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If it weren't for pickpockets, I'd have no sex life at all.
THIS ISSUE OF *el* is in memory of Milton and Bea Luros, their empire of Parliament News, and their many exciting and collectible products.

In the world of science fiction, it is also in memory of Gregg Shaw and Tetsu Yano.

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I would like to call your attention to Bruce R. Gillespie and the effort to Bring Bruce Bayside, a worthy cause to bring Gillespie from his home in Australia to the Bay Area next February for Corflu and Potlach. There is more about this effort on eFanzines.com and your donation to the cause would be greatly appreciated.

#

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

Bill Burns is *jefe* around here. If it wasn't for him, nothing would get done. He inspires activity. He deserves some really great rewards. It is a privilege and a pleasure to have him working with me to make *el* whatever it is. And also, Dave Locke continues as *el* Grand Quote Master. You will find his assembled words of wisdom separating the articles throughout this issue of *el*.

Other than Bill Burns and Dave Locke, these are the people who made this issue of *el* possible: Victor J. Banis, Merv Barrett, Robert Bloch, Robert Bonfils, Bruce Brenner, Tom Brinkman, Elaine Cochrane, Brittany Daley, Stephen J. Gertz, Jay A. Gertzman, Terry Gibbons, Bruce Gillespie, Michael Goss, Lee Harding, Elaine Kemp Harris, Tony Jacobs, Dick Jenssen (Ditmar), Bruno Kautzner, Patrick J. Kearney, Miriam Linna, Jim Linwood, Robert Lichtman, Race Mathews, Phil Stephensen-Payne, Curt Phillips, Ryan Richardson, William Rotsler, Gary Sohler, Cat Sparks, Robert Speray, Bill Thom, and Jodi Wille.

A special thanks goes to Tony Jacobs for working overtime to furnish the Luros (and Greenleaf) publications cover scans scattered throughout this issue.

**ARTWORK:** This issue of *el* features original and recycled artwork by Ditmar and William Rotsler.

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**Sex is God's joke on human beings.**

--- Bette Davis

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…Return to sender, address unknown…. 9

**The Official *el* Letters to the Editor Column**

**Artwork recycled William Rotsler**

By Earl Kemp

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

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

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

\textbf{Thursday September 16, 2004}

I admire your effort to record the important past as you are; there will be researchers in the future who will bless you for what you are doing with \textit{el}.

\quad --Richard E. Geis

\textbf{Saturday October 2, 2004}

With all the footrafl about darker fen . . . A year or so ago I asked AL du Pisani if there were any none "Europeans" in Science Fiction South Africa. He said no. Not because they were minded to agree with the old policies of the former government, but none had ever asked.

We may have to wait a few years for a South African curse of the Mhondoro Nkebele.

\quad --Joseph T. Major

\textbf{Sunday October 3, 2004}

I have to say that \textit{el} is a highly entertaining piece of work. I've just managed to get through every issue in a few days and I can say that I've taken a great deal of enjoyment reading your work.

\quad Of all the many things I have to blame my Pops for, an undying awareness and admiration of Robert Bonfils is one of the most impactful. My Dad kept a large cardboard California Orange box full of old paperbacks that I wasn't to touch. I knew this because he had written on the side "Do Not Open: Bees". At the time, I'd rather anything than risk a bee sting, but I grew out of that phase and opened the afeart box by the time I was twelve. \textit{Nautilus, Orgy of the Dead, The Day the Universe Came, Starship Intercourse}, they were all there. My Dad, though I've never asked him about it, must have enjoyed the Bonfils art style so much that he constantly bought books with his covers. He also had \textit{Those Sexy Saucer People} and a half dozen others, mostly by Phillip Jose Farmer, which I had taken to my room one night. These were the only ones left after my Mom tossed the box out following my Dad's excommunication from the family. The only Bonfils covered pb I managed to hold onto until my Mother's major purge of the filth in my own room a few years later was \textit{Flee the Night}. I still miss them. Still, along with Dolly Parton's twin early 80s classics, \textit{9 to 5} and \textit{The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas}, those paperbacks with the Bonfils covers had a profound effect on my sexual awakening.

\quad --Chris Garcia

\textbf{Monday October 4, 2004}

\textbf{Correction to \textit{ef/16}}

I briefly looked over the latest \textit{el}. Bonfils said he did not do the cover to \textit{Fantasex} (PR212). And it's Tomas Cannizarro. Looking good. You are amazing!

