, and on more than one occasion I have seen a spectator jump down into the arena from its rim and start caping the bull himself, and in one case, herself. It looks easy when you're drunk and watching a *charro* do it, but every amateur *torero* I've seen came in second.

The drinking starts two hours before the *charreada* begins, when the local *charro* association hosts a dance at the town plaza, where people are encouraged to drink all they want of a pink mixture of grain alcohol, sugar water, and strawberry juice before staggering off to see the free show. I was dancing with Di at one of these little fiestas when I looked over her shoulder to see young Mexican guy glaring daggers at me as he took a bite out of his empty glass, and let the blood run over his chin.

At the arena the competition got serious enough to raise the hackles of the cowboys. Loud arguments started on the first of the three weekends we were there, and on the Sunday afternoon of the second *charreada*, the *charros* had six-guns strapped to their waists, and a couple of fist fights broke out among them at the end of that day's contests. For the third *charreada*, our sheriff ceded his authority to three mounted cops from Guadalajara, who had Uzies with them.

Ajijic was always more fun when Earl was in town.

You never knew when he might be returning from another buying trip, so I always made it a point to stroll past the barber shop on the plaza, usually his first stop on getting back to town. And if I was lucky, languidly smilin' Earl would be there, all lathered up and laid back in the barber's chair, checking out the foot traffic on the plaza while he was getting the works. I'd fetch us a couple of beers and sit down and hear about where he'd been on this trip, which almost always included cosmopolitan Paris as his last stop. I'd catch him up on the local news, and help him decide when to have his latest welcome home party.

You could always count on meeting other pornographers at Earl's parties, like Johnny Polling, only son of Linda DuBreuil, known as the porno grandma because of her terrific output, bettering mine in both quantity and quality. As with me, her typewriter traveled everywhere with her, as did all the gear she needed to make a pie when she was invited to stay at anyone's house. Her porn stories were simple and solid, and she was such a prolific writer that she was in the process of using her income to buy up much of the real estate in French Lick, Indiana, her beloved home town.

Her son Johnny was a very pleasant young man who rode into the porn world on his mother's shirttail. He lived in a big, classically decrepit *hacienda* in Guadalajara, where ragged rows of bullet holes in the adobe wall surrounding it were vivid reminders that Pancho Villa and his firing squads had once visited there. Johnny and his roommate smoked a lot of *mota* and regularly ate some of the *peyote* they cultivated in their patio, which was probably the reason Johnny did not write many books.

On the ugly side of porn personalities was a cadaverous expat named Vern Lundgren, who specialized in S & Ms. I was repulsed by his books, whose characters enjoyed very cruel aberrational excitement with absolutely no value or guilt. Di and I met him and his very young wife at one of Earl's parties. Eight or ten of us were seated around on the patio, talking and laughing, smoking and drinking, and some of us getting mildly disturbed at

how Vern was teasing Earl's daughter's St. Bernard puppy. Di was bothered by it to the extent of telling him to leave the poor dog alone. He responded by twisting the puppy's ears enough to make it yelp, which she countered by throwing a drink in his face, and he answered by laughing and pushing the dog away.

Vern wasn't faithful to his wife, and one of the parties in his infidelities was a *gringa* named Marge, Chapala's illegal gun dealer. She had a pistol with her when she and Vern went on a picnic, and Vern asked to see it, since he might want to buy it. As he examined it, he put its muzzle against his head and shot himself. Most people thought he'd simply angered Marge to the point where she'd killed him. Nobody really knew, but the cops and the crooks in Chapala knew that guns would be hard to come by if Marge went to prison for manslaughter, so Vern's death was listed as a suicide.

I won't get any farther into the often-troubled and rarely serene lives of the authors of porn that I knew. But they weren't the only ex-pats who got themselves into problems rarely seen in the U.S.

A fellow named Bill whom we met at the bar at the Inn was a retired federal judge from Chicago, about sixty years old, and an African American. We had him over for dinner a few times because he could talk eloquently and angrily about Mexican politics, corruption, societal inequities, cronyism, and political chicanery rampant in Mexico since before and after Hernan Cortez arrived to add Spanish and Catholic cruelties to the lives of the Mexican natives. It was dangerous for Bill to get on his soapbox when he had a couple of drinks in him, which was why we were much more comfortable to have him and a few gringo friends at our house for dinner. We didn't often see him around town because he lived in Chapala, several kilometers down the road, but close enough for us to hear that he'd been murdered late at night on his doorstep by Chapala's corporal of police, who had followed him home from the local cantina in the wake of a stormy diatribe against local Mexican politicians and crushed his skull with a rock.

Another incident began at one of Peggy's parties, when a hush fell over the crowd as everyone became aware of a sternly handsome young man standing in her open double doorway, dressed all in black, holding two black German shepherds on chain leashes.

Whispers rapidly made the rounds. "Who's that?...It's Hogan, he's new in town...I understand he's a remittance man...What's that?...He got into so much trouble and into so many bum deals in the states that his father sends him a remittance every month to stay in Mexico and out of trouble."

The rumors were apparently true. I scarcely spoke with him, but enough people did that his plans were fairly well known all over town. His latest plan was to take \$20,000 he had accumulated from his father's remittances to the state of Guerrero, and invest the money in bricks of a strain of *mota* renowned as Acapulco gold. He hadn't been seen around Ajijic for a few days when the rumor circulated that he was on his way back, in a coffin. It seemed that he'd successfully hooked up with a wholesale supplier somewhere in the jungle wilderness of Guerrero, and asked, "Where is my *mota*?"

His supplier replied, "Where is your money?"

And when Hogan took from his pocket the money and showed it to him, the supplier took from his coat a machine pistol and riddled Hogan's chest with bullets.

Even in death his father wanted nothing to do with him, but he sent a generous check for the gravestone that would mark his son's resting place in Mexico. Hogan was buried in a small graveyard between the lake and the road that led from Ajijic to Jocotopec, and his grave was very well marked with a five-foot-tall crucifix made of black marble. This didn't end Hogan's story.

