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NO WAY DOING, but here it is: And here we are, Bill Burns and me, separated only by keyboards and monitors, and we're doing it again. It's January 2003 and this is *e/6*, Volume 2 Number 1, the First Anniversary Issue.

During this past year we hope we have entertained, amused, titillated, thrilled, and shocked you in our attempts to be innovative, illustrative, and of benefit to you. We have maintained a regular schedule of quality material. We have tried to be innovative and proud. Feel free to let us know how we're doing at any time; your input is always welcome.

This issue of *e/* is dedicated to the boys of Advent:Publishers [Robert Briney, Sidney Coleman, Earl Kemp, James O'Meara, George Price, Jon Stopa, and in memory of Ed Wood], and is in memory of Mal Ashworth, Jerry Sohl, and Edward Yerxa.

Everything in this issue under my byline is part of my rough draft memoirs and I invite your comments, corrections, extensions, photographs, memories, jpegs, or whathaveyou emailed to me at earlkemp@citlink.net and I thank you very much.

I couldn't have done my part of producing this issue without Bill Burns' help and I can never thank Bill enough for making me look real good.

e/6 could not have happened without the help of numerous fans and book collectors who provided articles, jpegs, or other materials just for this issue. They include: Victor J. Banis, Robert Bonfils, Bruce Brenner, Darrell Doxmire, Charles Freudenthal, Richard E. Geis, Robert Lichtman, Lynn Munroe, Alexei Panshin, Janine Stinson, Josh Wachtel, and overlooked others.

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I'm sorry and I should apologize first thing: In October 2002 *e/4* I promised that part two, the concluding and by far the most exciting portion of Stephen Gertz' "Earthlings, Beware!" would appear in this issue of *e/*. Sorry! Gertz' agent pulled the plug on the punch line and the rest of the story will not appear as promised here.

And, because it was the better half of the story, and because I can, I think I'll add a little insult to injury.

I'm leaving you with this tasty tidbit to think about in the interim:

It is still discussed in reverential tones by those who were working in the business at the time. "Brilliant." "A work of genius." Competitors were in awe at the sheer nerve, the nth degree ofchutzpah involved in its conception and publication. It is now scarce, one of the Holy Grails of collectors, one of the most sought-after rare books of modern erotic literature. It is *The Illustrated Presidential Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography* edited by Earl Kemp, with an Introduction by Eason Monroe, the ACLU's Southern California Executive Director, a Preface by Donald H. Gilmore; and an additional Preface by Roger Blake, Ph.D. [John Trimble, Ph.D.] and released by Greenleaf.

--Steven J. Gertz, *An Amazing Kingdom of Thrills*, 2002

The Man From C.A.M.P.*

By Lynn Munroe

Victor J. Banis was born in Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania Dutch country, in 1937. "But the family moved to Ohio when I was a baby," Victor tells us, "so I grew up in Eaton, Ohio. Began writing as a teenager, mystery stories featuring a Nancy Drew-like classmate on whom I had a crush. I moved to Los Angeles in 1960, and started writing professionally in 1964, with *The Affairs of Gloria* for Brandon House, as Victor Jay. Starting with *The Why Not* (as Victor J. Banis) in 1966, I wrote a long list of books for Greenleaf Classics and eventually most of the other pulp publishers. In the 70's, I wrote mystery novels as Jan Alexander and hardcover fiction as V.J. Banis. All in all, I wrote somewhere in the neighborhood of 140 books, plus some shorter pieces, and the occasional restroom wall."

When we did our Don Holliday catalog back in 1996, I asked the first Don Holliday, Hal Dresner, if he knew who took over the pen name after he left Greenleaf. That later Don Holliday wrote a funny series of male homosexual spy spoof novels about The Man From C.A.M.P. Dresner had no information, but a few years later our friend Jeff Luther reprinted the cover of the first Man From C.A.M.P. book in his Pulp Fiction Postcards series.

One day Jeff got a phone call from Victor J. Banis, who told Jeff he was the "Don Holliday" who wrote the Man From C.A.M.P. books, and how surprised and delighted he was to see one of his old books on a postcard. Jeff passed on Victor's address to me, and this feature, spotlighting Victor J. Banis, is the result.

Victor was kind enough to sign a whole set for us, so we have the complete Man From C.A.M.P. series, with their vibrant cover art by Robert Bonfils. We also talked to Victor's editor at Greenleaf, Earl Kemp, who told me the Man From C.A.M.P. Books were supposed to have been ascribed to a different pen name. But, as often happened at that publisher, a mistake was made and the Holliday name was attached to all the books. Banis wrote 18 books as Don Holliday (the twelve C.A.M.P. Books and six non-series titles), and at least six as J.X. Williams. We will list all of them for you here in the Banis Checklist.

My thanks to Victor J, Banis, a sweet man who has been patient and accessible throughout our research for this project. Thanks also to Earl Kemp, Jeff Luther, and RC & Elwanda Holland.

*Reprinted from List 53, Winter 2002.

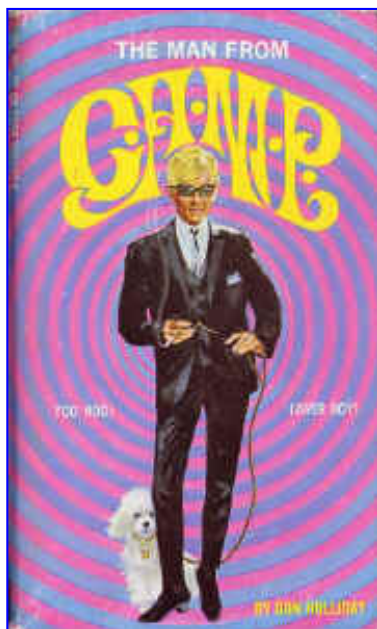
A VICTOR J. BANIS CHECKLIST

Compiled by Lynn Munroe

THE MAN FROM C.A.M.P. SERIES - as Don Holliday

1. THE MAN FROM C.A.M.P. - Leisure LB1154 (1966)
2. COLOR HIM GAY - Leisure LB1158
3. THE WATERCRESS FILE - Leisure LB1168
4. THE SON GOES DOWN - Leisure LB1177
5. GOTHIC GAYE - Leisure LB1184
6. HOLIDAY GAY - Companion CB545 (1967)
7. RALLY ROUND THE FAG - Ember Library EL367
8. THE GAY DOGS - Ember Library EL386
9. SEX AND THE SINGLE GAY "by Jackie Holmes, The Man From C.A.M.P., as told to Don Holliday" - Leisure LB1196
10. BLOW THE MAN DOWN - Late Hour Library LL763 (1968)
11. THE C.A.M.P. GUIDE TO ASTROLOGY "by Lady Agatha and Jackie Holmes, as told to Don Holliday" - Late Hour Library LL789
12. THE C.A.M.P. COOKBOOK "by Lady Agatha in conspiracy with Don Holliday" - Pleasure Reader 220 (1969)
(Banis: "Lady Agatha was the pen name and alter ego of my friend Elbert Barrow")
- (13. GAY-SAFE - Pleasure Reader 306 (1971) Banis: "I did not write this book. I think Sam Dodson must have." This was published after both Banis and editor Earl Kemp had left Greenleaf/Corinth.)

LB1154



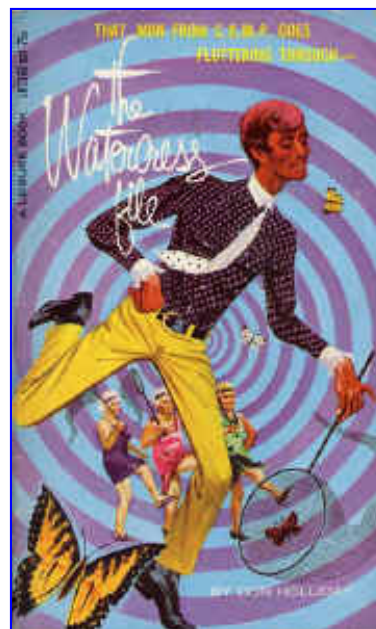
The Man From C.A.M.P.
Cover by Robert Bonfils

LB1158



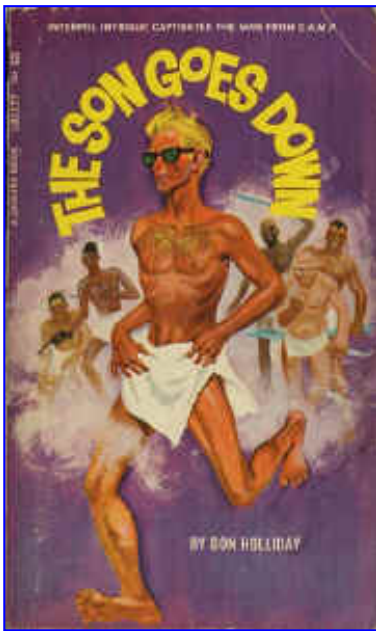
Color Him Gay
Cover by Robert Bonfils

LB1168



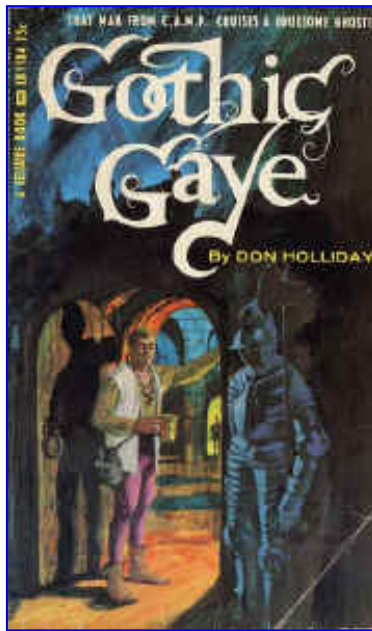
The Watercress File
Cover by Robert Bonfils

LB1177



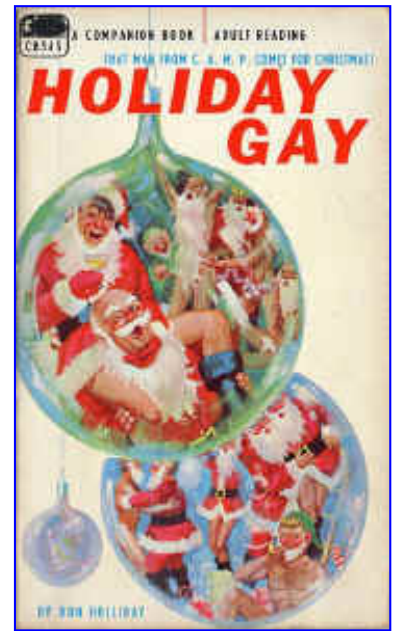
The Son Goes Down
Cover by Robert Bonfils

LB1184



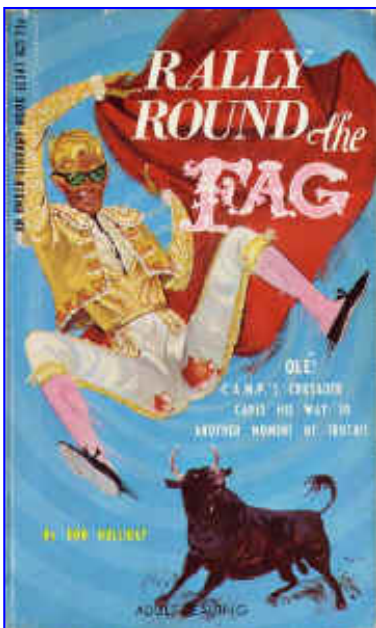
Gothic Gaye
Cover by Darryl Millsap

CB545



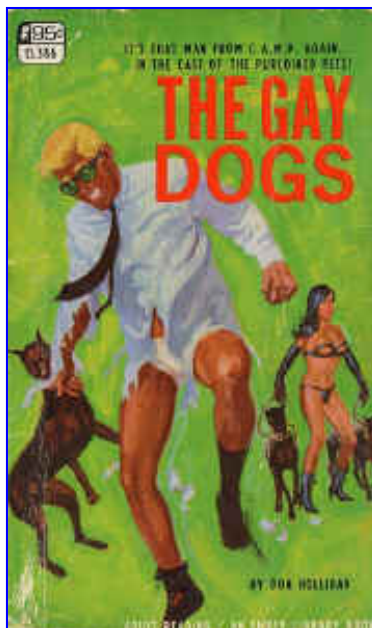
Holiday Gay
Cover by Robert Bonfils

EL367



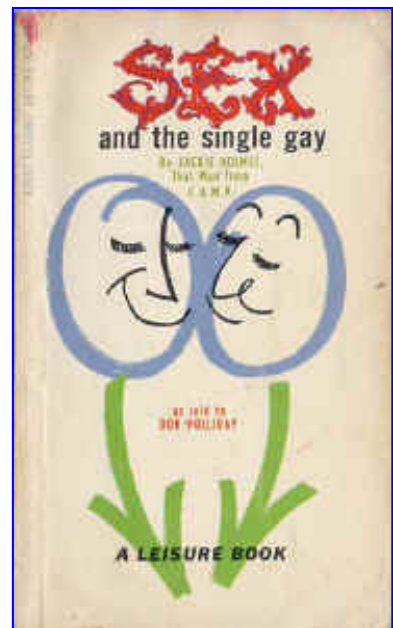
Rally Round the Fag
Cover by Robert Bonfils

EL386

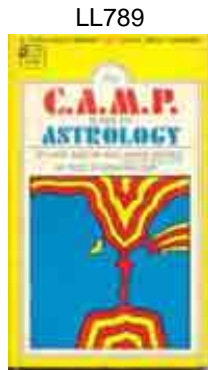


The Gay Dogs
Cover by Robert Bonfils

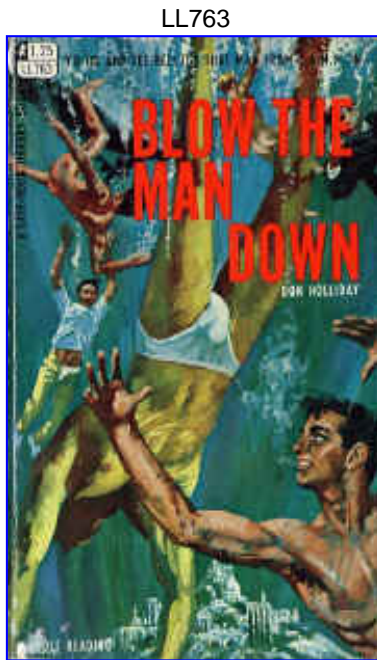
LB1196



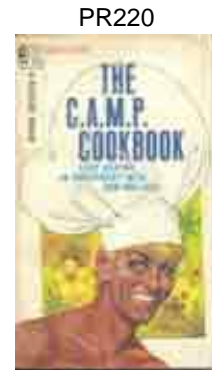
Sex and the Single Gay
Cover by Robert Bonfils



The C.A.M.P. Guide to Astrology
Cover by Robert Bonfils



Blow the Man Down
Cover by Robert Bonfils



The C.A.M.P. Cookbook
Cover by Robert Bonfils

Other books as Don Holliday

THREE ON A BROOMSTICK - Adult Book AB404

HOME OF THE GAY - Adult Book AB429

STRANGER AT THE DOOR - Late Hour Library LL733

GAY BUDDIES - Nightstand NB1857

THE GAY TRAP - Sundown Reader SR602

(Banis: "my friend and frequent collaborator Sam Dodson also wrote a Don Holliday at this time: BROTHERS IN LOVE - Leisure LB1204. And he wrote DONNIE & CLYDE as Sam Dodd - Late Hour Library LL760.")