\quad --Bruce Brenner
Much obliged for the link to your ezine, and to Jhim -- as he used to be known in the '60s -- for acting as an intermediary.

I of course remember your name from the good old days when I was a regular at Ella Parker's penitentiary in London. At the time I never knew of your connection with the wonderful world of paperback porn. My discovery of the Olympia Press at the time got me interested in the field of erotic lit. in which I am now adrift up to my neck, as my website should demonstrate -- www.sonic.net/~patk/. I know one of your contributors, Jay Gertzman, quite well. A researcher of major importance in the field. Keep up the good work!

--Pat Kearney

I failed to meet one of Earl's requests. I have a lot of photos from my five years in Viet Nam in storage, but I can't find the overall index. There are over 3,000 of them, so a random search is impossible.

--Dick Eney

Monday October 4, 2004

Another fascinating issue. One after another...awesome.

Bruce Gillespie is being silly if he thinks I've been snubbing him at Australian worldcons because I'm miffed at that hatchet job his fanzine did on me thirty years ago. I did not, of course, agree with the critical appraisal set forth in it, but I've been the subject of hatchet jobs on and off for decades, as well as the recipient of a lot of praise, and I take it all with equanimity. Naturally I prefer the praise to the hatchery, as most writers would, but I don't bear grudges against those who feel the need to assail my work. (Franz Rottensteiner was another who went after me with great vociferousness in that era. When I encountered him in Frankfurt in 1984 I greeted him with a grin, let him know I was aware of his many onslaughts, and offered him a handshake. He replied to the effect that he had, perhaps, been rather overzealous as a younger critic.)

The real reason why I've never spoken to Bruce Gillespie at an Australian worldcon, or an American con if he's attended one, is that I don't have any idea of what he looks like and, so far as I recall, have never laid eyes on him. If he'd care to introduce himself to me the next time we're in the same place, I'll greet him civilly enough. He is, of course, all wrong in what he says about my work, but why should I take that personally?

When I was a teenage fan I trashed Howard Browne and his editorship of Amazing Stories most ferociously in a fanzine, possibly Ed Wood's Journal of Science Fiction. Five or six years later, after I had sold Howard fifty or sixty stories, he slyly pulled the fanzine out of a drawer of his desk one day when I was in the office, by way of letting me know that he had been aware all along that the guy who was selling him a story every two weeks or so was the same one who once had accused him of preferring to publish crappy s-f. He wasn't one to hold grudges either, was Howard.

--Bob Silverberg

An afterthought on Gillespie, who says he was attacking me for what he saw as my pretensions as an "artist." I don't recall voicing any such pretensions. I just tried to write science fiction as well as I could, that is, to write the sort of science fiction that I thought science fiction should be. After a time I began to wonder whether all that was worth bothering about, considering the preferences of the readership. You know, such writers as Sturgeon and Leiber and Dick also tried to write science fiction at the highest level possible, and they all died poor and mostly out of print, so what was the point? That Dick made a lot of money posthumously from Hollywood doesn't justify the discomforts he had to put up with during his cash-starved life. Leiber lived in one tiny room in a slum part of San Francisco and Sturgeon in a squalid part of Los Angeles. I have had a more comfortable life than that; perhaps that proves I was never really an artist. But of course I did write a lot of hackwork as well as
doing the pretentious things that drew the Gillespie ire. The real problem may have been that I failed to see that my "artistic" work, *Dying Inside* and *Book of Skulls* and *Born With the Dead* and the rest of that pretentious stuff, was really junk, and my hackwork, *Sins of Seena* and *Sex Trap* and such, was really art; but what can a writer understand, really, of the merits of his own work?

What particularly saddened me about the criticisms that came from the Gillespie orbit was that they came from intelligent people, not from the know-nothing crowd that has mainly dominated the science fiction world. You expect the dopes to stand up and cheer for dopey fiction, but you hope for more careful reading from the bright guys.

--Bob Silverberg

Bob, is it okay to run this as an LoC? -Earl Kemp

Tuesday October 5, 2004

Sure, go ahead. I wanted him to hear me, and this is the best way.

--Bob

#

Bob Silverberg is a gentleman, as I always knew he was (we were fellow members of FAPA for ten years!), but in my mind there has long been a mistaken impression that goes something like this...