He'd only been in his grave for a few months when a developer decided to build a hotel on the shore of Lake Chapala, just on the other side of the graveyard. The most direct access was through the hallowed ground, which the developer unconsecrated by bulldozing a road from the highway directly to his proposed hotel site. Passersby told the priest at the Catholic Church, who managed to put a stop to it, but not fast enough to prevent the bulldozer operator from knocking over Hogan's big black tombstone and plowing up both Hogan and his coffin.

Incidents like these happened regularly, and the element of danger was at first welcome, for they vividly reminded us that we were living in a little world of very real personal danger. I was made more aware of this on my regular trips to the States, where you might read about crimes like these in the newspaper, but they never involved anyone you actually knew.

A tragically common crime in Mexico was inflicted on our part time maid, a hard-working woman who Dianne often conversed with in Spanish and always overtipped. Her usually cheerful nature was absent one day, in fact she was crying when she told Di that she was married to a truck driver who came to town only when his job took him into Guadalajara. This came about only three or four times a year, and if our maid wasn't pregnant when he got to town, she was when he left. Although she looked in her forties, she was still in her twenties, and the mother of seven kids. At first she didn't believe it when Di told her that a woman's ovarian tubes could be tied off in a simple operation, but when this was confirmed by a visit to Ajijic's unlicensed physician, she wept in gratitude when Di offered to pay for it. Vetoed by the priest and her truck driver husband, the operation never came to pass. This at a time when United Nations was funding a program to publicize birth control measures in Mexico, which was being promoted by Mexican President Luis Echeverria, and father of nine.

Too many kids can certainly be a problem, but having no kids around at all can be a drag. So Di and I were very pleased when my ex-wife and her husband agreed to have my two girls and their stepbrother Matt fly into Guadalajara and spend the summer in Ajijic with us. To top it off, four of Earl's kids would be in Ajijic for the summer.

The village looked like a movie set to them, and they couldn't get over walking on real cobblestones, having roosters wake them up at dawn, hearing church bells summoning people to mass, seeing Mexican people behind the counters of every store, and having so many *gringos* on the street greet them like old friends.

They spent the next several days running back and forth between our house, the lake, and the Kemps', getting to know the Kemp kids and the shops between the two houses. An evening cultural event that all the kids quickly took to was going to the movies, charmingly different from the ones they went to in the U.S. A movie was shown once a week, and you could tell when that was by the number of people walking toward the plaza with pillows under their arms. The movies were good, and the food served at the concession stand was so consistently delicious that people arrived early to enjoy a *torta* or a plateful of

enchiladas and a beer, plus a chat with their neighbors, before everyone found a wooden chair on which to place their pillow and enjoy the show.

The kids loved Di's home cooking and liked going out for dinner anywhere in town, from the old Inn to the new pizzeria. The lake was too polluted for swimming, but they liked frolicking in the hot springs at San Juan de Cosala. "They" being all the kids, the Kemps' and ours, and often Norm's girls. This amounted to about ten kids, a small herd that was hard to keep together when we went in group to places like *Libertad* market or the mammoth swimming pool at *La Barranca*, in the mountains outside of Guadalajara.



Here I am at my house in Ajijic, making *globos* for a bunch of the neighborhood children.

A homespun pastime we all enjoyed was making *globos* on our patio. A *globo* is a very large hot air balloon, laboriously made of sheets of tissue paper held together with flour water paste, and lifted off the ground with a kerosene soaked rag formed into a doughnut and inserted on a coat hanger in the bottom of the balloon. Sometimes the wind catches a *globo* before it gets very far off the ground, and it immediately flames. When the night air was cool, a *globo* could soar thousands of feet in the air before being caught by a breeze that takes it so far that all you can see is the kerosene rag burning out.

Some of the activities we planned for the children turned into real adventures, like the search for Pancho Villa's gold.

We heard about it from Pepe, the town's *mota* supplier and our personal tour guide, who said the old revolutionary bandit had stashed some of his stolen gold in a cave on the other side of the highway that snaked down underground to a cavern directly under the town plaza in Ajijic. The gold had already been taken by others, Pepe said, but the cavern

was still there to be seen by intrepid explorers. Our group was intrepid enough for a dozen of us to follow him up the steep hill through thick brush to a well concealed hole in the ground, just big enough to admit one adventurer at a time. Flashlights in hand, we followed Pepe into the steeply downward sloping passage where head clearance was only an inch when the spelunker was sitting down. It was cool, dry, and quiet in the tunnel, and Pepe said it was safe to go down, and still farther down until the bunch of us were spread out over about thirty feet of tunnel, a few adults, mostly kids, shining flashlights all around. And then somebody shrieked, and then everyone shrieked and clawed at their hair, and batted at the air, because our entry had disturbed hundreds, then thousands of bats, flying, fluttering, frantically squeaking past us to get out of their cave.

The tunnel had chambers or caverns where we rested until our hysteria eased and our breathing came back to normal. Then it took a while to get everyone to continue with the exploration, scrambling down through Pancho Villa's secret cave, passing under the highway and coming to a dead end in a humid chamber large enough to comfortably hold all of us, with a crystal clear pool of water in its smooth rock bottom that was the habitat for a school of white minnows, with no eyes.

Our trip to Mexico City was more cultural, and a bit frightening, too. Earl, Nancy, and four of their kids, and Di and I and our four, in two cars, stayed at the Hotel Regis, destroyed twenty years later in Mexico City's big earthquake. We ate in the best restaurants, taxied

around the huge metropolis to see its sights, like *Tenampa Calle*, where scores of the city's *mariachi* bands audition for jobs, all playing at the same time. We went through Chapultepec Castle, where cadets at Mexico's military school threw themselves off the walls to their deaths rather than surrender to America's invading Marines in the 1845 war with imperialist America. We attended the *Ballet Folklórico*, staged in a magnificent theater by a company worthy of the Ballet Russe, in traditional Mexican costumes. And best of all, we did the pyramids of *Teotihuacan*.



In the left photo longhaired Earl Kemp can be seen at the left and in the right photo, my daughter Susan proudly poses near the top of the pyramid.