Writing as J.X. Williams

THE BRONZE AND THE WINE - Leisure LB1172

AC-DC STUD - Ember Library EL371

GAY TREASON (co-written with Elbert Barrow) - Nightstand NB1875

BORN TO BE GAY - Sundown Reader SR597

PRETTY MAN - Sundown Reader SR604

GOODBYE MY LOVER - Sundown Reader SR607

Writing as Jay Vickery

MAN INTO BOY - Adult Book AB436

GAYDREAMS - Adult Book AB437

BRANDON'S BOY - Adult Book AB453

Writing as Victor J. Banis

THE WHY NOT - Greenleaf Classics GC209 (1966)

MEN & THEIR BOYS Medco

SMALL TOWN SEX - TODAY! Medco, (1966)

THE PUSSYCAT MAN - Sherbourne Press, (1969)

1st PB: Award A665S (1970)

THE SWORD AND THE ROSE - Pyramid 03596 (1975)

Writing as Victor Jay

THE AFFAIRS OF GLORIA - Brandon House 906 (1964)

THE LOVE EXPERT - Brandon House 973 (1965) 2nd printing 1966

SO SWEET, SO SOFT, SO QUEER - Private Edition PE344 (1965)

AC-DC LOVER - Private Edition PE346 (1965)

HIDDEN FLAMES - Brandon House 988 (1966)

HOMO FARM - Brandon House 2059 (1968)
THE GAY HAUNT - Other Traveler TC517 (1970) 2nd printing 1972; 3rd printing 1973
DEVIL SOUL - Belmont B75-2033 (1970)

Miscellany

AN ABC OF SEXUAL WORDS AND PHRASES by Victor J. Samuels - GC404
THE FLAMING SUCKERS by Jay Symons - Barclay 7082 (1969)
FRIAR PECK & HIS TALE by Anonymous - Greenleaf digest GL113
ONLY A BOY by Anonymous - Greenleaf Classics GC292
THE TIJUANA BIBLE READER by Anonymous - Greenleaf digest GL101
THE SECOND TIJUANA BIBLE READER by Anonymous - Greenleaf digest GL133

Collaborations with Sam Dodson

ALL THE WAYS HOMOSEXUALS MAKE LOVE by Dodd V. Banson - Academy Press OAP-5509 (1970)
AUTO-EROTIC ACTS & DEVICES by Victor Dodson - Medco nn (1967)
UNUSUAL SEX ACTS, PRACTICES & PERVERSIONS by Dr. T.K. Peters with Victor Dodson, ed. - Medco nn (1968)
A STUDY OF DEVIATE SEXUAL FANTASIES by Dodson, Victor & Samuels -
PEC Special 20 (1968)
PEDERASTY: Sex Between Men & Boys by Victor Dodson - Barclay House
THE LAMB by Jay Dodd - Presse de L'amour PDL101 (1969)

(Banis: "There were other co-writes with Sam Dodson, BLACK & WHITE TOGETHER was one, I think. Almost any combo of those two names was probably us. I remember a wife-swapping book for Sherbourne or Medco and several "case history" books on various sexual behaviors. I also wrote the intro to PRISON CONFIDENTIAL by Prisoner X for Medco. There are probably a couple dozen other adult books but I don't know the titles or bylines. Many of those I don't think I ever saw in print. Short stories in ADAM BEDSIDE READER, ONE, and DER KREIS (The Circle), published in Switzerland").

ADAM BEDSIDE READER 24 (1967) "An Apple a Day" short story Signed by Victor J. Banis (with photo and short biography of the author). Includes stories by Harlan Ellison (writing as Cordwainer Bird and under his own name) and "To Tahiti - The Second Step" by Max Williams (William Knoles).

Gothic romance novels

As Jan Alexander

THE WOLVES OF CRAYWOOD - Lancer 73-868 (1970)
BLOOD MOON - Lancer 74-648 (1970)
SHADOWS - Lancer 74-670 (1970)
HOUSE OF FOOLS - Lancer/Magnum 74-745 (1971)
THE SECOND HOUSE - Beagle 94157 (1971)
WHITE JADE - Popular Library 00300 (1971)
THE GIRL WHO NEVER WAS - Lancer 75-308 (1972)
GLASS HOUSE - Pop Lib 00313 (1972)
MOON GARDEN - Pop Lib 00338 (1972)
HOUSE AT ROSE POINT - Avon V2425 (1972)
DEVIL'S DANCE - Avon V2443 (1972)
THE BISHOP'S PALACE - Pop Lib 00403 (1973)
DARKWATER - Pocket (1975)
THE HAUNTING OF HELEN WREN - Pocket 78445 (1975)
BLOOD RUBY - Ballantine 24747 (1975)
THE LION'S GATE - Berkley Zodiac D3159 (1976)
GREEN WILLOWS - Pocket 81037 (1977)

As Lynn Benedict

MOON FIRE - Avon 0-380-14761-0 (1973)
FATAL FLOWER - Avon 0-380-15909-0 (1973)
THE TWISTED TREE - Avon V2467 (1973)
A FAMILY AFFAIR - Avon V2472 (1973)
BLOODSTONE - Beagle 26543 (1973)
WHISPER OF HEATHER Pocket 77784 (1974)
THE LUCIFER CULT - Pocket 77785 (1974)

Writing as V.J. Banis

THIS SPLENDID EARTH - St. Martin's Press, 1978

1st PB: Fawcett
THE EARTH AND ALL IT HOLDS - St. Martin's Press, 1980
1st PB: Fawcett
SAN ANTONIO - Arbor House, 1985

It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things, freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them.

--Mark Twain

Paperback Virgin*

By Victor J. Banis

I was a "paperback virgin" when first I met Earl Kemp. Well, almost, anyway, which I have always thought ought to count in those matters.

My actual deflowering, however, happened as a part of my experience with Brandon House Books, Milton Luross' operation out there in North Hollywood. What brought me to that momentous event-the foreplay, if you will-was a visit to a paperback bookstore in Hollywood.

This was 1963. The fuse was already burning for that paperback explosion that was soon to happen, but this was a bit before the big bang. In 1963 even the idea of a "paperback bookstore" was still new. I was fascinated. There was nothing to speak of in the way of gay material-up to this point, gay publishing was truly a sometimes thing. A very seldom sometimes thing, truth to tell, which did bother me.

But there were lesbian books aplenty. Yes, all right, faux lesbians, as a friend of mine likes to put it, which is to say, lesbians written by and for men and having not much resemblance to real lesbians living or dead. Still, I thought that I was as qualified as any of those writers. After all, I actually did know some lesbians, so I was practically an expert. What's more, when I glanced through some of these fictional gems I found myself thinking, "You know, I could do this."



I took home eight or ten books, randomly selected, read them, and sat down to write my own. I meant it to be a spoof, but not too obvious in its spoofery. No sense in biting the editorial hand that might possibly get around to feeding me.

I sent my manuscript off to the publisher who seemed to offer the most variety-Milt's company as it turned out, but I didn't know that at the time. In short order I had a letter from a Brandon House Editor (I'm afraid the name has faded from a memory that never was as good as it used to be) who told me he liked my offering (oh, be still my writer's heart!) but it was too short for their purposes. Would I be interested in making it longer, in which case he thought they might buy it.

I would and I did, and they did, and in a few months I had in my hands copies of my first paperback novel, *The Affairs of Gloria*, the uninhibited story of a free-loving, free-wheeling nympho, by Victor Jay (Brandon House Books # 906). Or, as my sister retitled it, *Dolly Do Good In The Boudoir*.

Fair enough. My Gloria was a good sort, and I thought the cover plenty stylish. I cashed the check I had

received and sat by the phone to await the call from the Pulitzer people.

Alas, the call, when it came, was from an employee at Brandon house, one Mel Friedman, who called to tell me that we had been indicted, and were invited to meet at the federal building the following day for arraignment.

Indicted? Invited? Arraignment? I was a virgin, remember? After a lengthy pause during which I considered a number of puzzling questions, I asked the one I thought most pertinent: "Indicted for what?"

A sigh, as if I ought to know already. Obscenity charges, was the answer. Federal obscenity charges. Conspiracy to distribute obscene material.

Of course, virginity did not equate with utter ignorance. I had certainly seen pornography in one form or another. Sex movies weren't then, as they are now, available at your neighborhood emporium, but even in those days you could find stag movies if you knew somebody who knew somebody. There were little mimeographed stories that circulated endlessly, and 8-page comic books in which grotesque versions of Popeye and Greta Garbo cavorted shamelessly.

But what had any of that to do with my Gloria? True, Gloria had a penchant for, yes, "manhood." Certainly she was in and out of bed often - all right, *quite* often - and some of that bedtime was spent with women as well as with men. But there was no shortage of books available at the time with plenty of sex in them, implied sex certainly. The habitués of *Peyton Place* did not spend their time quilting and dancing polkas.



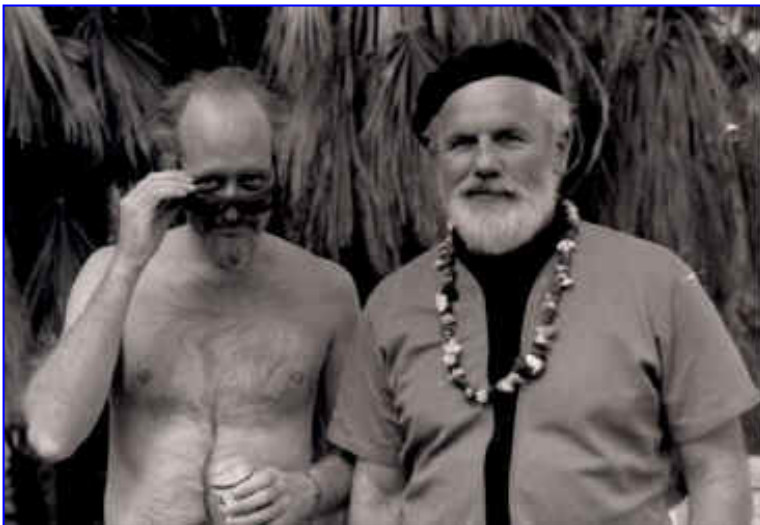
Looking back, I can see that what I was really guilty of was criminal innocence. I hadn't a clue. In my defense, I might point out that I had not bought those initial paperbacks from "under the counter;" no plain brown wrappers, no hasty swaps in darkened doorways. I had walked into a store in broad daylight, had taken them directly from the racks on the walls, and forked over my money. How could I have guessed that forking so openly might involve anything illegal?

Certainly, aside from the sparkling prose, there was nothing in Gloria that couldn't be found in her neighbors on the rack. The strongest words in the book were one "damn" and a "to hell with it." Unlike some of her crasser cousins, Gloria did not even have tits, she had melons. As for any other anatomical issues, she might as well have had a feather duster down there for all the details I provided-I only made it clear that it tickled many people.

Anyway, this was The U.S. of A., wasn't it, liberty and justice for all, home of the free....

#

It soon began to look, however, as if I might not remain one of the free. I went as "invited" for my arraignment...and met for the first time my fellow "conspirators." Chief among them was, I learned, Milt Luross, owner of the publishing company. His wife and co-owner, Bea, had been invited to the shindig as well. There was Mel Friedman, whose job never was clear to me. Stanley Sohler, Harold Straubing, and Paul Wisner turned out to be editors. Bernie Abramson headed their shipping department and Elmer Batters was a photographer. To round out the party there were two other freelance writers beside myself, Sam Merwin and Richard Geis.



Earl Kemp and Stan Sohler
at the desert oasis Canon de
Guadalupe, Mexicali, Baja
California, Mexico. Circa
1966.

Luros, Merwin, and Geis were a bit spacey because all of them came from a common background of science fiction, you know, that crazy Buck Rogers stuff. I was to learn later that William Hamling and Earl Kemp of Greenleaf Classics shared the same thing with them.

What was involved in Sioux City wasn't science fiction, but was a handful of books and magazines - nudist magazines, but mind you - not the split beavers to be found in today's *Playboy* or *Penthouse*. Rather more of the *Sunshine and Health* sort of thing, people in the all-together playing badminton or hiking through the bushes, with here and there a bare tush or the rare appendage flopping about. I suppose someone might have gotten excited by them, but I know people who get hot and bothered reading cookbooks.

There was an assortment of charges, involving writing, photographing, publishing, selling, and distributing these publications. The others were involved in numerous individual charges, plus the blanket conspiracy charge, but I was named only in the conspiracy. I felt sort of like an afterthought, but that p.s. loomed rather large in my potential future.

We were brought before the judge. Knees knocking, voice cracking, I pleaded not guilty. As we were leaving, fellow writer Geis whispered to me, "Gee, you acted really scared in there."

Breaking news, Dick: that was no act. I was scared.

And furious. It was on this momentous occasion that I met U.S. Postal Inspector, Donald Schoof who, it turned out, was the chief architect of our criminal case. And who, as I was leaving the courtroom, took me aside and whispered in what I presume was meant to be a seductive tone that he could make things easier for me if I was willing to testify for the government.

I must emphasize here that I was no outlaw, no career criminal, but up till now a law abiding, flag waving believer in the U.S. Of A. who had ever been willing, eager even, to cooperate with the government.

My only prior legal infringements had been a speeding ticket and a distressing incident in which an unhappy wife named me as co-respondent in a divorce trial. Today that would be one of the tamer programs on Oprah, but it was pretty racy stuff for Dayton, Ohio in 1956. I don't have the words to describe the pregnant pause that followed when the judge, a no-nonsense midwestern burgher, looked up over his glasses and asked, "Is the other woman in the courtroom?"

But while that was guaranteed to get you laughed at it involved no threat of mixed doubles in the big house.

These charges carried penalties of ten years in federal prison or ten thousand dollars in fines...or both, if you cleaned your plate.

I scorned Mister Schoof's advances. To be honest, had someone taken the trouble to romance me beforehand (candlelight and soft music are givens in this scenario) I would probably in the afterglow of consummation have blabbed everything I knew about Milt Luros-which, of course, was absolutely nothing. I had never heard of the man before our arraignment. But surely that fact must have come up in their alleged investigation, hadn't it?

This was after the fact, however. Like the old saying, once the horse is stolen it's too late to get out the Vaseline, or something to that effect. I was indignant, and kiss me where he might, Mister Schoof was not going to have me on his mattress willingly.

Moreover, I still felt certain that one had only to read *Gloria* to realize that a mistake had been made. I was in serious denial. Despite the arraignment, despite Mister Schoof's overtures, despite all evidence to the contrary, I continued to believe that this would all just go away.

