

# Nice Distinctions 19

Arthur D. Hlavaty, 206 Valentine Street, Yonkers, NY  
10704-1814. 914-965-4861. hlavaty@panix.com  
<<http://www.livejournal.com/users/supergee/>>  
<<http://www.maroney.org/hlavaty/>>

Published annually. The print version is available for \$1 (\$2 outside the USA), arranged trade, or letter of comment (e-mail counts). If there is an X after your name on the envelope, send at least one of the above if you wish to receive the next issue. The e-mail version is available on request, in text and .pdf formats. Copyright © 2010 by Arthur D. Hlavaty. Staff: Bernadette Bosky, Kevin J. Maroney, Qala Devi, and the Valentine's Castle Rat Pack. Permission to reprint in any nonprofit publication is hereby granted, on condition that I am credited and sent a copy.

This is Discordian Regimentation #119, a Church of the SuperGenius publication. In Wile E. we trust.

↔

Another year older, but not deeper in debt. The three of us remain together, still pretty much at the same jobs, still loving each other. Out in the world, another sworn foe of homosexuality got caught hiring a, shall we say, full-service luggage handler; BP made a gigantic mess; and the economy recovered except for the part about being good for people other than bankers and brokers, but we've survived. And I'm still **supergee** in livejournal and Dreamwidth, and every year I put together eight pages of what I do there and print them up because I'm still a fanzine fan.

↔

## Never give an angel the finger

In November, on my way home from shopping, I tripped entering the house and hit my left middle finger on a stone angel in the vestibule, dislocating it. I took it to DOCS, where after several hours, a female doctor snapped the finger back into place and gave me a new vocab word: What I had done to myself was a *subluxation*. Major new info: Dislocated fingers really gross people out. Major sources of pain: bureaucratic delay and Fox News in the waiting room.

After much physical therapy, the finger is almost as good as new.

↔

The Cambridge, MA, police investigated a possible burglary at the home of a Harvard professor. They found a person of suspicious pigmentation who did not sufficiently respect their authority, and so they arrested him,

even though he had demonstrated that he was the professor who lived there.

I'd be offended even if I hadn't enjoyed several of Henry Louis Gates's books (*Loose Canons*, *The Signifying Monkey*, *13 Ways of Looking at a Black Man*). Still there was some feeling among people of good will that Gates was not entirely in the right, that he acted privileged.

The word *privilege* etymologically means "private law," and I would like to see it used for the sort of things that have to be private laws, rather than for what we all should have. The problem is not that some people have such rights, but that some don't, so we should emphasize the condition of those who don't have them.

When I was growing up, I was told, "Your home is your castle" and "The meanest hovel should be safe from the king's troops." They didn't say it was just for white people or just for professors. When the police enter a home and the person inside demonstrates that he lives there, they should leave, preferably with a polite apology. That's not a privilege; it's a constitutional right.

↔

## Prophecy fulfilled

Someone published "The Lies of Sarah Palin, compiled." When I was a child, they told me some day computers would do things that would otherwise take months of work by a roomful of scientists.

↔

Some people are still under the misconception that the one study purporting to link autism to vaccination was sloppy and insufficiently documented. Actually, it was an utter and deliberate lie.

↔

**Rhetorical question:** "Why should I read books about people who aren't like me? They're not the same gender as me, the same sexual orientation, race, or religion."

**An answer:** Because if you stick to reading about no one but people like you, you become more of an *idiot*, a word that comes from the Greek word for "private" and means people who have so little awareness of consensus reality that they can never get out of their own heads and no one else can get in.

↔

Obviously, women of color can't be Surgeon General because they don't know important medical facts that everyone knows. Regina

Benjamin doesn't know that being fat is always bad for you. Joycelyn Elders didn't know that self-abuse causes insanity and blindness. What next—a Stork Denier?

↔

### **Back 50 years in the time machine**

1. To Dodger fans: "The O'Malleys will sell your team to someone worse."\*

"But Hitler and Stalin are dead."