This vast array of pyramids, temples, and dwellings was once the capital city of one of the Continent's major civilizations. The site has always drawn tourists and archaeologists from around the world, and its major features are The Avenue of the Dead, a mile-long stone paved street lined with temples, with one end of the avenue leading to the Pyramid of the Moon, and beside the avenue, the much larger Pyramid of the Sun. We walked the avenue, entered the temples, saw pyramids even more ancient than the big ones, and climbed the very steep stairs to the tops of the pyramids of the sun and the moon.



And as we turned to start down the stairs of the pyramid of the moon, below us on the Avenue of the Dead, pedestrians were parting like the waters of the Red Sea, frantically scattering to get off the street, because a two-engine private plane was buzzing them, not

fifteen feet above the ground, an altitude thirty feet lower than we were.

Our summer of teenage fun continued as the school year approached, and ended abruptly when Matt swallowed a staple. No, not one of those little ones you use on papers, but quite a large staple, over an inch long and thicker than most nails. We hurried him to the hospital in Guadalajara, and there they apologized for their fluoroscope being out of order, so they had no way to tell where in his digestive tract the staple was lodged. Their best medical advice was to get the boy back to the States as fast as possible, feeding him bananas all the way to cushion the points of the staple, and examining his stool to see if he'd passed it.

Kids, adults, and luggage were thrown in the van and off we went, berating poor Matt all the way for inflicting us with the smell of the bananas we bought him whenever we stopped for a meal, and banishing him to the desert to poop and dig through it in search of the staple. It was never found, and wherever Matt is, he might still have it in him today.

Having the kids with us made for an unforgettable summer, which would not have been possible if I'd stayed with chemical engineering.

Back in San Diego, we found that life had gone on without us, and were doubly disappointed, first to hear Gary and Gloria were getting an amicable divorce, and then with how our absentee property had been managed. I had also fallen behind in my writing, not only in terms of quantity, but also because of the drastic changes in America's sexual mores. We talked this over with one of my first porn publishers, Larry Ross in L.A., who invited us to stay with him in his large apartment in Van Nuys while I caught up on current life in America and cranked out an MS or two. It was decided that Di would fly back to Ajijic to check on our house, and proceed on to San Miguel de Allende, where Mack and Jeanette Reynolds lived, a fashionable colonial resort town in the mountains between Guadalajara and Mexico City, where she would enroll at the *Instituto* to polish her already good Spanish.

The day before she left, the Sylmar Earthquake knocked us rudely out of bed and made us scramble out into the patio of Larry's apartment house. It was a major tremor that later seemed to be an omen of things to come in our lives.

I was comfortable staying with Larry, an easy-going bachelor who was doing well in the porn business. We discussed what and where things were happening, and on a tip from him I visited the Swing Club on Ventura Boulevard. It was convivially crowded with couples and singles sipping drinks and surveying the crowd as they watched a slide show being presented showing minimally dressed couples frolicking at their back yard swimming pools and living rooms of their ranch style houses.

With the pictures came a brief description of what type of activities they liked to engage in with others, and providing a code number for getting in touch with them through the Swing Club. The show was clearly an invitation to join in any sexual activity that strayed from the norm into the promiscuous. I was shocked and fascinated, and then stunned when a very attractive woman came to the bar and, pointing at four or five people smiling at me from a nearby table, asked if I'd like to join them for an evening of partying at their home.

I stammered some kind of excuse and got up and left.

I had no qualms at all about writing as if I knew everything there was to know about engaging in the wildest sort of orgies, but I choked when it came down to becoming a swinger. When I told Earl about it, he smiled and attributed my prudishness to an old-fashioned sense of morality when it came to sex. But on the saving side, he said that the popularity of my books came from my basically prudish nature, which finds some kind of guilt in every sexual encounter, which somehow excites porn fans, and added more meaning to the G in my genre.

Mail service in Mexico wasn't fast, so Di and I heard from each other only sporadically. In my letters I told her about family and business matters and she wrote about the friendship she'd made with Mack and Jeanette Reynolds, one of Earl's old science fiction authors, and that Vivien Kern had broken up with Norm and rented an apartment in San Miguel, where Di had moved in with her for the rest of the school semester. Our letters went back and forth. And then, after an unusually long interval, I got a letter saying that she'd fallen in love with a guy from Mexico City.

I had no way to call her, and couldn't write her with any chance of my letter in time to...to do what? Change her mind? But I had to do something, so I started driving straight through to San Miguel in the van, dining on cans of sardines and beer and only stopping for gas.

I was not in the best of shape when I got there and neither was she, but we both somehow pulled ourselves together enough to talk rationally about what had happened to our marriage of seven years.

The man she'd fallen in love with was a guy she'd met at a dance in San Miguel, three or four years younger than Di's twenty-eight years, and working out of Mexico City as a tour guide. In my opinion, I told her, her lover was after her money, not her love, because of her seemingly affluent situation as the wife of a rich old *gringo* with real estate interests in the U.S. She said I was probably right, but couldn't resist her chance of a lifetime to experience totally unselfish romantic love, and she was leaving me to live with him in Mexico City, with no intentions of asking for a property settlement from our marriage. I told her she was nuts, she agreed, and left on a bus for Mexico City with a sappy smile on her face.

I headed back San Diego feeling guilty about marrying a woman so much younger than me. Had I married her to be a good stepmother for my daughters, or because I truly loved her? The former seemed to be the case, because in retrospect I knew I hadn't given her all the romantic love every woman needs. Was something lacking in me? Or was the basic fault with her, an idealistic young woman who always said she'd been born a hundred years too late, and should have lived in the exciting, unpredictable times of old? I had no answers. Like it or not, I was well on the way to my second failure as a husband. I still blamed myself for my failure to take proper care of poor Molly, and now it seemed I hadn't taken proper care of Di, though she was very different from Molly, well able to take care of herself, and with a family to fall back on when her romance went sour.