It didn't, of course. It began to look as if it might be me who was going away. Our trial began in October 1965 in Sioux City, Iowa. The very location was a joke (neither *Gloria* nor I would ever have set foot in Sioux City voluntarily) but federal law allowed charges to be brought where the material was shipped, where it was received, where it was most expensive and punitive to defend, or anywhere in between. The idea was that it would be easier to get convictions in Sioux City than Los Angeles, but the sad reality was, none of these books or magazines had ever been seen in Sioux City; or if they had, they really would have been sold "under the counter." No overt forking in the corn belt.

I can't say the experience wasn't interesting. For one thing, though they may not always be the nicest individuals, book people are almost invariably interesting. It is not a business that attracts dunces as, say, postal inspection might. Under other circumstances, I would have enjoyed spending time with these people, or some of them anyway.

I have said at every opportunity that I liked and admired Milton Luros from the very beginning. A graduate of New York's prestigious Hunter College, Milt went on to become quite an artist and painted covers for science fiction magazines for over a dozen years. After he moved to Los Angeles and started his business there, he had set out to print high quality art books, a line he soon discovered was not particularly profitable, and in short order he found his niche printing sexy stuff-for others, initially, but eventually for himself. His field of business notwithstanding-and I could see how some might not approve of that, though it did seem to me as if one had the option of simply ignoring it-Milt was a polite, soft-spoken gentleman of the old school.

I liked Bea Luros too, but I have to say in all honesty, she was as loud and crude as Milt was polished. Lunch at the same table with Bea meant that her fork was in everyone's plate, just in case you may have gotten something better than she had. And while she was eating yours and hers, she was talking in a shout. Subtle was not her style. Still, she was good-natured, and took a Jewish Mama's interest in everyone's personal woes. Plus-and this has always counted with me-she could be very funny. I think she liked me because I was the one who always laughed at her stories.



Astonishing Stories, February 1943, cover painting by Milton Luros.

I didn't spend much time with the editors, though Stanley Sohler took the opportunity to extol the virtues of acid to me; I nodded my head and demurred in a whisper. I don't think I really knew what he was talking

about except in the vaguest of terms. Sam Merwin sometimes wanted a listener while he drank his Scotch and bemoaned his marital and sexual problems. (Honestly, Sam, what kind of fun did you think I was having in the gay metropolitan area?) And Dick Geis and I swapped writing ideas.

Without a doubt, however, the most fascinating member of our cast was Stanley Fleishman, Milt's longstanding attorney. At the time, Fleishman was probably the country's leading First Amendment attorney. He was also one of the profession's most colorful.

Having survived polio as a child, Stanley was left with twisted and nearly useless legs and would walk all his life with a pair of crutches. He was not above using those crutches as weapons in a courtroom duel either. He would find himself so outraged, so stunned, by a question posed by a prosecuting attorney that he would leap to his feet, forgetting those shriveled limbs. While the entire assemblage watched, holding their breaths, Stanley tilted, swayed, seemed about to fall to the floor until, at the last possible second, he remembered to seize a crutch. By the time this dramatic interlude was over, the prosecutor's remark had lost its effectiveness, if it was remembered at all.

Milt had hired a second attorney too, specifically to represent the free-lancers among us, the legendary Texas criminal lawyer, Percy Foreman, who would go on in time to represent Jack Ruby, but was already known as a modern day Clarence Darrow for his success in seemingly hopeless murder cases. In reality, Fleishman and Foreman were working on an Abbot and Costello routine that they would perfect by the time Hamling, et al were brought to trial in Houston, Percy's home court, in 1966.

Foreman was a tall, folksy looking man with a drawl and a mop of white hair hanging in his face. Foreman had not heretofore worked an obscenity trial, but explained that he had taken this one because he wanted the privilege of working with Fleishman. He was scarcely any less dramatic himself.

There were rumors, by the by, that Foreman drank. I can't say absolutely, I never saw the bottle at his lips, but his breath was often one hundred proof. One whiff and the spaghetti stains disappeared from your suit. Well, it was important that we keep up appearances, so I counted that a plus.

Then there was the other side. I've said already that it was Donald Schoof's aversion to Manhood and Melons that brought us to this cornfield of honor. But while old M & M's was pulling the strings, he of course had the assistance of a prosecuting attorney, whose name I can no longer recall. My only clear memory of him was my impression that if someone had shown him two photographs and asked him to say which represented a hole in the ground, I honestly doubt that he could have come up with the answer. But, hey, I don't want to knock these guys. Seriously.

Still, with ten years hanging over my head, I didn't feel much inclined to laugh. I was young, blond, and though I lacked *Gloria's* melons, my own feather duster was not without its charm. Those ten years were not likely to be a house party for me.

I was even less inclined to laughter as I listened to government witnesses testify falsely regarding meetings I had attended at Brandon House, phone conversations, letters, etc. None of it true. Until that call from Mel Friedman, my only contact with anyone from the publishing house was that letter from the nameless editor, and he wasn't one of my co-defendants.

In Al Capp's brilliant comic strip, Li'l Abner, Abner's own favorite comic strip character, Detective Fearless Fosdick (the only instance I know of a comic strip within a comic strip) is tortured in a particularly vile way-tied to a chair and forced to listen over and over to Nelson Eddy's recording of "Mammy's Little Baby Loves Shortenin' Bread."



One has to suppose that these witnesses had been subjected to something equally heinous (say, the Von Trapp Family Singers and "It's a Small, Small World," from Disneyland) to get

them to perjure themselves so blatantly.

Had the jurors even looked at the material they were to judge? Certainly they did not in the courtroom. I watched them pass the nudie magazines, for instance, from one to another, gingerly holding them between thumb and forefinger without opening them and with their eyes turned solemnly heavenward. Though I had no connection with those magazines (heck, I hadn't even seen some of them myself) the charge against me was a conspiracy charge. A find that the magazines were obscene could send me up the river with only a feather duster for a paddle.

An employee of the motel at which we were staying told me our rooms had been bugged. My mail at home was left at the doorstep outside of the envelopes, so I could understand that it had been read.

So much for justice and the American way. The foreplay was over. The federal government and Mister Schoof, had me on the bed, and they weren't going to let me up until they had their vile ways with me. I was abused and misused for four months.

Four very long months, I might say. I don't suppose any of our group found Sioux City very exciting, but for a young gay man it was a case of, "no one to walk with, no one to talk with...." The others were already acquainted with one another, and most of them had been through some version of this problem before. I was the rookie, I was younger than the others, and I was gay. Mostly, I was alone, though I have to say that Bea Luross took my homosexuality in stride. To be honest, she seemed altogether fascinated by it. She stopped short of asking what my partner and I did in the sack, but only just short of it. Whether she was just being kind, or nosy, or salacious, I can't say, but it was a lifesaver to have someone I could talk to without seeing them back away, and I was grateful. In return, I let her pick whatever scraps she wanted from my lunch plate. Fair is fair.

Except for those chats and food swaps with her, however, there wasn't much to help the time pass. With the eyes of the community upon us (and that meant the eyes of the jurors) I certainly wouldn't have been out cruising and carousing, even had there been any gay hangouts in Sioux City, and so far as I know, there weren't.

It was days of overheated, stuffy air in the courtroom, with numerous pairs of disapproving eyes watching every shift of our bottoms in our chairs. And nights of watching television alone in a motel room, with the occasional drink in the motel's lounge where we were more or less entertained by a touring pop group whose girl singer had a limited repertoire and even less talent. To this date the sound track in my nightmares consists mostly of "Downtown" sung over and over in a nasal twang. Where is Petula Clark when you need her?

#

In the end the forces of law and order did let me go, if reluctantly. I was acquitted but only on a technicality, when the conspiracy charge, the only one in which I was named, was tossed by the judge at the end of the trial. The other defendants were convicted, though those convictions were eventually overturned on appeal.

"Was justice served?" I wondered aloud.

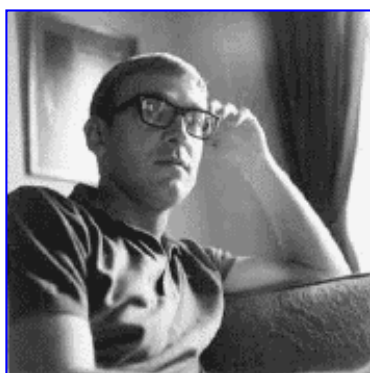
"Justice was served," Dick Geis replied, "She was served her head on a platter."

The sad result of all this was that my innocence was gone forever. I had been screwed in no uncertain terms and like any abused virgin I felt sore and violated. I came home from Sioux City with a burning resentment for the callous disregard that the government had displayed for what I considered some pretty fundamental rights I thought guaranteed by our constitution. There's a reason that the founding fathers put freedom of speech right there in the very first amendment; without that, the rest doesn't amount to a hill of beans, does it?

And it had all been for naught, as I saw it. It can be a mistake attempting to explain the thought processes of others, but one would have to suppose that in part, at least, the governmental individuals involved in indicting me must have assumed that they could discourage me from any further activity in the paperback business. Ironically, the result was exactly the opposite.

Under other circumstances, I'm not sure that I would have had much interest in pursuing a paperback writing career; *Gloria* had been fun but a whim, really. Certainly I had no interest in a career writing of faux lesbians.

I was still hurting, however, and I felt practically compelled to write at least one or two more books, to show the Federales (and myself) that I had not been intimidated. Well, if I am going to be entirely honest, I have to mention that I quickly discovered that the books were easy to do, for me at any rate. And they paid money. I soon found that I could write them with astonishing speed, easily a book a week. At \$700 a pop, that was really good money in 1966 dollars.



Victor J. Banis, the paperback virgin, in 1965.

The only problem was, I had decided I wanted to write gay books and if lesbians incited government censors to action, writing about gay males doing the deed was like waving red panties in front of a horny bull. The postal authorities and the courts, all the way up to the Supreme Court, had already proclaimed that sort of dalliance a no-no. Two men holding hands was enough to render a book obscene, as these folks saw it. Holding anything else was blasphemy, at the very least.

Not even out of respect for our common travail would Milt Luros venture into those waters, nor was I able to generate any interest among the other paperback publishers of the day. By now they all knew who I was. Paperback publishing in those days was a small town and I had paid my dues by taking my lumps along with Luros and company. Everyone was eager to see something from me in the heterosexual or lesbian vein, but even the bravest of them were convinced gay books would be like dropping their pants with little hope of satisfaction. "But who would buy them?" was the standard reply that I got to my queries.

Well, as everyone knows, when a guy gets really hot for something he isn't usually much inclined to be discouraged. I remained stubbornly convinced that there was a large and largely untapped market for gay books. The Stonewall Uprising wouldn't happen until 1969 but already by 1965 gays were coming out of their closets.

In 1950 William Jennings, often called the "gay Rosa Parks," was arrested on a sex charge in Los Angeles' Griffith Park. The usual response to this sort of arrest was to roll over and pay your fine, but Jennings refused and demanded a jury trial. He pleaded innocent and to everyone's surprise the jury agreed...the first time in California that a jury had ever acquitted an openly gay man on an indecent behavior charge, and it was looked upon as a deliberate slap at the police entrapment policy of the era.

In 1951 in San Francisco, Jennings and Harry Hay formed the Mattachine Society, the first American gay rights group. In 1953 W. Dorr Legg started One, Inc., and began publishing One, the first American gay review. In 1955, Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin founded The Daughters of Bilitis, the first ever lesbian rights organization.

It has to be mentioned that all of these groups became objects of scrutiny and harassment on the part of the legal authorities, especially the FBI and, of course, our old friends at the Post Office, who refused to mail the October 1954 issue of One on obscenity grounds, solely because it dared to discuss homosexuality in a favorable light.

A 1955 issue of the *Mattachine Review* mentioned homosexuals in "key positions" in the FBI hierarchy. The *Review* was careful not to name FBI director J. Edgar Hoover nor his companion Clyde Tolson, but those two took the hints personally as fighting words, and repeatedly charged that all three rights organizations were communist fronts.

In 1962 a group of San Francisco bar owners, gay and straight, formed the Tavern Guild to resist the practice of police payoffs and to consolidate their legal and financial clout. 1964 saw the formation of The Council of Churches, again in San Francisco. Their first fundraiser, a New Year's Eve drag ball, was raided and a number of prominent religious leaders jailed. The result was the first public demonstration for gay rights, long before the happening at Stonewall.

The history of the gay revolution needs a lot more than five short paragraphs, of course, but the point is, by 1965, gays were no longer cowering in the shadows as they had for decades. They were dancing together in bars and clubs, initially in private clubs but before long in public ones as well. The scene was jumping. The love that dared not speak its name was telling it to all who would listen, including a few who didn't want to hear it. Which is probably why God invented earplugs, Donald. Butt plugs are another matter, but this isn't the place to get into that.

Encouraged by this new gay spirit, and despite the advice to the contrary, I wrote my gay novel *The Why Not* with my own byline on it. Like the baby Moses, I put it adrift on the publishing waters, and who should save my offspring from the river of forgetfulness but the Prince of Bull-Rushes himself: Earl Kemp. And Prince that he was, Earl didn't even quibble over the state of my virginity; anyway, on the gay front, everything I had to offer was still unsullied. Well, yes, I do mean on the gay *publishing* front, but the point is, I was a "gay paperback virgin," which was what I started out to tell you originally.

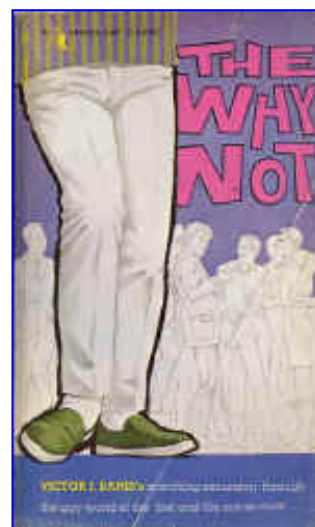
I don't know what kind of advice Earl got to the contrary, or what kind of heat he may have taken for his decision. He's never said. What I do know is that he had sufficient vision to see the gay explosion just down the road. He bought *The Why Not* for Greenleaf Classics (Greenleaf Classic # 209, by Victor J. Banis.)

I was curious so I asked Earl if he could remember the book. His reply (email, October 2002) really made my day. He wrote:

"There were many thousands of paperback novels published under my direction at Greenleaf Classics, and 99 percent of them all started out as original manuscripts. There was a point in time when we were almost inundated with unsolicited submissions by wannabe writers, the proverbial 'slush pile.' We also had a very good First Reader named Bill Moore. It was his job to wade through all those novice manuscripts looking for passable material. His word was the first absolute final word in the whole editorial department.

"From those approximate 4,000 paperback titles that we published I can remember around four manuscripts only of truly significant worth, both as literature and as a viable portrayal of our liberated times. These are manuscripts that almost from the minute they arrived at the office began making ripples of excitement that flowed instantaneously from editor to editor.

"Such a day happened when Bill opened the package containing the manuscript for *The Why Not*. He barely even began his customary quick-eyescan-and-quicker-rejection routine when something grabbed him and he stopped reading. When he realized that he didn't need to read the manuscript, he brought it directly into my office...the first time he had ever done any such thing. (Actually, office protocol dictated that he follow procedure and pass anything to me through the editor in chief.)