2. To George Lincoln Rockwell: "America's financial woes will be blamed on the international banking firm of Goldman Sachs."

"And rightly so."

3. To Alabama football fans: "One of your running backs will win the Heisman Trophy."

"Hooray!"

"And here's his picture."

"Aargh!"

\*Rupert Murdoch

↔

### **Rules for book covers**

1. The people should be white.

2. The corpse should be female.

Ideally, that would reflect the book's content, but if not, too bad.

↔

I think I was shunted into the wrong science fiction. When I was a child, I was sure that I was in the early chapters of the sf in which machines did the maintenance. Just as someday there would be small cheap devices that could do arithmetic faster and better than people could and there would be social progress such that all over the country people of all colors could drink from the same water fountains, so I expected to live in a world where the Robot Maid cleaned up and we threw the garbage in the Oubliette. But something happened, and now I'm in a world where the color of envy and nausea is a term of praise (but at least someone wrote a song called "It's not easy being green").

In the world of Connie Willis's "Even the Queen" (which, alas, we haven't reached either), there are still people loyal to the old ways, known as Cyclists. In my world there would be Recyclists, those who unnecessarily processed the garbage themselves. There would be Nacirema-like satires of them, treating them as worshipers of the matter that they washed, sorted, and gift-wrapped, but there would also be a more compassionate view: These people were traumatized by being

born in the pretechnological days when they were trapped in a *Huis Clos* where you couldn't throw anything away because there was no Away, and so they developed a kind of Stockholm Syndrome towards the material world because there are psychic rewards in deciding that you love what you have to submit to anyway.

I don't think I'm the only exile from that world. Another aspect of my sf was the Robot Car, which would drive itself, so the person in the driver's seat would not have to be present, and while "driving" could safely talk on the telephone or even write letters. That would be nice, but I know I don't live in that reality.

↔

Television comedians are our natural leaders. Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert are more trusted than other news sources (and rightly so). Al Franken is a better senator than most of those who have never been paid to be funny. And then John Ensign and David Letterman faced adultery extortion. The senator went whining to Mommy and Daddy to pay off the bad guys, and the comedian said, "Publish and be damned."

↔

### **Making a Statement**

They always told me that however I dressed, I was Making a Statement. For instance, if I did not meet standards of neatness, I was showing contempt for the people or the venue, and I would be judged by my Statement. There's a part of me that still resents that, but these days I go along with the gag. There is, after all, a lot of truth in "the meaning of your communication is the response you get."

If you do an all-male anthology or Top 10 list, you are Making a Statement. If you really believe that the only worthy examples were by persons of the penile persuasion, go with it, but don't be surprised or indignant if you're judged by it.

### **Eric Frank Russell**

I am not one of those who want science fiction taken out of the classroom and put back in the gutter "where it belongs." Quite the contrary; I for one welcome our new academic ~~overlords~~ scholars. In particular, I encourage those who are battling the encroachments of time to rescue the lives and works of sf writers who go back to the days of First SF and its immediate successors, Fifties Galaxy

and New Wave, which are still my favorites anyway.

The first half of a new Robert A. Heinlein bio is about to appear, and I imagine there will be similar works about Isaac Asimov and Arthur C. Clarke, but I hope we do not forget those a step behind, perhaps petit rather than grand masters. One such is Eric Frank Russell, who did not crash galaxies together, offer bold new scientific speculations, or lead us through pulse-pounding adventures, but presented human-interest stories that may wear better. He is a particularly obvious exception to the statement in the recent *New York Times* obit of William Tenn that the field was grim and humorless before Tenn came along. He is widely believed to have invented “the ancient Chinese curse: may you live in interesting times,” though the evidence is inconclusive. (No one has found an actual Chinese curse to that effect.) His best-known work is probably “And Then There Were None,” in which ornery but cooperative individualists manage to create a working anarchy. There are tales where the Earthlings bamboozle the natives and ones where, as a Russell character puts it, “intelligence is like candy: it comes in many different sizes, shapes, and colors, but all are delicious.” He has enriched the vocabulary of the sf community with phrases like the “basic right” (to go to Hell in one’s own way).