One of our apartments was vacant, so I moved in with a minimum of furniture and spent most of my time writing porn for a market that was dwindling, thanks to easing restrictions about publishing photos of completely naked couples and groups engaging in unrestricted sex. My waning income disturbed me, and I was further disturbed by the feeling that Mexico had defeated me, and that Di, still in Mexico, was riding for a terrible

fall. Crazy thinking, but I was into that sort of thing at the time, aided by my increasing intake of beer, marijuana, and seeing movies like *Clockwork Orange* and *Woodstock*. I said good-bye to the family again, turned the apartment management over to Suzy Youngs, and once again set out for San Miguel.

I was thinking the bloom might have worn off Dianne's love affair by then and reconciliation might be possible. I was also thinking that by then her lover realized she was essentially broke, and might turn her into a prostitute. And aside from Dianne, I felt that if I didn't return to Mexico for a while, I could never go back under any circumstances.

With Di in Mexico City, Viv took me in at the apartment on *Calle Barranca* she'd rented, with Di in mind as a roommate. Although I was a stranger to Mack and Jeanette Reynolds, they treated me like a son-in-law who'd been jilted by their daughter. Jeanette was an early version of Martha Stewart, the premier real estate dealer, gourmet cook, and social arbiter for San Miguel, who could do anything, and do it well. Mack was an award-winning writer of science fiction, who wrote politically oriented sf novels until noon every day, when Jeanette brought him lunch and he took a nap before hosting a discussion group with the town's permanent and visiting writers, with vodka and tequila served to liven the conversation.

As a published author, I was invited to join them, and felt honored to be in the company of men I looked on as literary giants compared to a porno paperback hack like me. When I brought this up to Mack, he took an almanac from his bookshelf and showed me a statistic that said ten million Americans were professional writers, as defined by their earning more than three thousand dollars annually from the written word. "And, Jerry," he said, "you're making a lot more than that with your writing, which puts you in rarified company. Instead of being ashamed of writing erotic fiction, be thankful you're making a good living at writing, which is the best of all possible worlds."

But my slowly returning self-confidence stalled when her lover was on another road trip and Di came to San Miguel, looking as if she was getting a good deal of exercise in bed, according to Viv. Her behavior had estranged her from the Reynolds, and worsened my fears that she'd made the mistake of her life.

Then the Reynolds got a call from Di in Mexico City, who asked for me to be at their house at a certain time to talk to her. She called on schedule to say I was right, her lover was only interested in her money, and that her parents had wired her enough money to fly home to Seattle.

Our marriage was finished, but I stuck around San Miguel long enough to learn to live alone in an adobe cell built atop a house just around the corner from Viv's. I had kitchen and bathroom privileges, and shared the roof with two dogs trained to bark at any disturbances, that would spend their entire lives on the roof of that house as burglar alarms.

I got a lot of writing done, met some interesting people, had a few brief romances, and several memorable experiences, one of which I will briefly recount here.

I was having a beer at the writers' booth in *La Cucaracha* on the plaza, watching the town prepare for another big Mexican independence day parade. Dalton drew my attention to the life-sized statue of Father Hidalgo, the father of the unsuccessful revolution, who

stood on a pedestal with his hands cupped at his waist, while a Mexican Indian knelt before him, gazing adoringly up at the good father. Dalton said, "Keep an eye on that statue and you'll see why they have that soldier with a rifle guarding it during the parade."

I watched, and soon a pretty girl who worked in a nearby shop came to stand in its doorway, smiling at the soldier. He smiled back, she waved and disappeared for a few minutes before returning with a couple of bottles of soda. They started drinking their soda together as they stood by the statue before he followed her in to the shade of the shop. And as soon as he left his post, up popped a couple of guys with a pail. One climbed on the shoulders of the other to empty the pail into the cupped hands of the priest, who had been offering salvation to the Indian, and was now offering him a double handful of fresh bullshit. "It happens like that every year," said Dalton. "Just like it's been happening to this country's Indians ever since the Spaniards brought the Catholic Church to Mexico with them."

Restless again, I headed for the states, moved into another vacancy at my apartments, and began churning out MSs for Greenleaf, where the demand for erotic fiction was turning toward actual factual books about sexual aberrations. I adapted, writing as Dr. and Dr. Lance and Jill Boyle, married sexologists who commented on the success they'd had in treating nymphomaniacs, satyrs, homosexuals, exhibitionists, sado-masochists, voyeurs, shoe fetishists, handkerchief freaks, and other unusual ways to find sexual excitement. Viv was writing the same sort of thing, and we were doing our research with the help of an ostensibly respected psychiatrist named Kraft-Ebing, who wrote a book about extreme eccentric sexual behaviorisms called *Psychopathia Sexualis*.

Greenleaf should probably have gone back to science fiction at that time and I probably should have gone back to engineering, but I was compelled to make one more trip into Mexico, with Ross as my co-pilot. And since the family felt I'd been acting a bit deranged, he would also be coming along as my keeper.

Giving everyone in the family a Bible for Christmas was about the only thing I'd done that was out of character, but I was glad to have a sensible fifteen year old with a quick sense of humor and an appetite for adventure with me on my last visit to Mexico.

As soon as the spring semester ended we set out in the VW van, sporting four brand new Michelin tires and its first rebuilt engine, and first-stopping in El Paso, where George Damos, my best pal at USC, was working.

We found him living in a rambling sort of a minor madhouse with his third wife and most of the nine kids he'd sired since getting out of college. He was as entertainingly crazy as ever, and we got along just fine, drank too much, and enjoyed some great Mexican-Greek cooking. We argued about a few things, but Ross and George's eldest son Frankie, also fifteen, became fast friends, and when it was time to leave, Frankie asked if he could join us, and George said, "Go to it!"

Humbled and honored at being entrusted with the first born son of a man I hadn't seen in fourteen years, I promised to take good care of him. Fluent in Spanish, Frankie took good care of us throughout the most enjoyable trip through Mexico I've ever had.