The Why Not (GC209) featured a revolutionary new type cover painting by Darryl Milsap.

"I think you need to look at this manuscript yourself,' he told me.

"And I did, and I agreed with Bill and I also recognized it as something remarkable, timely, and apt to be rather popular. I bought that manuscript right then without even reading it all the way through and I've never regretted that decision for a moment.

"I feel it was a pivotal book that opened doors too-long closed and one of the major building blocks is Greenleaf's ongoing fight for First Amendment realities."

#

I won't pretend that this was a great novel, but it did get astonishingly good reviews, one in *Publishers' Weekly*, and that truly was astonishing, since they were mostly disinclined to review gay paperback novels at all, and sold well enough that Earl was amenable to more of the same. As an aside, it's worth mentioning that this book, which sold for seventy five cents back then, is now offered for sale on the Internet for \$175. A pretty good rate of inflation, one would have to say.

The best was yet to come. I proposed to Earl a spy spoof, in the manner of *The Man From Uncle*, then playing on television. *The Man From C.A.M.P.* by Don Holliday (Leisure Books # LB 1154) was published by in 1966 - and caused a sensation.

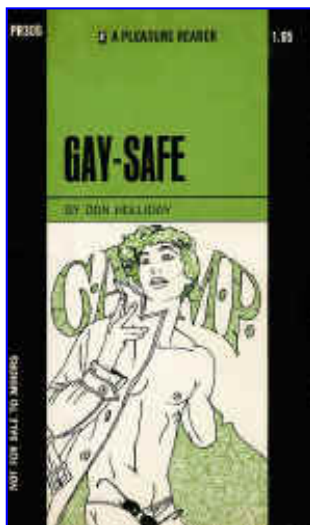
The cover painting of *The Man From C.A.M.P.* By Robert Bonfils was perhaps the single most popular, most reprinted cover of all the GC paperbacks. All of the C.A.M.P. covers appear in the bibliography above.
--Earl Kemp

The Man From C.A.M.P. was Jackie Holmes, who tweaked every cliché then in existence regarding homosexuals. Yes, he was blond, pretty, and effeminate. He was also tough as nails and could outfight, outshoot, and outrun the best of them. He looked very pretty in a dress, too. His white poodle, Sophie, had razor sharp teeth and was trained to kill. Best of all, so far as I know, Jackie was the first homosexual protagonist in fiction to be openly gay and proud of it. In a sense, gay pride could be said to have started with Jackie Holmes.

Jackie cemented as well the partnership between Earl Kemp and myself, and a friendship that would last until the present day. It is doubly ironic, I think, that my Sioux City trial resulted in bringing together in unholy wedlock a southern boy who couldn't say "fuck" without blushing and a Midwestern prude who was 30 before I could bring myself to say "damn" aloud.

An unlikely pair of pornographers, one would think. In that vein, however, it's worth mentioning that before he left Ohio for the bright lights of L.A. And success as a porn star, superstud John Holmes (no relation) was known mostly for his record of perfect attendance at Sunday School...12 straight years without a miss. Hmm. Different bed, different head, I suppose one would say.

Jackie never made it to Sunday School, at least not in the



This is the 13th C.A.M.P. Book (*Gay-Safe*, PR306), with an excellent cover by Harry Bremner, only it was written by Sam Dodson, not Victor Banis

pages of any of the books, but he had his own sort of stardom. The gay world took to their new superhero with a passion, and so launched the gay paperback revolution that would change the publishing, and social, landscape of the sixties and seventies.

I considered that a good trade for my maidenhead.

Oh, hell, if you want to know, I had never put much value on that anyway!

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People demand freedom of speech to make up for the freedom of thought which they avoid.
--Søren Kierkegaard

A Fan For All Seasons*

By Earl Kemp

There's something different about Richard E(rwin). Geis that sets him apart from all other fans. You could even go so far as to call him a Renaissance fan. And the thing that makes him so unique and extra special is, he has a roomful of Hugos, awards, accolades, and other accomplishments. I count a Lucky Thirteen in Hugos alone, six for editing the best fanzine (two for *The Alien Critic* and four for *Science Fiction Review*) and a staggering seven time award winner as best fan writer. How can anyone even try to keep up with a person like Geis?

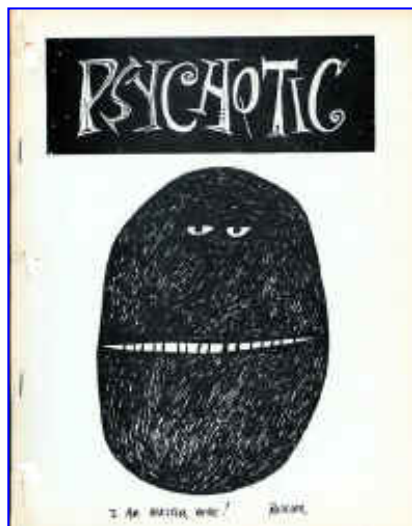


You can't, that's how.

Most people think Richard has been around forever, and they're only half right. He started his science fiction career in the early 1950s but peaked as an activist commentator during the mid- to late '70s.

When I began gathering material for this homage to Richard, I had no real idea what I might encounter. Imagine my surprise when I discovered myself again...with Richard.

The year was 1954 and the fanzine was *Psychotic* (No. 12, June) and there I was as big as life only I didn't know it, couldn't remember it, and was really surprised that I was there. I had written an article called "Impressions of Outer Space" that was a review of a record album by the same name that I didn't happen to enjoy. My article was beautifully presented in *Psychotic* and accompanied by two excellent drawings by Richard Bergeron, who was one of my favorites at the time. Unfortunately the mimeography was so faint an adequate jpeg can't be made of it. And, by the way, I was also surprised to discover that the article was pretty well written and nothing to be embarrassed about



Psychotic 22 with a fantastic William Rotsler cover.

having done.

Apparently the main reason I wrote the review, other than just shooting my mouth off, was to tweek Sam Mines, who was not only promoting the record heavily in *Startling Stories* and *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, but also wrote the liner notes as well. The album featured the cover painting done by Alex Schomburg for *Startling Stories* May 1952.



Imagination was not my favorite prozine. That honor went to *Other Worlds* (I was a sucker for Ray Palmer's editorials and his long replies to letters) and *Startling Stories* and *Thrilling Wonder Stories* (Sam Mines' excellent pulps, which had the most fannish letter columns).

--Ted White, "Mari Wolf & Me," *e15*, December 2002

Then and again much to my surprise, I also discovered that, two years later, Richard wrote "Come And Kill Me, Earthmen!" for *Destiny* No. 10 (Spring 1954) complete with typo in the title and a fantastic painting by Hannes Bok.

Ten years later, as Richard had moved on a bit as a professional writer and novelist, the unthinkable happened in 1964 when the Feds said Geis and a bunch of others didn't have the right to the First Amendment and Richard really got hassled over a bit. The incident left permanent scars on his psyche and, to this day, dictate to a certain extent his outlook and reactions to the things he perceives.



On October 14, 1964, North Hollywood police raided the offices of London Press, which made its money by publishing "girlie" magazines among those indicted in the aftermath were Sam Merwin, who edited *Startling* in the 1940s, and once-and-future fan Richard E. Geis....

--Richard Lynch, "New Frontiers," Chapter One, *Outline of Fan History*

This incident, concluding with a federal trial in Sioux City, Iowa, where Geis was tried along with Sam Merwin, Milton and Bea Luros, Victor Banis [see Banis' memoir of the same incident, "Paperback Virgin," elsewhere in this issue of *e1*], and some others, earned Richard Geis a measure of respect in the general book world. He won his battle scars fair and square defending the First Amendment from those allegedly responsible for maintaining it.

Fancyclopedia III lumped Richard and me together as having made the usual crossover move from science fiction to what was called pornography in those days and nostalgic sleaze today (and what a difference a day makes).

Although outright pornography has not been a common outlet for fanac, two of the best-known fanwriters, Dick Geis and Earl Kemp (Who Killed Science Fiction?), as well as several less noted fans, earned their living in the field and fueled discussion of obscenity laws and censorship. For publishing the text of the report of the President's Commission on Pornography - illustrated to show precisely what they were discussing - Earl Kemp served jail time beginning in 1969. During the early 70's, Geis chronicled his porn career in *Science Fiction*

Review and *The Alien Critic*. He also ran a limited circulation zine including sexual material. Andrew Offutt, as John Cleese, achieved a small cult following among fans aware of the pro writing pseudonym. Bill Rotsler's photography of naked ladies was well publicized and envied.

--*Fancylopedia III*

Fortunately for us all, Richard managed to survive mostly intact and went on to do many truly significant things for science fiction and fandom through his numerous fanzines. The titles seemed to interchange a bit now and then, and they appeared at irregular frequencies, died, and became reborn just as capriciously, but only to our collective benefit.

Throughout the 1970s, Richard Geis dominated the field of serious science fiction commentary as no other person had done before. This was pointed out by Ted White in his "Fanzine Reviews 2001."

Nova Express is yet another type of fanzine: what is now called the "sercon fanzine." "Sercon" stands for "serious and constructive," and the term was originally coined (in the early '50s) as a sarcastic put-down of overly earnest and humorless efforts, but by the late '80s the term had been co-opted by the publishers of serious, science-fiction-oriented fanzines. This kind of fanzine owes its existence to the Richard Geis fanzines of the '70s, variously titled but best known as *The Alien Critic*. The typical sercon fanzine runs an article or two on science fiction topics, at least one interview with an author, and many book reviews. Unfortunately, none of the editors of these fanzines has the deft touch of Geis, and consequently none of their fanzines are as lively.

--Ted White, "Fanzine Reviews 2001" efanazines.com

Now, through the magic of time travel, let's jump ahead from June 1954 when my "Impressions" piece appeared in *Psychotic* to December 2001. My article "With Fists Full of Fantasies" appeared in *Mimosa 27*. It was about the science fiction to pornography switchover and porno mills in the 1960s. And, among other things, it touched upon William Rotsler's varied input into the era.

In response to my article, Richard Geis wrote a letter of comment saying, among other things: "I was especially interested in the old-time porno writers memory lane strolls. I'm happy to say I'm among them, and am surprised at the extensive interaction and social cohesion of the writers/editors of that era.

"Alas, I was on the fringes of that interaction, being a loner and not connected. I'm in the 100-plus sex novel group, and in retrospect wish I'd written faster and made ore money and met more people. I did meet Milton Luross and was with him (a co-conspirator) in Sioux City, Iowa, when we (eight of us as I recall) were on trial by the feds for conspiring to publish and distribute obscene books and magazines. Nudist mags- which were Big sellers in those benighted days-and sex novels. I was one of three writers indicted and put on trial. My Chosen Novel for Prosecution was *The Three-Way Apartment*. Wow. It couldn't be published today for lack of wall-to-wall sex.

"I think we spent three winter months in Sioux City on trial and in the end the government's case was serially dismissed by the judge and appeals courts.

"It was a great experience for me and didn't cost me a dime. Mr. Luross paid all of our expenses-motel rooms, meals, airfare home and back during holidays... A very fine, honorable man.



"I could go on and on about that trial...."

#

In April 2002 I wrote a convention report/review of the 2002 Los Angeles Paperback Show for *The Geis Letter* because so much of his material was on display there. And, at that, I just squeezed in under the wire because Richard terminated the run of *The Geis Letter* and I for one really miss it.

Then, to completely round out the fantastic boomeranging full circle of fate, this issue of *e/* contains Richard's memoir "Writing It Down & Dirty."

I suppose there's something weird going on, Fate is acting up and spinning that old same, same around and around so what comes around does just that.

Any way you look at it, we're much better off because of Richard Geis and damned proud to have him as an award-winning fan.

If anyone were to ask me if I knew Richard, I'd answer, "Hell yes, I know Peggy Swenson. I'm damned proud to call him my friend."

- - -

*For all First Amendment Warriors wherever they are. Special thanks goes to Robert Lichtman who not only did the basic research for this memory but also supplied the cover jpegs from his world-class fanzine collection. Dated December 2002.

Everything that is really great and inspiring is created by the individual who can labour in freedom.
--Albert Einstein

Writing It Down And Dirty*

By Richard E. Geis

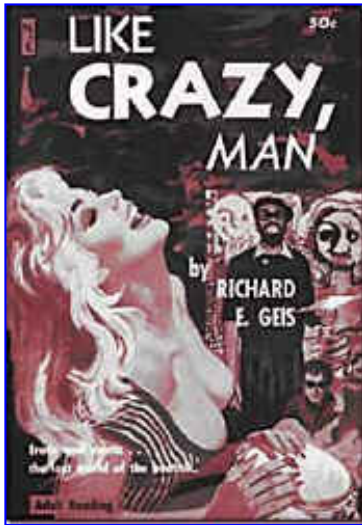
Exhuming long buried memories - from nearly 30 years ago - can be disturbing and amazing. Call it Past Shock.

Since 1963 the sex novel genre has flourished - and died. Killed by now legal sex videos.

The Gay Movement has smashed out of its closet and in spite of AIDS the gay lifestyle is becoming more and more 'normal' every year.

In 1963 most of the censorship furor was about the commercial nudist magazines, which are now - gone. Killed, not by gimlet-eyed sex prosecutions, but by now legal XXX sex videos.

Then the government was still reading private mail and prosecuting singles and couples who wanted to get together for sex.

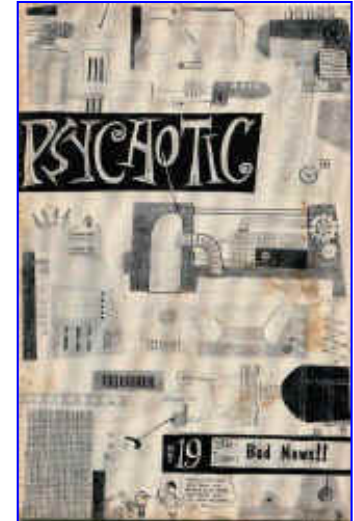


Now... You see where I'm going? Today, couples freely get together, videotape their XXX sex and sell it on the Internet!

The VCR and the video camera and now the internetted computer have triumphed over every moral and censorship opposition. And what new technology will in turn banish video to the trashcan of social/sexual history? I would suggest direct brain feeds.

But this piece is not about sexual/social trends.

How quaint and laughable the notorious Sioux City Sex Trial now seems, even to me, and I had to sit through winter months of it in that cold town.



What follows is not a coherent, fact-filled history of the trial, but a series of notes, snapshots, and comments.

#

There was a California state prosecution first. The state mounted a Conspiracy to Produce and Distribute Obscene Material case a year before the Feds used the same wording and charged the same nine people with the same crime(s).



I was arrested in Portland one night by two detectives, taken to the city jail, and housed in the felony tank until the next day when I was brought before a local judge who told me I was wanted on a fugitive warrant from Los Angeles.

I protested that I had never been to California (so how could I be a fugitive?) but that cut no ice and back to the tank I went to await two Los Angeles detectives who were flying up to get me.

They got me, we flew to L.A., And I called my editor from the airport (who called Milton Luros) and I was then deposited in the huge Intake Tank (I'll call it), a big caged room with benches, a single naked toilet, and nothing to do.