Like many other writers of his time, he has been served well by NESFA Press, with collections of his short fiction (*Major Ingredients*) and of his better novels (*Entities*), and now we have a much-needed biography, *Into Your Tent*, by John L. Ingham (\$18.00/£9.99 from Plantech (UK), PO Box 2104, Reading RG1 5WG, United Kingdom, e-mail: PlantecUK@aol.com). It is an admirably detailed work, with much about Russell’s family background, his nonwriting life, and perhaps of most interest to many of us, his dealings with John W. Campbell and other editors. Russell turns out to be somewhat like his cantankerous characters (perhaps a bit more so, which is unsurprising given the vocabulary restrictions then placed on the public media). He would not have liked the present work, believing that writers’ lives in general and his in particular were none of anybody else’s business, but (do I mean *because?*) it gives us a thorough, well-drawn picture of him.

The book could have been better. It is self-published or small press, so one occasionally yearns for the cold formalities of professional publication. The cover blurb not unreasonably describes Russell as one of Britain’s science fiction greats, but puts the word *greats* in quotation marks. The book could have done with some prose pruning and the elimination of annoying idiosyncrasies, such as parenthetical explanations of words that might be considered difficult (e.g., *incongruous*). Nevertheless, this is a valuable, irreplaceable study of one of the fascinating figures of our field.

↔

There are two John W. Campbell awards: the one for new writers and the one for best novel. The former generally works out well, going to Nalo Hopkinson, Jo Walton, Elizabeth Bear, and John Scalzi among others, though I was ready to console each with a reminder that the award began with Jerry Pournelle beating George Alec Effinger. The novel award is more controversial.

The very first novel award went to Barry Malzberg’s *Beyond Apollo*, an excellent book that was also an attack on everything John W. Campbell stood for. Since then, we have gotten away from the idea that the award should go to the book Campbell would have liked least, but trying to give an award for literary excellence that honors Campbell’s memory is like trying to line people up alphabetically by height: The goals aren’t quite opposite, but it’s hard to do both at the same time. The award has veered back and forth; a few years ago, they had an inspiring nominee list, all of which were literarily interesting except for the Ben Bova book, which won.

This year Margaret Atwood is on the list. Many sf people object because she has made some statements apparently distancing what she writes from that nasty science fiction stuff. That doesn’t bother me; sf has long since become established enough that we don’t have to resent our closet cases.

My objection to Atwood is that she’s a Nuffer. Like Bill McKibben (from whose book *Enough* I stole the term), Jeremy Rifkin, Leon Kass, Francis Fukuyama, et al., she believes that she is the Crown of Creation, that humanity as represented by her is as good as it gets and it would be blasphemy to try to improve on her. I have a more modest self-

image: I think that the missing link between the apes and civilized humanity is Us (definitely including me).

OK, I admit it: I'm a religious fanatic of the Post-Humanist faith. I think that humanity should become as gods or die trying, because the alternative is to die without trying. I don't think that being or being trapped in (I am also ontologically incorrect, drawing the mind/body distinction) doomed, raging, demanding meat is Enough. And while I am nowhere near silly enough to confuse acceptance of this view with literary excellence, I want to define science fiction as my kind of stuff, with the Nuffers outside the tent, and that policy certainly goes with an award named after John W. Campbell.

↔

An alleged product of the Andy Warhol art factory was considered to be worth \$2 million until it was stamped **DENIED** by another branch of the Andy Warhol art factory, and now it is supposedly worthless. Obviously what its owner needs is a new aesthetic theory stating that a Warhol with the stamp is even more valuable than one without the stamp because it interrogates the concept of authenticity (perhaps it's even an enhanced interrogation).