We slept in good Mexican hotels and on the ground in sleeping bags, had *huevos rancheros y pan dulce y café canela* for breakfast with workers in produce markets, lunch on the road and dinner in Mexican restaurants. We hit cities we knew and others we didn't

on our way to explore Mexico City, and from there we drove on through the mountains to Taxco, Cuernavaca, and every boys' summertime goal at that time, Acapulco. They surfed at *Playa Revolcadero*, we hired a fishing boat that gave us hours of boredom before providing us with the best ten minutes of fishing possible, and I stayed in our cheap Mexican hotel, and while the boys swam in the pools of all the hotels on the beach, I worked in our hotel room with my typewriter. Frankie stayed with us for about a month before he got homesick, and we reluctantly bade our good-byes to him as he boarded a *Tres Estrellas* bus for Juarez.

Back in San Miguel I rented a very nice two story house owned by the Monsignor, who was on Sabbatical leave, interviewing altar boys in Times Square, NY. Jeanette fell in love with Ross and his teenage appetite, making it seem rather a shame that the Reynolds never had kids of their own. But they were busy with other things at the childbearing age, Jeanette overseeing a communist commune in upstate New York, and Mack serving with Ernest Hemingway in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War.

Ross and I had some interesting experiences with and without the Reynolds. Several times we drove over the Sierra Madre ridge to browse the marketplace in Guanajuato, Mexico's witchcraft city, and entered its underground catacombs. When the Reynolds found out we enjoyed this sort of thing they offered to guide us to a tiny old village used as a movie set because it had no electricity, and hence no electric wires to ruin a scene from the Old West. They also said it was the site of a very strict cross-breed religion between Catholicism and Aztec beliefs.

The four of us set out for Guanajuato, took off on a narrow dirt road through the high desert, and came within sight of a tall cross, surrounded by a square formation of Mexican men wearing peasant garb. But from under the back of their *sombreros* flowed two feet of something white, like a bride's wedding veil. Facing the cross, they obscured its base, so we couldn't see what was holding their attention, and on Mack's good advice, we didn't stop to ask.



A mile or so down the road we got to the scruffy little village whose name does not appear on maps. It was the oldest Mexican town I'd ever seen, all adobe houses, with hitching posts for horses, one or two *mercados*, and an old, squat church made of weathered adobe and attached with a curious structure shaped like a beehive. A fiesta was going on, a very glum one, with the five or six booths manned by unsmiling women whose wares consisted of candy skulls, grotesque crucifixes, and

miniature whips. The expressions on the women's dark faces did not change one iota as we walked courteously past them to reach the church and peek inside. The entrance to the beehive was barely three feet high, so we had to crawl through it, into a darkness such that it took a few moments to adjust our vision and see that the inner walls of the beehive were heavily stained with brown to a height of about four feet.

"That's dried blood," said Jeanette. "We're in a town where *penitentes* practice their

religion by whipping people before they let them pray in their church.”

“And we’re getting the hell out of here—now,” said Mack.

And we did. And as we strolled nonchalantly back to the van, toward us walked the men in their bridal veils, in single column, some of them carrying banners, none of them even glancing at us, and all of them carrying full-sized coiled bullwhips. Their eyes so glassy and blank that they had to be stoned on peyote, and when we were almost at the van when—*BANG!* It was hit by a rock. And through the air came another one—*BANG!* And we were in the van and headed for home.

Lynn and Wendy were vacationing schoolteachers from Milwaukee and wanted to see what they could of the Yucatan. As did Ross and I, so we loaded up the van and headed south and east, through Mexico City, but not before showing them the Anthropological Museum, and the Jai Alai matches at the Fronton, where bets are stuffed in red tennis balls and thrown over the heads of the crowd to the bookies. Back on the highway, we almost missed a road sign whose message was a silhouette of a pyramid. We backed up, noticed a very narrow dirt road, and took it. A few miles later we arrived at a small pyramid, with passageways just big enough for running through and playing tag, which was interrupted by a man who came out of a shed, waving and smiling at us.

He was the caretaker for the archaeological group that was excavating the pyramid and the ground around it for artifacts, hundreds of which were stored in the shed. He was happy to show them to us. Most of them were *monos*, he explained, small clay figurines and heads that were buried at planting time in each field where corn was planted, thus ensuring a good crop.

“Would we like to buy some?” he asked. “Only one dollar each, *por favor*.”

I bought six, one for Ross and my two daughters, one each for my wives, and one for old me.

We were halfway to the Yucatan Peninsula when we stopped for a late lunch in Matamoros de Azucar, a picturesque village in sugar cane country, where the costume of choice was baggy white cotton trousers and shirt, with a cane-cutting machete hanging from the men’s belts. The restaurant we chose might have been the only one in town, and we were warmly welcomed by its proprietress, a middle-aged woman who pointed at a group of ten men having lunch at a long wooden table, and identified them in a proud whisper as the city council, which met at her restaurant every six months to plan the city’s future. Their discussion was lively, and their food and drink was being amply served as the four of us sat down to quite a good lunch with wine. The politicians were still at work, hammer and tongs, when we left in late afternoon and, too pleasantly full to continue on the road, we checked into two rooms at the hotel for a little siesta before dinner, bedtime, and an early start the next day.

Ross and I woke up at dusk and knocked at the girls’ room to rouse them for dinner. While they dressed and put on their makeup we waited on the balcony overlooking the town’s main street, made of dirt, well packed by the bare feet of centuries of sugar cane workers. As we watched, two men met in the middle of the street and began talking, inaudibly at first, then loudly enough for us to realize they were arguing, heatedly. Then one of them pushed the other in his chest, backing him off, and allowing both of them to draw their machetes and begin flailing away at one another.

Clang, clang, clang! It sounded like an old Errol Flynn swashbuckler movie. But these guys weren't acting. And then some other guy in white comes hurrying over, steps between them, shakes his finger in the face of one of them as he scolds him, then turns to do the same thing to the other. But after the scolding this time, the would-be peacemaker snatches the machete from the second duelist's hand, and turns and starts swinging it at the other duelist, who turns and runs away, closely followed by the machete wielding peacemaker.

Lynn and Wendy missed the show, but that's what people get for being girls. Proceeding on to the restaurant where we'd had lunch, and the only one who missed the show there was its central character, the town mayor.