I also had to strip, shower, be examined for possibly hiding drugs in my ass (while my clothes were searched), was fingerprinted and laughed at,

because the California authorities had included an aka in the paperwork: I was 'also known as' Peggy Swenson (the pen name I had used on the novel *The Three Way Apartment* [Brandon House 710] the "authorities" had chosen to include in the case). I suppose the gaolers thought I was gay.

Hours later an attorney hired by Mr. Luros arranged bail for me and I spent the night in a posh downtown hotel, paid for by Mr. Luros.

The next morning I met all my fellow 'co-conspirators' for the first time at the Justice Center. We were all released on continuing bail, and we all went home.

But that initial court hearing was very instructive as the state prosecutor objected to my 'small' \$5,000 bail because (I paraphrase) "God knows what other sex crimes this man has committed in the past!"

Our lawyers objected, uproar, uproar, and the judge reprimanded the prosecutor for grandstanding and unsubstantiated accusations and continued my bail as is. Note that the equivalent today would be at least \$50,000.

As I mentioned, we all went home. Mr. Luros paid my airfare. In fact, he paid for all - ALL - of my plane tickets in the following months/years as I repeatedly had to appear with the others in court, first in Los Angeles, then in Sioux City. A dozen or more flights.

And while I'm being grateful, note that all through those months of trial in Sioux City we all stayed in a very nice national-chain motel, all expenses (including meals) paid by Milton Luros!

A California state judge eventually threw the California case out of court.

Months later the Feds mounted the same case against us by altering the wordage a bit; 'interstate commerce'. It was a 'high profile' (Your government at work against Evil Sex, and who cares who gets hurt?) case and was covered intermittently by the national media.

The Fed case: I had to go to Sioux City to appear before the Grand Jury. But the feds screwed up their schedule and I was not actually called to testify. They knew, too, that I could add nothing to their case. So I was excused from grand Jury testimony, but the Grand Jurors indicted me (and my novel) anyway.

So after a while I was arrested in Portland by the FBI, taken before a Federal Judge in Portland... I have a vague recollection of a local defense attorney at that hearing - again paid for by Milton Luros - and being released (I guess on bail) to await further legal developments.

Those legal developments were appearances in Sioux City... And finally The Trial.

I sucked my way through dozens of packs of Lifesavers as the jury of locals was picked. Townspeople, farmers... Nobody had told them they'd have to page through a dozen nudist magazines and read all the text, nor that they'd have to read every word of my novel and one other (as I recall) in their juror chairs. And we had to spend a week watching them do it.

The feds flew in dozens of witnesses: FBI agents who had rented post office boxes at the main Sioux City post office and who had then ordered the indicted magazines and novels by mail. Post office employees who had placed the magazines and books in the boxes... A chain of recorded possessions proving those items had in fact been sent into Iowa!

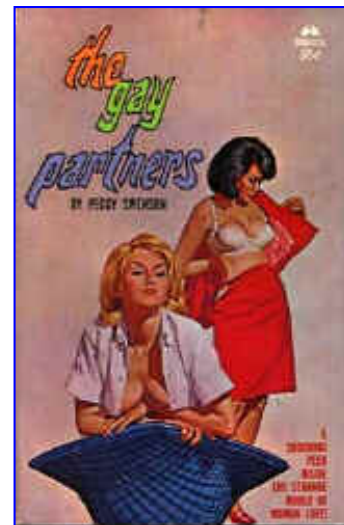
Then we had experts and "experts" in sex and photography and literature.

And we had a few employees of Milton Luros's publishing and printing companies who were used by the feds to prove there had been contact between the defendants to prove conspiracy.

In my case the switchboard operator swore I had once called the head salesman for the enterprises...or was it the overall corporate manager? I don't remember. But she was totally mistaken or simply lying to please the feds and to avoid their wrath. I had never called him, had never heard of him before.

So that challenged phone call was the only conspiracy link to me.

Christmas came, with a recess, and we all flew home...and back a week or so later.



I couldn't find a copy of *Three Way Apartment* but I did find Peggy Swenson's companion novel, *The Gay Partners*. Courtesy Darrell Doxmire collection.

A blow to the prosecution was the revelation in court that the head postal inspector, Mr. Schoof, had talked to the Grand Jury during their deliberations and had "explained" how evil was obscenity and how awful we pornographers were.

This is called 'poisoning the well' I was told by one of our lawyers, is illegal, and is solid grounds for the judge to throw out the entire case against us all.

But this federal judge didn't have the guts to follow the law and precedent and so ruled the trial would continue. But everyone except the jury and the public knew the federal case was lost: it would be dismissed on appeal.

The trial ended with a scenery-chewing summation by the federal prosecutor, and an impassioned appeal by our lead attorney for freedom and fairness and constitutional law.

The jury, after a couple days, came in with Guilty verdicts on all charges.

Whereupon our lawyers leaped to ask for obvious justice - "Some of these men do not belong here, your honor!" - and the judge took their motions under advisement. The feds had their phony and short-lived media moment of public victory against evil.

And weeks later the judge reversed or vacated the convictions against all but Mr. And Mrs. Luros.

And months and months later, in an appeals court, those convictions, too, were reversed.

And so it goes.

I learned True Cynicism during those state and federal prosecutions as I saw how lies, threats, and self-service are the stock in trade tactics of politicians everywhere, at every level, of federal agents and federal lawyers. They all live by those time-honored dictums followed by authoritarians and psychopaths everywhere: Might Makes Right, The End Justifies the Means, and It's Okay, the Enemy Isn't Human.

Give a man the power of the State and that federal status (and a chance to get more power and position and the salary that goes with it), and he'll lie to anyone and kill his mother to get it (or to protect his ass). Justice? Law? The Constitution? Don't make me laugh!



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Self-reliance is the only road to true freedom, and being one's own person is its ultimate reward.
--Patricia Sampson

Revision of Things Past

By Charles Freudenthal

A Fanarchist Meeting (Circa 1954)

Dave Mason was always somewhat wild and scruffy looking. (Pronouncedly Welsh. He once inadvertently, told me his real name but I have forgotten it!) He later became a successful science-fantasy writer.

The only Fanarchist meeting I remember was in Mason's basement flat in lower Manhattan. I don't recall any business. It was really a party.

Dago red was the beverage of choice in those days. The perps were Dave Mason, Dick Ellington, Dan Curran (at that time 16 but looking like a dissipated 30), myself, and miscellaneous others. On the dilapidated couch a rangy young man with hair falling over his eyes was singing the blues and accompanying himself on the guitar. I resented the racket because I thought he sounded amateurish. His name was Dave Van Ronk.

At some local Con the Fanarchists wore armbands with a winged bullet logo. This croggled some people who needed to lighten up.

I don't remember any other details. It was almost fifty years ago!

Dick Ellington, Bill Donaho, Dan Curran, and I later joined a real Anarchist organization, but that had little to do with the Fanarchists. According to my geriatric memory, sometime after NYCON II the Fanarchist idea lost its energy. One problem is that I am the last living Fanarchist and there is no one left to ask! Everyone mentioned above is deceased.



Charles Freudenthal duded up in Joe Mckenna's Wehrmacht stuff. The Dive, 1956.

Gallery 1956: All interior photographs were taken at the Dive in 1956



Bill Donaho and Trina Robbins (nee Perlson).



The kitchen table at the Dive.



Front: Dick and Pat Ellington, unknown fan, Art Saha.
Back: Joe Mckenna, Bill Donaho, Saha's girl, Ron Smith, and
Danny Tannenbaum at George Washington Bridge.



Pat Ellington, Trina Robbins, and Ruth Landis (before
becoming Mrs. Dave Kyle).



Bill Donaho, Joe Mckenna, Danny Tannenbaum, and Dave
Pollard at George Washington Bridge.



Dick and Pat Ellington

The Dive

The Dive was a nine-room apartment on the eleventh floor of 299 Riverside Drive (103rd Street). From about eight windows in the gigantic living room, we could see over the Jersey shore. On a clear day we could see the George Washington Bridge. We played ghoddminton with a standard tennis net. (Eat your heart out, Belfast!)

The inmates were Dick and Pat Ellington, Bill Donaho, Art Saha, Dan Curran, and myself. Dan and I had servant's rooms and our rent share was proportional. There were two refrigerators. One was for beer and mix! There were two bathrooms. Since we often had twenty or thirty guests, this was convenient. There was very little furniture. Art Saha wanted to call the place Dingleberry Hall but we vetoed that as too gross. (I always felt Art was disrespectful of the *gravitas* of the Dive!)

Our policy for our distressed friends was that they could stay ("crash") for three months but then they had to move on to make room for another guest. This caused a problem with Dave Van Ronk felt the rule should not apply to him. Dick was the only one of us who had the *chutzpah* to tell him to leave. Unreasonably, Van Ronk never forgave Dick and even decades later held it against him.

Another guest left "beefcake" magazines on the hall table! (For a more innocent generation, "beefcake" was seminude, muscular jocks.) Because this person became a pro and has since deceased, he shall remain nameless.

Ruth Landis (later Ruth Kyle) lived across the street from the Dive. She was being harassed by a real dork. One day he pounded on her door when we were all home. He suddenly found himself confronting four or five irate males. Dick almost hurled him down the stairs. He never bothered her again! (You can see those very stairs with Ruth leaning out the window in one of the pictures!)

Stanley Alboum was known as "Stanley Toothbrush" because he always carried a toothbrush in his shirt pocket in case he had to crash!

Five of our friends were named Dave. Dave Pollard was Erudite Dave. (He was a perpetual student.) Dave Mason was Hairy Dave. Dave McDonald was Obnoxious Dave. Dave Van Ronk was Big Dave. Dave Van Arnem was Devious Dave! (Lin Carter called him Devious Deve.)

Ron Smith, editor of "Inside", used to sit in the lap of his wife, Cindy. She was the larger of the two. (I do not seem to remember conversations, but tableau.)

Here is a list of some of the habitués of the Dive. Ron and Cindy Smith, Trina Robbins (nee Perlson), Joe McKenna, Fred Werner, Marty Jukowsky, Ken Beale, Danny Tannenbaum, Dave Van Arnem, Larry and Noreen Shaw, Nick Falasca, Bob Hoskins, Will Sykora, Sandy Cutrell, Joanne Block, Jeannie Witlin, David and Ruth Kyle, Sheldon Deretchin, Frank and Belle Dietz, Dave Mason, Katherine McLean, Bill Rickhart, Dave Pollard, and many, many more.

I know I have left many people out and there are several reasons for this. There were thirty or forty people there at a time. I didn't know everybody. As we say of the sixties, if you remember it, you weren't really there! For those who feel neglected, I apologize.

In spite of my low social skills, I became the unofficial greeter for the Dive. A large number of people were always coming and going. Saturday night the front door was like the entrance to a New York subway station.

From Dick Ellington's bedroom one could hear continuously the sound of his typewriter doing fanac or NyConll business. There was also the aroma of cats. He had three. One of them was named Shithead. She had a disconcerting habit of "presenting" her rear to any stationary person. She was in perpetual heat. Alone of our group, Dick was almost a teetotaler.

Gallery 1956: All interior photographs were taken at the Dive in 1956



Ron and Cindy Smith.

Habakkuk, god of *Habakkuk*



Bill Donaho.



Charles Freudenthal minus 60 lbs

Art Saha would often come back from outside activities very late on a Saturday night and slumped in a chair would, with an owlish expression, lecture us on some topic. ("You know Chuck, it has to be...") There is an appropriate picture in *Wealth of Fable*, p 391! This is what brought it back to me.

When we began to stir on a late Sunday morning, Danny Curran with his leprechaunish face would appear and announce, "Close your eyes or you'll bleed to death." Danny worked in a liquor store. Very handy!

Every weekend was an extended party. (Some weekdays two!) We often had poker sessions. The principal entertainment was Donaho's high fi. Bill had a Carlson Exponential Slot Radiator Speaker/Cabinet. I discovered that for certain passages in the Tchaikovsky 1812 Overture with cannon, or a Louie Belson drum solo, we could blow out candles! You could feel your feet bounce slightly. The sound was indescribable. In the end, it cost us our lease. What a glorious way to go!

LPs were into full swing at this time. Our favorite music was Broadway Shows, "Cool" or bebop jazz, 50s folk music, Tom Lehrer, etc. (McCarthyism had not yet finished its task and Tom Lehrer recordings sometimes had to be bought under the counter, like "French post cards".)

We had a colossal Christmas tree. Donaho and I, though atheists, were into that sort of thing. Trina Robbins and I decorated it. Dick's cats busily tried to undo our labors!

H. Warner in *Wealth of Fable* (p 207) reports that on New Year's Eve a kitten fell into the Blog. I have heard this fable before. There are several things wrong with it. We didn't have a kitten. The crock was too high for a kitten to climb. I can't imagine I simply forgot about it. (It might be a *Rashomon* situation.) The Blog was awful!

One spring Sunday we had a picnic in Fort Tryon(?) Park under the Washington Bridge. Bill Donaho put the beer in the Hudson River to keep it cool. He didn't know about tides! When he waded into the river to retrieve the beer, it is not true that the level of the river rose 1 1/2 inches!

Seemingly, the Dive became notorious all over New York as a party pad. We never found out who was spreading the word. One night an acquaintance from high school I had not seen for ten years walked in. He

was now an airline pilot. It seems he had heard about us in Greenwich Village, including my name!

Late one Saturday night four young sailors came in. When they discovered we were out of booze, they went out and brought back beer for everybody. They behaved like perfect gentlemen.

I once estimated that about a thousand strangers came through in the course of a year. In all that time we never had a fight. Of course the fact that Donaho was as tall as a tree and Ellington, who grew up in the slums of Seattle, could look tough enough to chew nails may have had something to do with that. We had no thefts either. Most of our uninvited guests seemed to be college kids from the Village.

When the lease expired the landlord did not renew it. To get the lease we told him some cockamamie story about being half brothers, cousins, or whatever.

A psychiatrist moved in after us. (What else!) Joanne Block showed up at his door once and asked if he had found her guitar capo. He said, emphatically, "I didn't find anything but dirt," and closed the door in her face.

I was devastated at the breakup. (I don't think Saha was. The Bohemian life was not his style.)

I remember the very last evening, in the empty living room, looking out the windows at the traffic on the West Side Highway and the lights of the Jersey Shore and the George Washington Bridge. I realized there would never again be anything like this for any of us. I still miss it!

- - -

Dated November 20, 2002 All photographs courtesy Charles Freudenthal collection.

The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.
--Thomas Jefferson

"That lucky old sun... just hangin' 'round heaven all day...."*

By Earl Kemp

Sun. Sol. Bisexed motherfather one to us all. The one essential androgynous entity from whom all blessings flow. The orb whose semen alone is required to fertilize any egg, whoever the father, and start the chain reaction that creates the very spark of life itself.

Es imposible tan separado vivir....

The being from whom all true gods evolve, the direct descendants of God Himself, the creator of the sun and all that He surveys.

The son of the sun is Pharaoh, ruler of all the Egyptians, in direct line of descent from the sun itself.