Because I was the official leader of the victorious Australian contingent at Torcon 2 (1973) (the result had been announced the night before, that Aussiecon I would indeed be held in Melbourne in 1975), I was on the top table during the Hugos banquet.

About halfway through the banquet Bob Silverberg came up to the table, pointed to me, and said, 'What are *you* doing there?' To which all I could say was, 'Because Australia just won the bid to hold the worldcon in 75 in Melbourne.' And Bob sauntered off.

But obviously all he took away from him was: '[That unknown fan from Australia] is there because Australia just won the bid to hold the worldcon in 75 in Melbourne.'

All this while, of course, I had been sending *SF Commentary* to Bob during the early seventies. Since such a lot of people at Torcon did look at my name tag and did welcome me as 'So *you're* Bruce Gillespie' (with delight or horror in the voice, as the case might be), I had assumed Bob had recognised me.

However, even if Bob had recognised me at Torcon, he would hardly have recognised me at Aussiecon II, in Melbourne in 1985. By then I had put on a lot of weight -- most of what I am still saddled with -- and I don't think even Gene Wolfe recognised me at Aussiecon II. (I had spent an afternoon at Gene and Rosemary's place in 1973, when Jackie Causgrove and I drove up there.)

At Aussiecon III, in 1999, since Peter Nicholls had shanghaied the opening ceremony by inviting all the pro writers to his place for a party, Bob would not have seen me give my Fan Guest of Honour talk, and therefore would still have not recognised me.

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1977 (the date of Silverberg Issue of *SFC*) was a long time ago, except the seventies doesn't seem all that long ago to me. Much of the eighties does, but not the seventies. Looking back, I realise a lot of authors were going through crises of direction posed by the New Wave and the following wavelets. Some writers were making big
money in SF for the first time; on the other hand, the more self-conscious writers were finding things difficult. Bob Silverberg seemed to wend his way through the contradictions of the time fairly adroitly, until he reached *Lord Valentine’s Castle* and a whole new career path. Meanwhile, people like me remained excited mainly by people we might still call 'New Wave writers'.

What unhinged me in the early '80s was the enormous boom in SF publishing. Suddenly I had no idea what 'the field' was doing. In the nineties, I gave up caring -- I read my favourite writers, and let the others gather their own hosts of fans. In the late 90s, I re-read some of Bob Silverberg's short stories from the seventies, and found I enjoyed them a lot more than I remember enjoying them when they first appeared. I suspect I would do the same if and when I get back to his seventies novels.

These days, I'm just that tall tubby guy with white hair (but not much of it) who, for some reason, is being given a trip to America by fans in early 2005. It would be good to 'meet' Bob Silverberg for the first time... even though we've stood not many feet from each other at each of four world conventions.

--Bruce Gillespie

**Wednesday October 6, 2004**

<snip>

As for the 1973 Torcon anecdote-well, it should be pointed out right away that Torcon was four years before the infamous Silverberg issue of *SF Commentary*, so even if I knew that the fellow sitting at the head table was Bruce Gillespie, I'd have had no reason to have negative feelings about him. In fact I have no recollection of this 30-year-old episode at all, nor can I imagine at this late date why I asked him what I did, unless I was just fooling around. Maybe I had no idea who he was and was simply curious about his presence at the head table. Certainly there couldn't have been anything very serious or significant about my question.

[Responding to Gillespie's comment about sending *SF Commentary* to Silverberg:] I did indeed read *SF Commentary* when it was sent to me, so I would have known Bruce Gillespie by name. Perhaps I looked at your nametag, recognized the name, and simply wondered why an Australian fan editor was at the dais. (I don't pay much attention to con politics and could not tell you the name of the chairman of the Boston con that I just attended, though I do know that Vince Docherty is Glasgow's.)

Since Torcon I have no recollection of having encountered you again. Cons are busy places for me, panels and meetings all day long, pro parties and dinners with editors and agents at night, and there are usually plenty of people I never get to see, especially if I don't know them in the first place. I discovered only yesterday that the extremely tall John Betancourt, whom I DO know, was at Boston-he saw me, I didn't see him. I saw John-Henri Holmberg of Sweden, whom I wanted to talk to, for ten seconds in a hallway. Et cetera. I don't meet a lot of new people unless they come up and introduce themselves to me.