Even though he was every bit as drunk as the rest of them, you could tell he was mayor by the way he addressed them as he lurched to his feet, gesturing expansively. He was still blabbing and waving his arm as he left for the men's room, inadvertently kicking a leg of the table. It was a long one, forested with glasses and bottles of beer, wine, tequila, Pepsi, Coke, and rum, all of which teetered and clanked against one another as a result of the jolt to the table. Alarmed, some of the councilmen grabbed at the table to hold it steady, but only succeeded in knocking over a bottle or two of booze, causing some sort of a domino effect, exacerbated by all the councilmen grabbing at bottles to steady them, then snatching some of them up from the table as the vibrations caused one end of the table to quiver and collapse, sliding all the bottles down the table to crash on the tile floor.

At this time the proprietress comes out of her kitchen, absolutely furious, and right after that, out of the john comes the mayor, frowning in disbelief at the catastrophe that took place while he was peacefully taking a leak. And as he gapes at the floor, and looks in great confusion at his councilmen claspng bottles of booze against their chests, the proprietress leaves the dining area just long enough to come back with a mop and a broom and a bucket, which she rudely thrusts in the hands of the right honorable mayor of Azucar de Matamoros.

We found the historic city of Pueblo to be old-world charming, and we found the plaza of Oaxaca filled with *gringo* hippies, patiently waiting for the psilocybin mushroom harvest to come into town. The ruins at Monte Alban and Tula impressed us greatly, but we hadn't the time to go farther and see more of Pre-Columbian Mexico, so back we went to San Miguel, in time for the schoolteachers to return to work in Milwaukee.

School would start very soon in L.A., but Ross would start the semester late, so he could be in San Miguel to witness the parade, *castillos*, and fireworks commemorating Mexico's other important Independence Day on September 15th.

Viv came with us to the Mexico City airport, with Ross, who had learned to drive that summer in Mexico, at the wheel of the van.

I lackadaisically finished the manuscript I was working on, said *adios* to my San Miguel friends, and headed for San Diego, detouring through Milwaukee to see Lynn and Wendy one more time on a trip that signaled the loss of almost all the freedom I'd cherished as a writer of erotic and sometimes humorous fiction for eight unforgettable years.

Part 4: An Epilogue...or A Revival?

I was back in San Diego for just a few days before facing the fact that I had to get some semblance of a steady j-j-j-job. A lot of people at Greenleaf might be doing the same thing, because my favorite publishing firm was in serious legal trouble.

It seemed impossible because Greenleaf had been regularly hauled into court by states that felt their publications were obscene, and corrupted the minds and morals of American readers. The trials were costly and time consuming, but in every instance, the judgment went in favor of freedom of the press, leaving Greenleaf not only legally off the hook, but able to be a bit more explicit in describing sexual practices. Though this trend had been going on for some time, I didn't like it because story line and characterization were being sacrificed in order to get more detailed sex scenes in what had once been erotic fiction, and was steadily turning into plain old dirty books.

Regardless of freedom of choice, several government bodies felt that pornography was bad for its citizens. The biggest Federal objectors were President Lyndon B. Johnson and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, who were infuriated every time a pornography case was dismissed by a court of law. Though they got little support from the general public, Johnson commissioned a Congressional panel to study pornography in the media and report on its harmful effects on the America's morals, ethics, and IQs.

The study would cost the public two million dollars and take two years to complete, during which time Richard Nixon would become president and take up the censorship cudgel wielded by Johnson. The study was getting a good deal of press, which included an independent report saying that "public opinion does not support the imposition of legal prohibitions on the rights of adults to read or see explicit sexual materials" and, it concluded, "pornography does not contribute to sexual deviation and crime". Nixon and other Republicans denounced the report, and the study continued.

While these machinations were taking place in Washington, Earl was quietly doing his job as editor-in-chief of Greenleaf, traveling the world in search of classic volumes of sexually oriented literature and art, and on the side, accepting invitations to lecture at universities and media meetings on Pornography as Political Protest.

Freedom of the press, morality, money, votes—the Congressional report was expected to have a bearing on a number of very large issues, so it was logical for Bill Hamling, Greenleaf's owner, to arrange to have two people inside the commission send him dispatches from D.C. detailing the commission's progress.

Before the government's final version went to the printing office, one of the insiders flew a copy of it to San Diego. Earl met him at the airport, brought the report to Greenleaf office for his staff to have its text conform precisely to that of the commission's report. With preplanned coordination, Greenleaf's version of the report was enhanced with photographs clearly illustrating every sexual act mentioned in the text. For example, just to make it perfectly clear to the world that fellatio involved oral sex, several photographs of people engaging in this widespread but sometimes disdained practice were appropriately included in Greenleaf's *Illustrated Report of the President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography*. And on a page mentioning bestiality, Greenleaf's illustrated version of the report even had a photo of a woman getting it on with a pig. Many of the photos were well beyond the limits of good taste, but based on numerous court rulings about freedom of speech, everything in Greenleaf's version of the report was entirely legal when it was sent to Greenleaf's printer in L.A.

Greenleaf catered to a number of serious collectors of pornography, so a mailing brochure had been designed to let them know the illustrated volumes were available to the public. Everything was in place for blanket distribution when Earl had to leave town for the Frankfurt Book Fair, pleased about the company's literary coup that would strike a major blow for freedom of the press. But back at the office, Hamling's concern was with sales, and wanting to get the most return from the 55,000 mailers, had their margins imaged with sexually explicit photos before sending the brochures off to the Post Office.

When Earl and Greenleaf's attorney saw the altered mailers, they immediately knew the company had very likely broken the law, and was in for serious trouble.

Sure enough, although no legal fault was found within the 340-page illustrated report itself, the altered mailing brochure resulted in the federal government filing suit against Greenleaf for sending obscene materials through the mail, naming Hamling, Earl, the corporate secretary and the CFO as the responsible corporate executives.

Earl and others at Greenleaf had clashed with Hamling's business and editorial decisions so often in the past that they had already decided to strike off and start their own publishing company, called Surrey House, Inc. Hamling said he understood their decision, admitted he'd made a terrible judgment error with the mailers, and said he'd pay all their court costs if Earl and the financial officer went to trial with him rather than testifying against him. Hamling further promised that, if it looked like the judgment was going against Greenleaf, he would personally take all the blame for the mailers and absolve his two co-defendants of any guilt. They had to agree, because the trial loomed long and costly.