↔

### **My winter message**

The sun is returning; let us rejoice! Many years ago, some of those who celebrate the occasion falsely accused my ancestors of waging a War on Solstice. We kicked their ass, and we celebrate that victory as Hanukkah, but it's long past time for bygones to be bygones, so to those who celebrate Solstice, as well as to those who celebrate Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Yule, Newtonmas, and any other holidays I left out, season's greetings.

↔

### **Chained**

Unlike Gen. J.C. Christian, I do not frequent bars where everyone dresses like a motorcyclist, but no one owns a motorcycle. If I did, though, I would now have an excellent accessory.

I once again lost my wallet. I have done that before, so this time I decided to buy a wallet on a chain.

It's an interesting contrast. The image is Badass Biker, but the purpose is pretty much

the same as tying a little kid's mittens to each other.

↔

### **A statistic of near-astrological precision**

Whole Foods is going to give higher employee discounts to its Caucasian employees—no, wait, that can't be right. The heterosexual ones? Ah, here we go: the ones with low BMIs. For a minute there, I thought it didn't make sense.

### **ICFA**

Maybe I'm getting old and tired, so I haven't done a real ICFA report, but I do want to mention some good things:

—The opening panel, particularly De Witt Douglas Kilgore and Owl Goingback. The former was the occasion of the Freudian slip of the conference, as his critical sf study *Astrofuturism* was called *Afrofuturism*. Either way, it's worth reading. The latter reported that publishers asked him to change his name because it sounded too foreign. (His isn't; ours are.) Since then, Facebook, which accepts foreign-sounding names like mine, has just as wrongly decided that his name is fraudulent and refused to admit him.

—Nalo Hopkinson's witty GoH speech;

—Interesting new person of the year, Nisi Shawl;

—Bernadette's paper on Peter Straub, specifically *Mister X*;

—Bernadette's session, where, as she said, the audience was small but choice: Kit and Joe Reed, Jennifer Stevenson, Rhonda Brock-Servais, and of course Peter Straub;

—Kit and Joe Reed, whom we got to spend a lot of time with;

—Bill Senior talking about *The Hobbit*;

—David Farnell's paper on how intermarriage with the Other is seen as frightening/tempting in H.P. Lovecraft's "The Shadow over Innsmouth" and Octavia Butler's *Lilith's Brood*;

—Farah Mendlesohn, who has stepped down after years of great service as the parent organization's president and has declared that her new title is Dowager President.

↔

### **Mother of God, is this a chance for RICO?**

The Rude Pundit has asked: "What if investigation after investigation discovered that the Muslim church had engaged in a decades-long cover-up of massive criminal activity

involving the molestation and raping of children? What if it involved countless Muslim religious leaders, imams, and others? What if one of the highest Sunni leaders in the world was complicit in hiding sex crimes committed against deaf kids?"

↔

### **Sci-fi dream**

Football and hockey have been described as activities that would get their participants arrested if they were done anywhere but on the playing field. Perhaps in a better future capitalism will be a spectator sport like that. Hostile takeovers, bear raids, and such all would be great fun to watch if they didn't matter.

↔

### **An immodest proposal**

This year I have already lost two tires and much time and peace of mind to potholes, for which I have a scapegoat. I am informed that the pressure a vehicle puts on the road is proportional to the fourth power of its weight, and surely you have noticed that there are a lot of SUVs on the road.

With due respect to the small percentage of SUV drivers who really need a truck (technically, an SUV is a truck, except in situations where it is more advantageous to call it a car; did I mention that a lot of rich white guys own them?), there is much to be said for the belief that the main target audience is men who fear anatomical inadequacy. (Bernadette says that SUV stands for "small unit vindication.")

So I'm beginning to believe that Eldridge Cleaver was right, and male insecurity is so prevalent that we need a more direct approach—trousers displaying what Cleaver called the appurtenance (which can of course be suitably augmented). It would be gross to look at, but the economic and ecological advantages of going back to reasonable-sized cars could make it all worthwhile.