The son of the sun is Akihito, Emperor of Japan, ruler of all the kingdom to this very day, in direct line of descent from Hirihito his father and from the sun itself.

The son of the sun was Huayan Capac in 1527, and he had already had ten predecessors. He was the

supreme Inca, ruler of a fabulously wealthy 3,000-mile empire that stretched from what is now Ecuador southward including all of Peru and parts of Colombia, Chile, Brasil, and Bolivia. Urban. Polished. Sophisticated. Completely connected by the most remarkable system of highways, bridges, tunnels....

It was Huayan Capec's son Atahualpa who would, in direct line of descent from the sun, feel the full brunt of the unconscionable villain Francisco Pizarro who, in just a few years, would commit another blasphemy for the Holy Roman Sea on a fateful day in Cajamarca when the ground would turn rust/red forever.

All divine, every son of the sun, each of them, and all holy and sacred and all man men, men, men, men.

Quando caliente el sol, aqui en la playa....

#

Fade to red....

The evil one first learned of their existence in 1524. That was when the bastard Francisco Pizarro - that's not meant to be an endearing term but rather to display Pizarro's fatherless heritage - first heard of the Inca wealth and obtained samples of it off the coast of Colombia and his insane letch for money and power and all glory to the Holy Roman Catholic Church obsession really began. With little more to go on than his own imagination and greed, he set about creating his own eternal following of those who could not imagine a man so depraved and evil as well as those who, somehow, admired him like Richard Nixon for his accomplishments, whatever their cost.

By 1530 Huayna Capac, who ruled from the northernmost point of his empire in Ecuador, had died of the dreaded smallpox, just another gift brought by the criminals and low-lifers ransacking the land and killing everyone in sight in the name of God who just simply could not be the same God from whom Huayna Capec, from whom Atahualpa and all the following sungods were directly descended.



Atahualpa

Atahualpa son of the sun was the son of the north in charge of the Inca armies, and Huascar son of the sun was the son of the south, occupying the imperial capital of Cuzco and conspiring for control over his brother Atahualpa as a mini-civil war raged.

By November, 1532, Atahualpa had succeeded in defeating his brother and was enroute to Cuzco to be crowned...and was well aware of the invading gluttons with no manners who were summarily ransacking, robbing, and killing as they saw fit and somewhat calmed because his sources of intelligence assured him that the band of roving criminals were mere men and not gods as was he, and that Atahualpa could, when he wanted to, abolish them effortlessly.

Them were a grizzled and terribly frightening looking bunch of renegades, some 160 of them, whose most often used services consisted of enslaving Central American Indians. Mostly Spaniards, there were also some Moors-Negroes-Italians, Levantines, Greeks, and Jews and, included among the officers were Pizarro's younger brothers and Hernando de Soto.

As in all good tales, it came to pass that these two ships nearly collided in the night. Atahualpa had camped in Cajamarca, a small mountain town a bit inland from where the marauders were advancing along the coast road.

Cajamarca was one of the Inca regional centers located in a lush valley ringed by hills. It was a very special ceremonial place for Inca hierarchy and was used for rituals like the periodic piercing of foreskins in sacrifice to the gods, rather than a place for people to live. Almost completely ceremonial, it was capable of handling

very large festivals indeed. At the center of town was a huge plaza that normally housed the crowds for those celebrations.

As Pizarro and his band of criminals approached Cajamarca, they could not believe their own eyes as some 80,000 of Atahualpa's soldiers were stretched out from horizon to horizon. Atahualpa was personally camped beside a springs a few miles away with his bed women and numerous officers.

Pizarro sent a messenger to see Atahualpa who received him and offered him food and drink. He granted the Spanish leave to camp out in some of his empty buildings overnight and agreed to meet with Pizarro in person the following day.

Overnight Pizarro devised a bold, audacious plan to capture the emperor in the midst of his huge, powerful army, and would make a last-minute decision whether or not to activate his plan as things progressed.

The following day, the 80,000-man-strong army, dressed in full ceremonial regalia and completely without arms of any sort, lined up for the highly formal event. By late afternoon Atahualpa had arrived himself. He was bedecked in radiant feathers and dressed in the finest, richest ceremonial robes possible. His head was crowned with jewels and he wore a collar made of the finest Colombian emeralds. He rode atop a huge litter that was decorated with silver and it took 80 of his officers to carry him and the litter on their shoulders as they slowly progressed to the center of the town plaza and the raised platform that Pizarro had armed with musketeers and small artillery guns.

All around the square in the buildings lining it, Pizarro's men lurked in the shadows, armed to the teeth and ready to meet Armageddon head first in an incredible 160 vs. 80,000 mano a mano.



When Atahualpa was approached by a foul-smelling, funny costumed person brandishing a tattered leather-bound book in front of him, he hardly knew what to expect. As the son of the sun and direct descendant from God himself, Atahualpa had no real reason to condescend to the frantic squealings of Dominican friar Vicente de Valverde who, for some reason, felt rejected by the godking emperor of all he surveyed and, his robe billowing and flopping like J. Edgar Hoover's very best drag, wafting out wave after wave of month's-old unwashed stench, de Valverde turned and fled from Atahualpa for his very life, screaming, "Come out, Christians! Come at these enemy dogs who reject the things of God!"

Insanely, acting in the worst possible moral interests, Pizarro gave his signal to attack. Artillery roared and foot soldiers and horsemen came from every direction, shooting and slashing into the crowd.

The awful killing years began for real on that day....

The Inca had filled the square to capacity. There wasn't even room to maneuver, and since it was purely a ceremonial meeting, not one single weapon was on hand for one of the 80,000 soldiers to use in their own defense. They panicked, never having heard cannons nor seen fiery-eyed horses trampling their numbers by the score as the invading sabers slashed and cut, a head here, an arm there, half a stomach....

Pizarro, a notoriously bad horseman, had some difficulty reaching Atahualpa's side but, with some help, finally managed to tip the litter and capture the emperor, only it wasn't over then.

The terrible acts of the invaders went on for another two or more hours relentlessly cutting asunder anything in its wake... and every one of Pizarro's men killed at least fifteen natives each during those two hours.

There were seven thousand killed outright and that many more without arms or legs. The square ran red with royal Inca blood and, when the sanctified army finally stopped their slaughter, their victory was proclaimed as having happened by the grace of God....



#

The god son of the sun Atahualpa was, however, imprisoned and held for ransom. The next day Hernando de Soto alone amassed a personal fortune in excess of two tons of silver and emeralds and almost a ton of gold.

Pizarro held Atahualpa for ransom in the staggering amount of one huge room filled with gold and a smaller room filled twice with silver, in exchange for the emperor's freedom and restoration to his throne. He made the offer to Atahualpa in writing, even though Atahualpa could not read the words the stinking friar had written, in the name of God, on the parchment unrolled before him.

By the middle of 1533 Atahualpa's ransom had been accumulated and delivered to Pizarro, the man of honor.

On July 26, 1533, a Saturday nearing dusk, Atahualpa was brought into the town plaza and tied to a stake like a rabid dog. Ceremonial trumpets were sounded by the Spaniards and Friar de Valverde performed what he called a forced conversion for the godking to the godking of Friar de Valverde's particular version of religion.

Instead of releasing him after he paid his ransom as Pizarro had promised the emperor in writing, he garroted him, and earned a place in the hearts and minds of every decent person born after that date and made a mockery of the already mockery of Catholic religion and avarice that would outlast time itself.

With a reputation for absolute ruthlessness, the "Slaughterer" rode roughshod over all the Inca empire, melting down each precious object he got his hands on and shipping back bulk only to adorn his God, to decorate his Church...in the name of the eternal bastard....

Coo ca coo ca ru, paloma...

- - -

*In memory of the Medici, Joan, Pius XII, and the other infallibles; shit happens. Dated June 26, 1995.

Neither a lofty degree of intelligence nor imagination nor both together go to the making of genius. Love, love, love, that is the soul of genius.

--Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Secret of the Incas*

By Earl Kemp

She did the down and dirty to me, plundering my innocence. *She* stripped me and touched my mind and my soul with her eternal flame while seducing me with the promise of the fulfillment of my every constant thought. *She* defiled me and abused me and had her evil way with me while confirming the truth of my most wished-for desires' rewards.

The Snake Mother bit me, sending vile mixtures of extra heavy wanderlust and discontent jetting through her fangs and through my flesh and into my veins. It pulses through me like an adrenaline reinforced niacin rush and pounds with my very heartbeat. Her venom is obsessive and all demanding.

Quatermain and me...we trekked damned near every foot of The Dark Continent looking for pyramids to climb, tombs to plunder, and ethereally untouchable sunvirgin princesses to do doubles on and dominate, delight, and deflower in our endless quests for unrecognized but eagerly perused goals.

Her fulfillment came many decades later as a tribute and a salute to what *She* and *The Mother* had began so long ago inside the gestalt of rampantly erect teenage libidos all over the world. The song is exactly the same in every language. The song of the sultry siren luring youngman ever onward toward an orgasmic rush of explosive intensity....

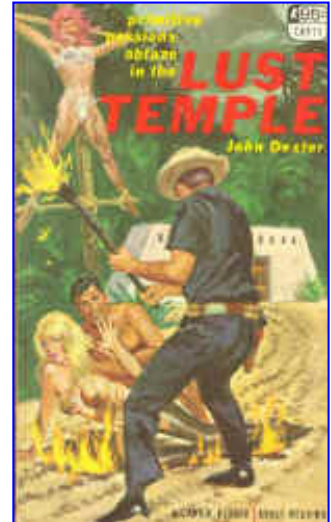
All there, all safe and secure, held in possessive grasp inside the mind of the beholder.

#

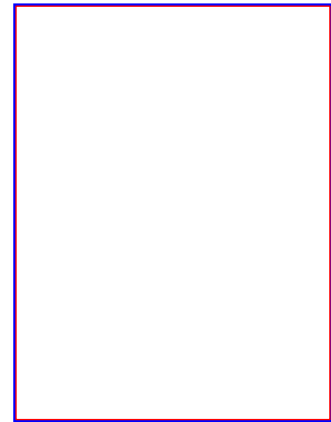


Me, all the way with a healthy soupcon of John Carter, Flesh Gordon, Buster Crabbe, and Dorothy when she wasn't in Kansas anymore.

The thing I wanted most, as a kid, besides cold showers, was to roam the world climbing those pyramids, looting those tombs, walking in Atahualpa's footsteps, plundering the sunvirgin princesses, and movin' on. I read every book I could get close to about ancient civilizations and the landmarks they left behind them. My favorite magazine was National Geographic not because of all those feverishly exciting naked pictures but because of their focus on ruins and relics. My wildest dream was, someday, to scale some of those heights and mount a princess now and then with a preferential emphasis on the now.



For some odd reason that I've never been able to understand, some of those fantasies finally started coming true along about the 1950s. All kinds of nut-fringe stuff was starting to come together. Things like space opera and bug-eyed monsters and imminently seducible renewable virgins got all wound up with Fate and flying saucers and Roswell and "they're lying to us, you know? About almost everything."



And there was Yma Sumac, the Secret of the Incas herself, a teenage boy's dream costumed in odd Peruvian finery, a certified sunvirgin, hereditary possessor of all things mystic and desirable there, high in the Andes where the real ruins are and where the real Incas lived and where civilization took an impressive turn or two. Plus...would you believe it...she could sing like nothing you ever heard in your whole life and definitely the only one to sing that way ever.

Her records were almost religious experiences in racial memory of unrecalled and long forgotten lullabies sung in honor of the listener's reign and term of godhood. Her concerts were occasions for consternation and awe with her audiences almost reaching disbelief at her astonishing vocal range and naïve, almost simplistic stage presence and command.

In 1954, Paramount Pictures launched a major campaign to make a star of Yma. She got the full treatment including very fanciful, made-up biographies, royal lineages, and acclamations of all sorts. Then, at last, *Secret of the Incas* was released, starring Yma and Charlton Heston with much of the footage actually shot on location in Peru. From memory the picture was just passably watchable, but it did have that incomparable scenery, those romantic locations, and a one-of-a-kind voice lilting through the soundtrack.

[Regarding *Secret of the Incas*]: A nice, low-budget adventure film, with wittier dialogue than you'd expect. And if you want to know where they got Indiana Jones from, you've come to the right place: Charlton Heston's got him down cold, a quarter century before Lucas and Spielberg resurrected him.

--Michael Resnick, June 2, 1999

In 1957, Paramount tried again, this time starring Yma in *Omar Khayam*, which was a monumental case of misjudgment.

Yma Sumac and her haunting voice are still with me today. Hearing only a few notes are enough to bring back prolonged memories and images of pleasure and exaltation.

#

Little wonder visiting Peru held a very high priority number on my all-time wish list.

1973 had been one hell of a year for me. Nixon ordered the CIA to murder Chilean President Salvador Allende Gossens and replace him with the despotic dictator Augusto Pinochet Ugarte. The Watergate scandal was crumbling all around Nixon's cadre of criminals and Vice President Agnew resigned after being caught in a smoking-gun payoff. Pablo Picasso, an old favorite reprobate, died, and me...on the personal

side...I gave an exciting lecture for the Law Department at San Diego State University and was officially branded a "felon."

It was inevitable and only a matter of time before I would be going to prison. I rejected all offers to accept very lucrative refuge in "safe harbors" and began a slow process of disappearing within myself in order to salvage any part of myself that might hold some value.

I was literally disseminating, unraveling at the very seams of my core being, and most of it was happening outside my control because I wouldn't allow myself to interfere with my efforts to protect and insulate me from the unknown but suspected horrors of the immediate future. I was well on my way to losing all sense of personal value to anyone, most of all to myself. And the worst part of it all was I couldn't figure out why it was happening to me, much less what was happening. Every person, every institution, the very myth of creating the USA itself all betrayed me, turned their individual backs on me, and left me floundering in the residual breezes left by their hasty departures.

I couldn't concentrate on anything or any person for more than the briefest moment. Nothing, no concept, no possible future scenario held any promise for me. Even the jubilant news in 1974 that Nixon had resigned in disgrace and accepted a "pardon" for his crimes rather than face the reality of the history of his own creation was not enough to calm me, to help my numbed-out thought processes to any degree...I just continued growing smaller and more insignificant by the passing day.

To see if it was possible to change my perspective, and to do a bit of last-minute game playing of Fuck the Feds by running around South America instead of mourning, I took my long-delayed ultimate grand tour of Peru while waiting for them to decide when to lock me up. I talked my first son-in-law Michael Buckner into going along on my dream quest with me because he was easy to talk into it; we'd been doing it for a long time by then and had worked out some remarkably effective routines that we could pull out of storage under the right circumstances.

It was an American Express all-inclusive deluxe tour that included almost everything one might need for just over a month. In reality, a few meals were left open so tour members could seek out restaurants of their own choice by themselves. We were literally picked up and delivered everywhere we were to stop along the tour. All ground transportation, the handling of all luggage, all hotel accommodations, were only incidental parts of the tour and, at every stop, local busses and tour guides took us almost everywhere an out-of-towner might ever think about visiting and threw in a few bizarre extras just to keep us all on our toes.