As indeed it was, with many expert witnesses flown into San Diego—professors of literature, librarians, university department heads, and constitutional attorneys. Most of them spoke on Greenleaf's behalf, because Earl was widely known in academic and legal circles through his lectures on Pornography as a Political Protest. Employees within Greenleaf testified that Earl had objected to putting the sexually explicit images on the mailers, and the government answered by pointing out that, as Greenleaf's editor and a corporate officer, he was fully responsible for all the company's published texts. The trial seemed to go on forever before a guilty verdict was arrived at, and then it was clear that Hamling would be convicted.

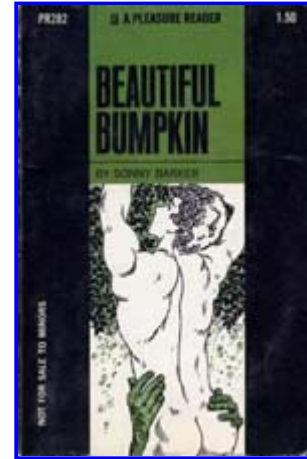
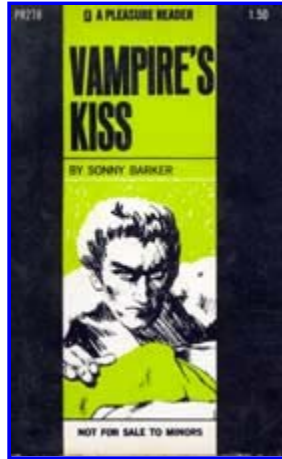
You can see what they're still saying about the senseless trial in back issues of Earl's popular fanzine, at <http://eFanzines.com/EK/el9/index.htm>.

Earl built literary milestones as a crusading editor.

His fanzine's fan letters-to-the-editor laud his very significant part in bringing homosexuality out of the closet and into everyday life in America. Its articles are entertainingly written and illustrated with the cover art on paperback books about the life, times, adventures, heartbreak, triumph, love, and fun experienced by fictitious gay guys. Homosexuality was felt by many people to be just as harmful to America as pornography, indeed so harmful that Hamling's Greenleaf would never think of publishing a paperback meant to entertain and inspire gays. But when Earl left Greenleaf to take the editorial helm at Surrey House, he started a line of paperbacks called Blueboy Books which were aimed at gay adult males, and was an immediate hit.

During the trial Greenleaf had deeply curtailed their output of erotic fiction, and had promoted a guy named Doug Saito to editor-in-chief. One of his first acts in this role was to reject a submission of mine with a letter that said future plot lines should be minimized in favor of more numerous and more detailed sex scenes, none of which should involve any humor whatsoever because, even though I might disagree, Greenleaf's readers found nothing at all comical about sex.

Surrey's readers thought otherwise. The Blueboy books I did for Earl had solid plots larded with farcical sexual situations best appreciated by gays. Don't get me wrong. I had neither the talent nor the audience to write comedies nearly as good as *La Cage aux Folles*, *Victor Victoria*, or any of several other very popular and well received movies about gay life. The best of the gay books I did were the last three, *Codpieces*, *Thar He Blows* and *The Captain's Mast*, parodies respectively of *Captains Courageous*, *Moby Dick* and



Mutiny on the Bounty, in which all the seamen are gay or become gay during the course of their voyage. But as much as I enjoyed writing them, Surrey-Blueboy didn't have distribution nearly as big as Greenleaf's, so they couldn't pay as much for manuscripts, and I had to find another way to make some money, fast.

Di and I had split our assets when we filed for divorce, leaving me with a little over \$6,000 cash. I pored over the newspapers in search of a solid investment, and took a chance on OPEC's raising the price of crude oil to a point where gasoline could soar to as much as a buck a gallon. Never much of a gambler, I nevertheless bought fifty motorized French bicycles \$75 each, planning to sell them at twice that price until I could find a better investment. After renting a little shop in La Mesa to store them until I sold them, OPEC announced it was embargoing further crude shipments to America.

Suddenly a successful entrepreneur, I raised the price of my cute little motorized Solex bikes, and soon learned Voltaire was right when he said, "When you buy a cow, the cow owns you."

For starters, I needed a business license to sell the rest of them. Then one thing led to another, and I had to compete with a rising flood of European mopeds by selling Vespa's moped, the Ciao, which I couldn't do until I became a licensed motorcycle dealer, which necessitated a costly DMV bond, and financing all my wares through a bank. Business was so brisk and promising that I had to move out of comfortable old La Mesa and into 5,000 square feet of space in blighted downtown San Diego, hire nephew Ross to help me be a moped mechanic, and marry Suzy to help me handle my booming moped rental business, my blossoming international motorscooter smuggling and, not so incidentally, make me the happiest guy in the world.

In my spare time I wrote some actual factual books for Surrey House in collaboration with Vivien Kern. Again, based on case histories we dredged out of a book called *Psychopathia Sexualis*, by a renowned European psychiatrists named Dr. R. v. Krafft-Ebing, whose life's

work revolved around unbelievably eccentric sexual obsessions, which of course gave us plenty of fodder for eccentric sex, love, desire, obsession, and good old reliable guilt.



By this time Earl had been remanded to the Federal prison on Terminal Island in Long Beach, where Suzy and I found him bitter but resigned to serving three months in jail. He asked us not to visit him there again, and we returned to San Diego in a somber mood that was overwhelmed with the day-to-day business of being owned by our business.

The OPEC crisis had made mopeds so popular that a new manufacture gave us one hundred of his machines to rent through San Diego's tourist hotels, and although we sold Vespa's motorscooters at a volume discount to a huge store in Tijuana, we were making good money on supplying them with spare parts. Throw in our retail sales in San Diego, and I was still addicted to writing, spending what free time I had in tearing off a few sex novels for Surrey and a maintenance manual for mopeds that went into a second edition. Just as I realized I wasn't cut out to be a businessman, the National Highway Safety and Trade Association came to my rescue by imposing regulations on mopeds that effectively banished them from American streets, and right after that, the Tijuana store that was buying most of my scooters burned to the ground.