↔

### **"The victim forgave him"**

So we should let Roman Polanski go. I'm sure someone has pointed out the stupidity of making this a get-out-of-jail-free card, but I haven't seen it. Suppose you've committed a crime, and you know that you won't be punished if the victim forgives you, what will you and your friends do? That's right: threats, nagging, religious appeals, all sorts of things

that would keep victimizing the victim. (Like "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs," it can be nice once but is disastrous as a policy.)

I am a failed libertarian, which is to say that I recognize the grim necessity of giving some people guns and clubs and letting them use force in the name of the shared fantasy known as society because there are worse things (such as armed gangs that do not have to act accountable). This is one of the things the State is good for: After a crime is committed, the State takes the responsibilities of arrest, trial, and punishment off the victim's shoulders as much as possible.

↔

### **Which reminds me**

The one group more likely to defend Roman Polanski than Hollywood cronies is French philosophers, led by Bernard-Henri Lévy, who is often described as the intellectual heir of Jean-Paul Sartre. I guess he's starting with excusing rapists and will work his way up to excusing gulags.

(I am tempted to refer to the French philosophers as "cheese-eating postmodernism monkeys," but It Would Be Wrong. Besides, reviewing the Russell book reminded me that he came up with a better gastronomical insult, describing one of the lead buffoons in the Dreyfus case as a "snail guzzler.")

↔

### **Who is Silvio, what is he?**

Now that America is no longer governed by an evil clown, where do we go for our cruel laughs? Why, Italy, of course, where Silvio Berlusconi may have given us the best Freudian slip since President Nixon, in his last State of the Union speech, said, "It is time to replace the discredited president—the discredited present welfare system":

In absolute terms, I am the most legally persecuted man of all times, in the whole history of mankind, worldwide, because I have been subjected to more than 2,500 court hearings and I have the good luck—having worked well in the past and having accumulated an important wealth—to have been able to spend more than €200m in consultants and judges ... I mean in consultants and lawyers.

↔

### **Becoming white**

When I was born, we Jews weren't quite American. That might have continued, but a fellow named Hitler was giving Jew hating a bad name, treating Jews even worse than

genteel gentiles thought they should be, fighting a war against America, and losing. So now, when Helen Thomas says one thing about Jews as stupid and hateful as what the Coulters and Becks repeatedly spew about people of color, she is forced to retire. I am now making extremely small circles with my index finger.

↔

There's a collectivist view that allowing poor people to control their own fertility is just like genocide because it will lower the number of them. Now it has been inadvertently satirized by a warning of a diabolical scheme by Bill Gates to make the poor breed less by having fewer of them die of disease. The creators of this remarkable approach have also performed the difficult feat of providing a stupider argument against vaccination than the fake autism menace.

↔

The New Black Panther Party, both of them, did a bit of cosplay at a polling place for the 2008 elections. One of them had a nightstick, they both had leather & boots, and of course they both had Terroristic Negritude. Fox News and the Teabaggers concluded that this was the Worst Voter Intimidation Evar!!! and it proved that Obama doesn't want white people to vote. This one is so ridiculous that even famous racial reactionary Abigail Thernstrom is calling bullshit on it.

### Nasty, Brutish, & Short

As a geek/nerd/differently socialized person, I practically believe that "nonverbal communication" is a contradiction in terms. One corollary is that there is no such thing as dressing so as to invite groping, tasteless comments, or other harassment.

You are never alone if you have no internal life.

I saw an lj post telling us that the poster did a Twitter post telling us that he did an lj post. (Really.)

I am a Reform Grammarian. The taboos against the Split Infinitive and the Terminal Preposition may have been good rules for an earlier time, but they are no longer needed.

We love the story of the turtle, but we'd rather watch the hare.

Jacques Derrida, like Charles Barkley, was good at what he did and had a sense of humor about it, but you shouldn't take him as a role model.

These days I carry a check in my wallet in case I need to use it, but eventually they just get frayed and I replace them. I used to do that with condoms.