I didn't know much about Peru, except that I really wanted to go there badly. I didn't know what type of government they had or what their citizens did, and was I ever surprised. Their money, as an example (called Solares) was not accepted in international exchange; you couldn't do anything with it except spend it within the country itself. Lima was the single most repressed, shutdown, and tightly controlled city I have ever visited. It felt as if every person I encountered knew for sure I was a member of the dreaded Peruvian secret police sent just to spy on them. No person looked at you. No person spoke to you unless forced into doing so. Everyone was poised on the brink of instant flight to...nowhere...somewhere other than wherever they were at the moment.

Everyone was waiting for the dreaded Peruvian secret police to grab them and whoosh them away into some incredibly horrible secret lair where the most unbelievably evil things would happen to them.

Sort of like walking through a graveyard populated by living corpses...or much to the joy of the local Chamber of Commerce, one hell of a tourist town. Aside from the fact that there is no recorded occasion of rainfall and using bridges and structures standing when Columbus "discovered" America...it's a dull, drab, depressing place. There are a number of nice museums including a world-class collection of Pre-Columbian erotica scattered around the city itself.

And, if you're so inclined, you can pass by Francisco Pizarro's disgusting 200-year-old cadaver and pay your

respects to a first-class mass murderer and worldfucker. The bastard's not very high on my respect list. I said a silent prayer in Atahualpa's name.

Then, finally, the tour left the bright lights of the dull city and entered the countryside where, fortunately, most of the things I hated about Lima seemed to disappear or move far back into the woodwork. The rural natives actually smiled at us and looked at us, talked and interacted with us. We visited many ruins of vast significance but there was always the big one looming ahead, my real destination, Machu Picchu.

Finally we flew into Cuzco, the highest elevation city in the Andes served by regular airlines, and lazed around for a couple of days getting acclimated to breathing relatively pure oxygen while being two miles high and what a wonderful high it was too, liberally augmented with the ever-present *copa de te cocaine*. Cuzco made an effort to erase some of the bad thoughts about Lima and I genuinely liked the town. I thought of it as being almost Moroccan with its ornate balconies overhanging the streets. I loved sitting in the city park and breathing deeply of the intoxicating fragrance of oxygen. My inherent romanticism made me realize that I was sitting on the very spot where Atahualpa had sat in the early 1500's breathing in the same invigorating gulps of everlasting memory.



Michael Buckner can be seen on the left of this photo taken at the Cuzco marketplace in 1974.

What a delight just walking through the city marketplace, checking out all the different grades of coca leaves for sale by the kiloscoop.

Then the last piece of the puzzle, the narrow-gauge railroad trip from Cuzco high up into the mountains to the closest destination to Machu Picchu. The train trip itself was a great joy. I had been addicted to trains for much of my life, seeking out different types of rail service in different remote places, and this one was a real winner. At each stop along the route, ambulatory vendors would approach the open windows of the train holding up their trays of goods for sale...homemade taste treats, barbecued corn on the cob-most delicious- and other forgotten finger-food tidbits.

At the train station, passengers destined for Machu Picchu boarded tour buses that took them up the mountainside to the national park entrance and obligatory souvenir shoppe where they all got tickets for the grand walking tour of the park.

I have made many grand walking tours of many parks but this is for me the grandmother of them all. The vast expanse of nature alone is staggering as you find a lonely spot to pause and listen to the roaring silence. The knowledge of the people and their culture that made all this possible in the first place overwhelms you with significance as you reaffirm your private spot in nature's overall plan.



I said to myself, He stepped here. Then on this stone. I looked at each one of them carefully. Yes, I thought, joyously, *I'm actually walking in Atahualpa's footsteps.*

#

Then, after exhausting hours of wandering around the huge park, it was time to reboard those tour busses for the trek back down the mountainside to the railroad station. Michael and I decided we would continue our walkabout and hike down the mountainside instead, through the bright green Peruvian foliage. We told our bus driver to go on without us and that we would rejoin the tour at the railway station, and we did.

The hike down the mountain was actually quite easy because of the incline. Most of the time we just tried to keep upright and moving at a fast pace. We encountered no misadventure of any sort on our trek back to the train though several members of our tour acted as if they had again confirmed their suspicions that the two of us were more than a little nuts.

#

Finally, the grand tour of Peru came to an end and it was time to return to Lima and its depressing atmosphere and dreaded Peruvian secret police. The tour group was at the Lima international airport ready to board an Aerolinas Argentina flight for Buenos Aires. I was making my last-minute rounds of the airport gift shops trying to find something to spend my Solares on, otherwise I would have to reconvert them back to dollars before leaving Peru.

That's the moment the dreaded Peruvian secret police grabbed me and whooshed me away into some incredibly horrible dark secret lair there within the dark secret airport where the most unbelievably evil things were about to happen to me. Somehow they had determined that I "had too much money on me" (but only after they had searched me) and they were a bit uncertain how to resolve my crime. They did, there in the locked seclusion of drab airport security, perform a superficial search of my clothing and found, among other things, a money belt with a few thousand-dollars security walk-around bills stashed inside it.

In my pockets they also found a liberal selection of grades of coca leaves that they tossed out atop the examination table. And, in my carry-on bag, several choice pieces of pre-Columbian erotic artwork that was allegedly a crime to take out of the country. They broke very best of the lot, a couple enthusiastically 69ing, by knocking it off the table. It crashed onto the floor; shards scattering in every direction as if the statuette had exploded instead.

I pretty much considered the whole thing to be some sort of farce. I couldn't take the dreaded Peruvian secret police seriously for a moment and kept repressing impulses to laugh at them as they performed like actors in a poor comedy. Time was passing and nothing was happening. Finally I suggested that they have the local Lima tour guide vouch for my honesty so they brought him into the interrogation room instantly. That instantly should have been an important clue to me.

I could tell right away that the tour guide was not going to be of any help to me or to anyone else. He was literally scared shitless. He shook and vibrated uncontrollably as great gobs of sweat popped out all over his forehead and spotted down his cheeks. He visibly crumbled and almost whimpered as he protested his innocence of every crime he hadn't been charged with. And I had a really close-up look at how local citizens acted when confronted by the dreaded Peruvian secret police that I had been tentatively laughing at.

And time was passing and nothing was happening. Fortunately the dreaded Peruvian secret police weren't nearly as sophisticated as the USA counterparts they took their lessons from in old 1940s movies. They hadn't yet discovered the thrill of strip searches or anal relaxation probes while looking for those really elusive little gems of contraband hiding up in there somewhere...surely. They hadn't yet descended to crude jokes about genital size, general condition, or capabilities for use.

And time was passing and nothing was happening. Outside, the flight to Buenos Aires had boarded already and was rapidly approaching take-off time; they were literally holding the doors open for me.

There came some very loud pounding on the dreaded Peruvian secret police interrogation room door and a series of excited shouts repeated again and again.

"Open up! There is no more time...."

The secret police opened the door and faced the pilot and head stewardess of that Buenos Aires flight. "Take him or release him," the pilot shouted. "Make up your mind now!"

There was a brief moment of decision before the dreaded Peruvian secret police told me I could leave. The pilot, the stewardess, and I grabbed up all my things scattered around atop the table (ignoring the broken statuette), stuffed them back into my carryon and my pockets, and grabbed my hands, one in each of theirs.

"Run," they said to me, "don't even think. You have no idea how lucky you are to be getting out of here."

And we ran all the way to the gate and directly onto the plane and the doors closed behind us before either of them released my hands. The pilot rushed to the cockpit and put the plane into an immediate takeoff mode. The passengers on board the plane loudly cheered and applauded when the pilot and stewardess brought me back among the living and departing. To celebrate, because I had a pocket full of forbidden and useless Solares (and a back-up money belt), I bought all the wine there was on board that plane and had it handed out to the passengers.

We had a wonderful nonstop-party story-book flight to "Don't Cry For Me" Buenos Aires where the pilot's sister, Analise (my private Evita and drug dealer), and their other brother, Juan Peron's personal physician, made many of my ultra-deluxe dreams come true...only that's a different country and a different culture, and certainly a much different story....

- - -

*For Yma Sumac and all the ethereal, almost virginal *shes* everywhere; "...thank you, ma'am...." Dated January 2003.

We seem to see our flag unfurled,
Our champion waiting in his place
For the last battle of the world,
The Armageddon of the race.
--John Greenleaf Whittier, Rantoul

The Voice of the Inner World: Yma Sumac, SF, and Me

By J.G. Stinson

This article is about how I found science fiction and got introduced to a singer from Peru when I was nearly a teenager, and how the experience created a lifelong fascination with stories I read, as well as the singer and the myths of her career. But we really should start at the beginning...

Being a military man's daughter had its advantages back in the 1950s - the Army was more interested in moving its soldiers around every two years in that decade, and families accompanied the soldiers to most assignments. This required military "brats" to develop fast friend-making skills, or end up with few friends by being too shy. I floated in the middle ground: I had friends, but I wasn't massively popular. By the time my father was assigned to what would be his final duty station in Virginia, I had lived in two different countries

and attended four different schools, and I was only ten years old.

This peripatetic lifestyle, compared to that of "civilians," can also give military children a potentially wider range of experience with other cultures than children who stay almost all their lives in the same town or city. The occasional absence of the soldier to duty assignments considered too dangerous for family accompaniment (like Korea and Vietnam, between 1950 and 1975) meant that the soldier often brought home unique items from their foreign travels.

Perhaps because I was a military brat, my interests range across many subjects and along many paths. When something piques my curiosity, I tend to follow it down to its lair - like a terrier after a rodent - until what I've learned along the way satisfies my interest. I decided to write an article about a Peruvian singer, who was most popular during the 1950s, because she'd been a mystery to me for many years, and only in the last decade was I able to find out more about her via the Internet. And I believe she should be remembered for her extraordinary gift.



The author holds a Soviet-made AK-47 assault rifle during a tour of an exhibition of captured equipment from Grenada at Andrews Air Force Base, MD in 1984. She notes that she no longer resembles the person pictured here.

* * *

Having been raised in the Roman Catholic Church (later lapsing by choice) and brought up in a musical household, I began singing at an early age. I started teaching myself guitar somewhere between the end of junior high and the beginning of high school, when I became enamored of rock music. But by then I'd already heard a fair chunk of classical music as well as liturgical standards, and knew the four basic choir voicings: bass, tenor, alto, and soprano.

When I began singing in a formal setting - other than la-la'ing to myself around the house or to the radio - I was in second grade, for my one and only year of parochial school. Learning the Latin liturgy and hymns of the Catholic Mass in 1962-3 was an enriching experience; there's something about all that ritual and lofty church ceilings that instills a sense of possibilities beyond the known. Catholicism also taught me, at a relatively early age, the joy of music and its ability to express human thought and feeling beyond mere words. Through liturgical music I learned the names Beethoven, Bach, Mozart, Handel, Mendelssohn, and several other classical composers.

Second grade was also where I learned about choir voicings, the different vocal ranges assigned to singers; learning the gradations in between the four basic levels came later.

When my dad was assigned to one-year hitches in Korea and Vietnam, he bought and traded several vinyl recordings, so I heard jazz by Glenn Gould and Stan Getz for the first time by listening to the LPs (long-playing, describing the type of 33 rpm recording, as opposed to the smaller 45 rpms called singles - that's for you young 'uns out there) my dad brought home. He also collected reel-to-reel tape recordings, from surf music by the Ventures to more jazz. My father is responsible for my exposure to these and other artists such as Harry Belafonte and, through him, Miriam Makeba, before I started high school. Belafonte's music was, compared to Makeba's !Xhosa! language songs, more like pop music than an exotic import.

Then I discovered the Yma Sumac record in my parents' collection, and learned what exotic really meant.

* * *

Somewhere around seventh grade, I think - in the late 1960s - I discovered my junior-high school's library

had a two-volume set titled *Masterpieces of Science Fiction*, and a novel called *Moon of Three Rings* by Andre Norton, who turned out to be a woman (and what a revelation that was, that a woman could write such wonderful things). The shyness I'd hidden behind in social settings fell away from me when I found science fiction, and in its pages I could do anything. I was still shy in "real world" life, but the seeds had been planted. I didn't discover fandom or fanzines until nearly 30 years later, but I'd been ready for it for decades.

Also during that time, I started ransacking my parents' recording collection. I found "Bluesette" by Steve Lawrence (sexist words but great melody, and I still sing it sometimes), "Telstar" by the Ventures, "The Girl from Ipanema" and bossa nova. And I found a 1956 compilation LP called *Voice of the Xtabay* by Yma Sumac. [1]



The woman on the front cover was the most exotically dressed person I'd ever seen outside of a Catholic church (anyone who's been to a Catholic High Mass will likely recall the heavily decorated vestments the priest wears). I'd discovered archaeology in sixth grade and eagerly consumed every book I could lay hands on at the school library to learn more about ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and then the ancient South American cultures. I had a smattering of familiarity with the Inca culture, so I recognized some of what the album's liner notes referenced. But as I later learned, much of that description was fantasy conjured up to lure record buyers and impress the public in general. Looking at that cover photo today, I suspect much of the decorative elements of Sumac's costume aren't historically accurate. But it's still an attractive and mysterious costume, even today.

What was more interesting to me were the descriptions of Sumac's career and each of the songs, little fantasies in themselves. Whoever wrote them did their job, because I read each of them as I listened to their respective tracks, and was transported to the jungle-blanketed mountains of Peru and the long-dead empire of the Incas. Those descriptions were all I had to base my comprehension on, because Sumac didn't sing in English. Her manager and husband Moises Vivanco, the liner notes claim, "is an authority on ancient music, especially that of Peru. He has based his compositions and their arrangements on authentic Incan melodies and rhythms, and has written lyrics based on authentic Incan legends." Very goshwow stuff for an impressionable teenager to read. All I knew at the time was that Sumac wasn't singing in a language I understood. I suspect that even if she'd sung in Spanish - the lyrics she did sing were Quechua, her home language - I'd have considered it exotic.



Sumac's drawing card was her unusual vocal range - some say it was four octaves, some claimed five octaves. Two octaves is the average range for a "normal" human voice. Descriptions like "They say 'that she has a panther and a nightingale in her throat' " sound, without evidence, very far-fetched. [2]

Once I heard her sing, I believed them.

* * *

Finding out more about Yma Sumac rode in the back of my brain for the next 20-odd years, until around 1996 when I bought my first online-capable computer. The information available on nearly anything on the Web astounded me. I searched first for my dearest and longest-admired musical icons, a British rock band called Yes (about whom more later, in another place and time), and was thrilled to find there were plenty of Yesphreaks online. Then I used a search engine to look for information on Sumac, and didn't find much at

the time; but I was able to buy a copy of Voice on vinyl for a very reasonable price. I listened to it and the chills went up my spine again, hearing that voice and those liquid glissandos pouring out of the stereo speakers. None of her magic had been lost.

In the 1970s, Minnie Ripperton scored a major pop hit with "Loving You" and her stratospheric upper range - which lasted for five notes in the chorus. More recently, Mariah Carey was celebrated for her ability to hit a few notes above high C and not squeak. Opera divas, the sopranos of various description, have been hitting those notes for centuries - after having had their natural talent hammered into an acceptable mode.