We combined the remaining of our business, the proceeds from the sale of Suzy's house in El Cajon, and became the owners a distressed piece of income property in Pacific Beach, which since then has owned us.

Hectic times, happy though broke times, and we sold the scooter shop just before the price of gasoline sank, Suzy got her real estate license and started working for Tom Hom Associates, I was writing Books for Young Readers for G.P. Putnam's Sons for peanuts, delivering 300 copies of the *L.A. Times* to La Jollans every morning to make ends meet, and stepfathering Suzy's hooky-playing young daughter Jamie.

Cash flow still insufficient, I reluctantly decide to go back to chemical engineering, and with another recession settling in, the only job I can find was the most hazardous I've ever had—pumping hot 20% nitric acid at 300 gpm through a maze of aluminum piping in a hydrogen peroxide plant being built in Houston during the hottest months of 1979.

When the job ends, I'm sent to Butte, Montana as project engineer with a salary high enough to have Suzy turn the Thomas property over to nephew Ross and wife Lynn, and come with me to enjoy the trout fishing, river rafting, and driving all over the Rocky Mountain part of scenic Montana for the happiest year we've ever had in our long and busy marriage.

Butte was followed by unemployment insurance, two years with a reverse osmosis firm, including four months purifying water in Saudi Arabia, followed by three weeks of company paid vacationing throughout Europe before returning to San Diego just before the firm went bankrupt. Then, while writing my last SLODGE epic, I get a job as West Coast Editor for a trade journal dealing with the manufacture of printed circuit boards, a subject about which I knew nothing. But I do know how to write, which keeps me churning out how-to-do-it articles about the 34 steps in manufacturing PCBs that are so readable that they border on technical entertainment.

Once again luck gives me a boost, for my part-time editing job becomes full-time just as the circuit board industry enters a development phase that is largely responsible for the rapidly growing commercial and military electronic industry, a subject which I am actually starting to understand. With much of the growth on the West Coast, I am sometimes writing most of the ten or twelve articles being published in *Printed Circuits Assembly* each month, and important enough to be invited by my boss in Boston to attend a significant staff meeting in Quebec.

It is a lavishly costly meeting, at which our six advertising salesmen are heaping praise on me for helping them make their ad sales increase every month. The sales manager insists that I come to Chicago with him to meet the PCB industry's biggest brains and advertisers, and this exposure of my rising renown is followed by my presenting a lecture on "Automated Optical Inspection in New Orleans," where I proudly flaunt my charming and beautiful wife Suzy to the PCB industry's moguls.

With IBM leading and Apple running a good second, the growth of the U.S. electronic industry spreads across the seas in both directions, and I am sent to Japan to report on their latest developments. Booming ad sales make our trade journal so profitable that it is purchased by a much larger publisher of trade journals, which gives me license to travel to wherever the most interesting factory might be, with Suzy as my indispensable companion. Between trips she designs a six-unit complex on our Thomas Avenue property to belatedly build our future around renting five at top dollar, and living in the sixth, while she works as comptroller at Tom Hom Group and I continue to enjoy my position as a well-known frog in the shallow end of a developing technology that will grow to today's \$310 billion multinational electronics industry. When the growth goes too fast for my firm to handle, it is purchased by an even bigger trade journal publisher that provides excellent medical and other employee benefits.

By then, although I had completely lost the personal freedom I cherished as a free-lance porn writer, I still feel very fortunate in having worked as a trade journal editor and columnist from 1984 to my retirement in 2001.

Readers of this article know that Earl Kemp, the man responsible for getting me into that best of all possible jobs, is now headquartered near Kingman, Arizona, where he publishes his bi-monthly e-zine as a labor of love.

Having survived a bad marriage and bitter divorce, on his 75th birthday Larry Ross retired unchallenged as the Founder and King of Fetish, and keeps his hand in the business as a consultant and producer of fetish videos.

Dianne Murray, who stuck with me through my metamorphosis from engineer to porn writer, never remarried, gave birth to two children, and still lives in Ajijic, where Suzy and I have visited her several times during our business trips to Guadalajara, which became known as Mexico's Silicon Valley.

Gary Sohler, my partner in porn and my next to best friend, has been married five times, traveled the world from Europe to Peru to the Bering Sea, went broke several times along the way, and now earns a six-figure salary as a construction supervisor in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Suzy, my all time best friend, the love of my life, and my widely respected wife, mother,

stepmother, and grandmother of well over thirty wonderful years, has remained at my side through the cancer and other penalties I've paid in the past five years for the decades of pleasures and accomplishments I've enjoyed in my undeservedly long and well traveled life.

Despite being raised by a pornographer, my three kids and three stepkids grew up to be very respectable citizens, and though I was sometimes an absentee father, my daughter Claudia spoke for all of them when she said, "Our childhood lives would have been boring without you."

Voltaire, my favorite philosopher, also said "Work keeps us from three great evils, boredom, vice, and poverty."

My work as a porn writer never bored me, but gave me the time and resources to take my kids on educational adventures they still like to talk about, and the resources to get there in style. And although much of my writing involved sexual vices, it left me with neither the time nor the inclination to sample them all myself.

It was fun while it lasted, and gave me a leg up on my second career as a writer that kept me going as a wordsmith into the 21st century.

Now, while advancing age diminishes the number of my colleagues and friends, it increases my concern that my finest creative effort has already become extinct. I know from trying to read today's so-called erotic books, that SLODGE is an important enough genre to be reborn and developed as a literary goldmine, but try as I might, I haven't been able to convince anyone but me to even try to revive the genre, and I quit trying before I got to....

...THE END

I'm afraid that I'm like Joe Heller. I don't vote anymore and that is terrible and I don't recommend that to anybody. Joe Heller never voted. He didn't want to be complicit.

—Kurt Vonnegut, explaining why he didn't vote, NPR 11/6/02



Run, Baby, Run
by Ditmar