A sign of the Apocalypse: *The No Fear Scarlet Letter*, with the original and an "easy-to-understand translation" on facing pages.

Fiction should be better than life. Life has excuses.

I am a Human Exceptionalist. I will stop being one as soon as some other animal writes a poem or proves a theorem.

### Not Forgotten

**Eve Hlavaty Cimmet:** My one sibling has died. It is a loss to the world and her family. She was a lawyer and then worked for Good Causes, and was good at those. Inspired by our parents' eminently successful marriage, she married someone good for her first try, as I did. She and Joe Cimmet had three wonderful children: Brian, Alison, and Stephanie.

She reached out, but our contacts were limited by my psychological inadequacies. Still, my family and hers managed to get together on a number of occasions, and a good time appeared to be had by all.

She fought the disease for a few years, and got to see the Yankees win another World Series, but knew when the war was over. The end was mercifully soon after that.

Good-bye, Eve. You are remembered with love.

**Charles N. Brown** gave us *Locus*, the science fiction newsletter. Maybe it never was a "fanzine," and the sf community eventually created a new term so it wouldn't win awards as one. But it was a good whatever, keeping us up with new books and such, and it expanded as the field did, Borglike assimilating fantasy, horror, YA, paranormal ro-

mance, etc. He built well enough that I expect *Locus* to continue to prosper.

**Alexei Kondratiev** really was “a gentleman and a scholar.” He probably fell a bit short of knowing everything there was to know about Celtic history, religion, and culture, but the knowledge that has departed with him is a great loss.

**Mary Herczog** was **bix** on livejournal until cellular entropy attacked, whereupon she added a new identity as **mscancerchick**. She fought, and she wrote magnificently as she fought, but eventually she lost.

**Kage Baker** gave us the fascinating Company series, and much else.

Whether he portrayed a flower-wielding poet, an American Nazi, or a Ferengi, **Henry Gibson** was amusing.

Back in the 50s my family and I used to go to baseball games at Yankee Stadium. I remember one time we sat near the bullpen, where **Tom Sturdivant** chatted amusingly with us.

**Juliet Anderson**, better known as Aunt Peg, was a plain middle-aged woman with a boy's haircut, so she would seem unqualified for XXX movies, but she was quite popular, perhaps because of her enthusiasm for her work. She said she never faked an orgasm.

**Robert B. Parker** wrote the Spenser books, noir mysteries in the Hammett-Chandler tradition. I enjoyed many of them but eventually stopped; I don't know if it was him or me.

I am old enough to remember **Walter Cronkite** saying, “What sort of day was it? A day like all days, filled with those events that alter and illuminate our times... and you were there.” That was before he became the kindly, yet authoritative voice of the news. He rarely expressed opinion, and when he did (we can't win in Vietnam), it mattered. After he retired from broadcasting, he wrote a column, saying sane things about the War on Some Drugs and the Marriage Hogging Amendment, among other things. He altered and illuminated my life, and I'm glad he was there.

By writing about Truman Capote writing about an infamous society killing, **Dominick Dunne** may have created the genre of recursive trash. I must admit I found his novels a guilty pleasure right up to the end, though his last one, *Too Much Money*, was more guilt than pleasure.

**Antony Flew** was a visiting professor of philosophy at Swarthmore one year when I was there, but I missed the chance to take a course with him and I regret it. He believed that he had disproved God, but late in life he became a Deist. I don't believe he ever renounced his attacks on political collectivism, which I found more convincing.

**Alice Miller** talked about the things families aren't supposed to talk about.

**Chris Henry** had the size and speed to become a great NFL receiver, but he got into enough trouble that he never really got the chance, and then he died when he jumped out the back of a moving truck to make his girlfriend regret driving away, which seemed all too typical of him. We are now hearing that his brain was damaged before that. (I wonder if the NFL will survive full awareness of the consequences of concussions.)