Yma Sumac has them all beat, in spades - all without formal training.

Her range starts somewhere in the lower baritone area and extends all the way up past most opera sopranos, and always, always, there is that incredibly rock-solid "bottom" in her tone. "Bottom" is slang among singers for the feeling of weight at the base of each sung note. It comes from a well-developed diaphragm in the chest, powerful lungs, and vocal cords able to take all that power and shape it into notes. Without that bottom, a note sounds thin and frail, often nasal, without power or emotion. Good vocal coaches always stress learning to sing from the diaphragm and not the nose.

Sumac's height was about five feet three inches as an adult. As a child, with that voice a major power but still relatively wild, she must have been smaller in stature and still amazed her listeners then. Her first manager and later husband, Moises Vivanco, coaxed that voice into near perfection without subjecting it to the worst that classical Western music could do to it - thus preserving one of the finest musical instruments the world has ever heard.

Those are probably the truest things known about Yma Sumac. Her name, date, and place of birth, and ancestry are all enveloped in fantasies and myths created to help make her popular. When I found her, I was primed to believe in fantasy and myth from my discoveries in reading archaeology and SF, so she fit right in to my inner world. She was a mystery to the outer world, though, in a time when mysteries were sought for relief from the horrors of a world war.

Yma Sumac was born Zoila Augusta Emperatriz Chavarri del Castillo somewhere in Peru on Sept. 10, 1927 - the generally accepted date, though several others were given by Sumac and others over the years, a conceit to disguise her age that was common in the 1940s and 1950s for women. Her mother, Ima Sumack Emilia Athualpa Chavarri del Castillo was supposedly at least part Quechuan (whom some claim are the Incans' descendants). Her father, Sixto Chavarri del Castillo, was at least part Spanish. Confusion also surrounds her birthplace; press releases claimed she was born in a village called Ichocan, while some family members say she was born in El Callao. Her stage name was cribbed from her mother's name, though the spelling varies.

She never received any formal musical training until she met Vivanco. He molded her early career by featuring her in a small group that specialized in Peruvian folk music. Her first major performance in Peru drew a lot of interest from classical-music intelligentsia, one of whom insisted that she be sent to Italy to study bel canto, traditional opera. Good thing Vivanco didn't listen, because, as he so rightly said, it would have ruined the uniqueness of her voice.

As a singer of folk music from a country few in America or Europe knew about, Sumac had that distinction in her favor. But what really floored American and European audiences were her voice - first and always, that stunning voice - and her stage persona, that of a self-assured, proud, and accomplished singer.

Sumac's improvisational skills were formidable even at an early age. "She opened her mouth and sang like a bird" would certainly be an understatement in her case. Whether she spent her childhood imitating the natural sounds around her, as publicity agents claimed, or she just sang what she heard without conscious intent, doesn't matter. She could imitate birds and thunder and wind singing through rocky mountain passes, and between these riffs she tossed off multi-octave glissandos in both directions of the scales. She's been

recorded sliding down four octaves without any sign of strain. Watch an opera soprano do that, even the best of them, and you'll see the effort, though they'll try to hide it. Sumac possessed a vocal gift unlike anything heard since the age of the castrati in Europe, but she was a category of one. [3]

In her later career, that persona was trashed in favor of the Inca princess-priestess myth that even Sumac apparently bought for a long time. Publicity agents talked Sumac and Vivanco into agreeing to market her as the direct descendant of Atahualpa, the last Incan king to rule before the Spanish conquered the Inca. Since she was singing about Quechuan legends and folk tales anyway, the agents may have thought, she might as well look the part. After all, it was mysterious, and mysterious sold tickets in the late 1940s and early 1950s.



But she wasn't an opera singer, Peruvian folk music wasn't on the hot-selling list when she started her singing career, and Sumac couldn't even follow the simplest musical direction in the recording studio. She seemed to have certain cues worked out with Vivanco, who interrupted the conductor at Sumac's first Hollywood Bowl appearance to provide "correct" conducting gestures so she'd know when to start singing. But she could not, so said conductor Les Baxter, reproduce a string of notes in the same octave twice in a row, though she consistently said she understood what was asked of her. Yet another mystery there: why was she unable to repeat a melody she'd just sung in the same octave?

Perhaps those same publicity people decided she shouldn't learn too much English, in order to preserve her "native charm" for audiences. Today that would likely be interpreted as an ethnic slur against Sumac, and I'd have to agree. There are reports from the time that claim Sumac was offered a movie role as an Indian but, when told she wasn't "Indian" enough, she sarcastically asked if they wanted her to wear her hair in braids, dress in cow skin and say "how" and "ugh" instead. She wasn't stupid, and she wasn't desperate - and the world is most fortunate for it.

Because of these "oddities," Sumac herself became an oddity, despite her second album reaching #1 in the *Variety* charts in 1950. She couldn't be pigeon holed, so after her novelty wore off, she was forgotten by the general public. It didn't help that rock and roll crashed into the world consciousness in the 1950s, either.

But the voice and the name will be remembered, one way or another, because even though one was a myth, the other was true.

Note: The website www.sunvirgin.com now has a wealth of material on Sumac and her career, for those interested in learning more about her. Some of her recordings are still available for sale, as well. Thanks to Nicholas Limansky for making the material available, which was the basis for most of the preceding article.

Footnotes:

1. *Voice of the Xtabay* was originally recorded in Hollywood, California in February 1950 and released in September 1950. It was paired with her second recording, *Inca Taqui*, and re-released on 12" LP in 1956. It was re-released on CD in 1987, withdrawn in 1990, and again released on CD in March 1996 on The Right Stuff label (catalog number 91217).

2. "Yma Sumac...the Voice of the Incas" by Ray Palmer and Jack Ross, from *Fate* Vol. 4, No. 8, 1951.

3. Castrati were male singers most popular in the 1700s-1800s in Europe. They were either naturally castrated from accidental injury or inherited defect or, as has often been claimed, intentionally "neutered" to preserve their high, pre-pubertal voices. Some historians claim that poor families often sold their younger male children with good voices to vocal masters or composers, who would then attempt to make their own names with the success of the castrato. A recent foreign film, *Farinelli*, chronicles the life of one such singer and his composer brother; some cognoscenti in classical music circles claim the film's events are exaggerated, but others say it's a modern representation of the sensational careers some castrati achieved.

Musical people always want one to be perfectly dumb at the very moment when one is longing to be perfectly deaf.

--Oscar Wilde

Put It In A Song*

By Alexei Panshin

During the past few years, I've been writing songs with Josh Wachtel. This is a miracle in itself since I have no musical training, I can't carry a tune in a bucket, and my children order me to stop whenever I attempt to sing. Without the particular circumstances that led to Josh's and my collaboration, I doubt that writing songs would ever have occurred to me as something I could do.

Because the music that Josh and his wife Kim perform doesn't observe conventional musical categories, Josh calls it Crossover Music. Their repertoire consists of unknown songs he's picked up from great people and great songs that he's learned from unknown people. The songs that we write together are intended to fill in the gaps.

These songs come into being in different ways. This one started after Josh borrowed a book of classic kidlore from me. He then surprised me by picking out verses and writing a tune to go with them. We worked at putting all the words together, including changing some of them. And one verse about a chicken egg found in a field metamorphosed into something new entirely.

This is called the Folk Process, and it's the way a lot of songs used to get written:

What the Blind Man Saw

One bright day in the middle of the night
Two dead boys got up to fight
Back to back they faced each other
Drew their swords and shot each other
A deaf policeman heard the noise
He came and killed those two dead boys
One bright day in the middle of the night

As I was walkin' up the stair
I saw a man who wasn't there
He wasn't there again today
Oh how I wish he'd go away

Jaybird sittin' on a hickory limb
He winked at me and I winked at him
His eyes were red and his teeth were green
Sat there pickin' on a tambourine



This is the only known photograph showing Earl Kemp (background, no shirt) and Alexei Panshin (foreground, striped shirt) together. Hal Shapiro (glasses, no shirt) has his back to the camera. Photo by Norman Masters, Midwestcon, Cincinnati, circa 1956.

(chorus) One bright day in the middle of the night

A monkey and a flea and three blind mice
Sat on a curbstone shootin' dice
The monkey did a flip and fell on the flea
The flea said, "Whoops, there's a monkey on me"

A Twinkie and a Tastykake knockin' at the door
They just come from the mini-mart store
The lady went upstairs to get her gun
Should-a seen the Twinkie and the Tastykake run

(chorus) One bright day in the middle of the night

As I was walkin' down the street
Who do ya think I chanced to meet?
It was Godzilla and old King Kong
Stompin' on buildings and singin' a song

Red and blue and delicate green
The King can't catch it 'n' neither can the Queen
Bring it in the house through the 'lectric socket
Catch a rainbow and put it in your pocket

(chorus) One bright day in the middle of the night

If you don't believe these lies are true
Ask the blind man, he saw it too

#

The next song was written because there wasn't anything like it already. It's about the rise and fall of a dictator. In my lifetime, I've watched a lot of strongmen come and go - and this is about all of them. If anybody has been following the news all this time and remembers, they might catch whiffs of Trujillo, Papa and Baby Doc and Saddam in this one.

Josh was the instigator of this song. Before it was done, we swapped it back and forth a number of times. I'm particularly proud of the instrumental bridge. Josh worked it up thinking that it was going to be another new song altogether, but I snatched it from his guitar and put it in this one where it fit perfectly.

Coup d'Etat

Triumphantly you mount your steed
And parade the boulevard
The trumpets sound and flowers fly
It's the changing of the guard

Men strew your path with gifts of gold
As they pledge their loyalty
The table's set and the feast begins
To celebrate your destiny

You're the chief now and your enemy died hard
The judge wipes a dagger on his cloak
Your hands are clean but smoke still lingers in the air
And liars laugh before you tell your joke

You wave your fist and pledge reform

But you give stale bread to eat
While your mistress soaks in a golden bath
Men and dogs patrol the street

Your mustache and your happy grin
Adorn ev'ry school and bar
But you spend each night in a different house
And need a fleet of decoy cars

You wear medals just like your Dad before
He killed a million people in his time
Graves in the highlands and corpses in the sea
He never paid a minute for his crime

The wind whispers of a coup d'etat
And you feel a sudden chill
The stolen ballots have now been found
There's guerillas in the hills

The time has come to wave the flag
And send the troops off to war
But the walls close in and you can't trust
Your own brother any more

The hour is near when the piper must be paid
The sky is gray and it looks like rain
The lights are out and your bags are packed
The plane awaits, but will you make the plane?

Strangely enough, when this song was first performed, somebody asked me, "Is this one really about Gee Dubya?" I said, "It couldn't possibly be. Gee Dubya doesn't have a mustache."

#

What's particular fun about song writing is when something emerges that neither Josh nor I could have produced on our own. This one started out as a tune that Josh had. He had a few words but stuck there. It ended with me trying to show Josh how the tune should go at the finish, with me singing notes wretchedly and then telling Josh "no" until he was able to sing the right ones back to me. Josh's brother Ben got in on the act with the melody for the bridge.

This one is a love song, which we hadn't done much of before. It was written to be sung by the female singer in Josh's band - but she took it so much to heart that she couldn't bring herself to sing it, not realizing that it didn't just apply to her, but was about the experience of half the women in America.

Beyond the Mountain

I was sailing / with my lover
On a ship / that sailed the ocean
But my mind wandered
And our ship foundered
And I was lost / in troubled waters

I was fishing / in a desert
With a bare hook / and a promise
But in that sea of sand
There was no place to land
There was no end / to my starvation

The light of glory / has no mercy
On a prisoner / in the dock
In the garden
The sun shines golden
But the door is locked / and the key is lost

Love is the answer
Rainbows in the air
Love must be the answer
But the rain falls in torrents everywhere

I must bake my bread / for our provision
On that new day beyond the mountain
When dawn has broken
And I've awoken
To my true love / in the morning

--By Josh Wachtel, Alexei Panshin, and Ben Wachtel



Josh and Kim Wachtel in San Diego, California, December 2002.

#

This song is another example of the Folk Process at work. (Before mass communication, when the Copyright Barons of the Twentieth Century stepped in to grab off everything they could as their own particular property, there was no such thing as the Folk Process - just people swapping songs around, changing words and notes to suit themselves and the needs of the moment.) Since I'm technically ignorant and musically incompetent, it's a great comfort to me to feel that in combining what has been handed down to me and what I've been given to write, I'm doing exactly what one person after another before me has done.

The blues started out as a kind of newspaper for those who didn't have access to official information sources or couldn't rely on them to be truthful. As the old song has it: "I've been farther into the blues looking for news than you've ever been." In that tradition, here is a classic news-blues for you. The tune is eternal. The words are true:



Alexei Panshin in 1968.

Times Right Now

Times ain't now nothin' like they used to be
Times just now, different than they used to be
I seen better days, but I'm puttin' up with these

I bought me a good car, I drove it down the road
You know, I got me a new car, I drove it on down the road
The police pulled me over, say they want to check my load
It's profiling - that's what it is!

They grabbed me by the ears, picked me up by the tail
Yeah, they grabbed me by the ears,
swung me 'round by the tail
If I don't smile and like it, I'm sure to spend the night in jail
But if I laugh - they'll kill me dead

They strip-searched my house, they hit me with their fist
Oh, they ransacked my house, punched me with their fist
Tell me they don't need a warrant, I'm an urban terrorist
They got a list with my name on it

They took me off in handcuffs, no one knows where I am
They took me away in handcuffs, 'n' I don't know where I am
They claim I flew the flag wrong and I hate Uncle Sam
Flyin' the flag upside down is a sign of distress

There's a postman in your basement,
the meterman's readin' your mail
There are eyes at your window,
the trashman's been readin' your mail
So be careful when you breathe in
and be cautious when you exhale
*And don't look suspicious while you're doin' it
Never can tell who might be watchin'!*

The Black Ships are comin', soldiers are movin' out
I say, the whirlybirds are comin', there's soldiers movin' out
Gonna guard the streets and highways
to save us all from doubt

Times right now, too much like they used to be
Times just now, too much like they used to be
In Nazi Germany
I seen better days, but I'm puttin' up with these
I seen better days, now I'm puttin' up with these
I see a better day, I'm not puttin' up with these

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NOTE: You can hear all four of these songs and others performed by Josh and Kim Wachtel at artists.mp3s.com/artists/40/josh_wachtel.html or go to the Radio Free Earth home page at www.enter.net/~joshwachtel/ for personal information. More song lyrics are posted on Alexei Panshin's website, *The Abyss of Wonder*, at www.panshin.com, along with other good stuff like stories of The Old Space Ranger, an account of how *Alice in Wonderland* was told for the first time, and Alexei's evolving online metabook reconsidering the writing and influence of Robert Heinlein.

See also: "The Skylarkers of Cyberspace," by Earl Kemp, *Peregrine Nations*, April 2002.

There is nothing more notable in Socrates than that he found time, when he was an old man, to learn music and dancing, and thought it time well spent.

--Michel de Montaigne