**Louis Auchincloss:** As Gore Vidal said,

Of all our novelists, Auchincloss is the only one who tells us how our rulers behave in their banks and their boardrooms, their law offices and their clubs. Yet such is the vastness of our society and the remoteness of academics and book chatters from actual power that those who should be most in this writer's debt have no idea what a useful service he renders us by revealing and, in some ways, by betraying his class. Not since Dreiser has an American writer had so much to tell us about the role of money in our lives.

He wrote a lot, and I didn't like all of it, but I loved much of it. He was essentially a short-story writer, and his best work (*The Rector of Justin*, *The House of Five Talents*, *Portrait in Brownstone*) was fix-ups, cunningly joined. (Offhand, I can't think of another mimetic writer of whom that can be said.) He was a lawyer in mundane life, and if, as I imagine, he constructed wills and trusts with the same intricate skill, there are many rich people indebted to him.

You could say that **Ted Kennedy** dodged a bullet, or that he dodged the consequences of Chappaquiddick, but either way he became a really good senator.

**William Tenn** wrote many delightful sf stories in the fifties.

**Claude Levi-Strauss** was a modernist who, among other things, outlived almost all of the major postmodernists. That amuses me.

**Takumi Shibano** practically created Japanese science fiction fandom all by himself.

The *NY Times* said of **Merce Cunningham**

Mr. Cunningham often spoke and wrote movingly about the nature of dance and would laugh about its maddening impermanence. "You have to love dancing to stick to it," he once wrote. "It gives you nothing back, no manuscripts to store away, no paintings to show on walls and maybe hang in museums, no poems to be printed and sold, nothing but that single fleeting moment when you feel alive."

You could say the same about drugs.

I don't think **Ellie Greenwich** wrote all of the girl-group songs of the Sixties, but she did a lot of them. **Harvey Fuqua** and the Moon-glows sang some lovely songs, too.

I can't say I liked anything **James Purdy** wrote after *Malcolm*, but that was a strange and fascinating novel.

Sometimes a libertarian is a conservative who's been wiretapped, and **William Safire** on occasion offered us sharp and thoughtful criticism of government snooping. I also remember his revulsion at the Pat & Pat takeover of the Republicans in 1992, and I enjoyed much of his Language Maven stuff. *De mortuis* and all that.

Besides, as a *NY Times* conservative, he's like Gerald Ford among Republican presidents: The more successors he has, the better he looks.

**Don Ivan Punchatz** was famous for Doom graphics, but I think of him as the guy who did the covers for Robert Silverberg's Avon books.

**Wilma Mankiller**: good leader, great name.

**Howard Zinn**: We've lost the great man who said that history is made by little people.

**Ben Indick**, long-time zine and apa fan. I've been enjoying his writing for 32 years.

**Tommy Henrich** was an excellent baseball player from my childhood. Years later, he appeared on nostalgia TV shows about those days and made astute comments.

**Bobby Bragan** was a third-string catcher for the Brooklyn Dodgers when Branch Rickey shocked him and the rest of the country by bringing an admitted Negro into the Major Leagues, and he was one of those who threatened to strike. But he thought about it some more, became more enlightened, and wound up as an intelligent baseball manager and executive.

**Manute Bol** was the world's tallest humanitarian. At 7 feet 6 or so, he was freakishly tall even for the National Basketball Association, where he first became famous. After that, he did Good Works for his native Sudan and died way too young.

**David Markson** decided that novels didn't need old-fashioned stuff like characters and plot. What was left still amused me.

**Three Tasteless Ones:**

**Johnny Maestro**: It was the worst that could happen.

**Teddy Pendergrass**: If you didn't know him by now, you will never, never know him.

**Bobby Charles**: Guess I won't see you later, alligator.

#### Also remembered

Mike Moslow, Dennis Hopper, Gene Barry, Ricardo Montalban, Budd Schulberg, W.D. Snodgrass, Sidney Zion, Camilla Decarnin, Merlin Olsen, Robin Roberts, George Scithers, and Gaines Adams.

---

Excelsior,

*Arthur*