Even without Peter's party [Aussiecon III, 1999], I wouldn't have heard your talk. Apart from the Hugo ceremony and my own panels, I just don't have time to go to con program stuff at all.

<snip>

As for the Silverberg issue of *SF Commentary*, my feeling was and still is that I wrote honestly and well in that era, and that anyone who cared about science fiction who didn't see the merit of what I was doing was not worth arguing with. I did wonder what the point of continuing as a writer was, if the earnest and committed people who read the stuff found what I was doing insufficient for their rarefied tastes, and in fact I DID stop writing sf altogether around the time of Aussiecon I and went back to it only when the financial pressures of my divorce made it necessary to do so. This was not so much out of pique that my wondrous works were not gaining sufficient praise as it was out of the feeling that there was no sense continuing to knock myself out for a bunch of idiots like that when I already had written enough good books to satisfy my own sense of accomplishment and had enough money to see me through without further labor. Eventually I DID go back to writing, and if you check out such stories as "Sailing to Byzantium" or "Enter a Soldier" you may find something worth your
attention. If you don't, don't tell me about it.

In general, I am singularly indifferent to criticism, rarely seek out reviews of my work, forget them pretty quickly when I find them. I choose my friends and sf according to personal chemistry, not whether they admire my work, although apparently most of them do. There are a few people whose company I deliberately avoid, and I will not name them here... But my feelings about you are simply neutral. I haven't been avoiding you, nor have I been seeking you out. Your 1977 fanzine struck me as an ungracious attack on someone who was trying to fight the good fight, but as my Howard Browne anecdote in the email to Earl indicated, I know how fierce and severe young fans can be, and I don't hold it against them in later years, any more than Howard held my teenage ferocity and severity against me when I became part of his staff.

Anyway, please do come up and say hello next time we are in the same place. I do guard myself against fools, but, as I say, I have only a neutral opinion of you, and certainly am not one to nurture a grudge over a fanzine review for decades and decades. What that fanzine engendered in me was a shrug and a smile, not anger. If these people are not satisfied with what I've been doing, I thought, then they are plainly insatiable, and that's their problem, not mine. And so I have felt ever since.

--Robert Silverberg

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**Wednesday October 6, 2004**

When I received your email telling me that e/16 was available in html format, I immediately had a look - a very GOOD look - at it. Just a quick run through impressed me enormously - especially with the quality of my graphics when I viewed them actual-size.

So I immediately 'phoned Bruce to tell him that he should drop everything and download the 'zine - especially 'cos there was a surprise awaiting him. ["Incredible Science Fiction" new original graphic by Ditmar featuring Bruce Gillespie as cover boy. -Earl Kemp]

Let me say again just how pleased I am by the way in which you've made my "artwork" look better than it is - particularly when a click on any image redisplayes it in VistaVision.

I haven't read through e/16 completely yet (so much!), but I was VERY interested in the article on Greenleaf's publications. These were not available in Australia thanks to the repressive society it was then. It was even more repressive when our family (Dad, Mum and I) moved here from Shanghai in early 1941. Dad suddenly discovered that books which he had thought were innocuous were liable to have him prosecuted should the Police pay us a visit. Books like Erskine Caldwell's *Tobacco Road* (!!!). And, if memory serves me correctly, even some of Thorne Smith's lighthearted books were proscribed. Some years later the situation was still pretty dreadful - for example, *The Biography of a Miocene Fly* (otherwise known as *Forever Amber*) was also banned. Briefly. And even later Mary McCarthy's *The Group* was attempted to be placed on the no-no list by our then state-governor.

When I was in the States in '63/'65 I posted books to my friend Merv Binns, books like Selby's *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, Trocchi's *Cain's Book*, and Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, some of which were intercepted by the Customs, and as a result Merv was threatened with prosecution if he was sent further items. Would you - could you - believe that owning or importing a copy of *Evergreen Review* (*Evergreen Review* !!!) was a criminal offence?

Returning from a Conference in the US in about '67 I was carrying a Grove Press paperback, *The Pearl*, which was very soft Victorian erotica. This was discovered by the officers - I was making no attempt to hide it - and I,
and all my luggage were very thoroughly searched. As I say, I had been to a conference where I’d given a paper involving many slides, and EVERY one of these was held up to the light to see if it contained any corrupting images...

So I really liked the Greenleaf article!

And I particularly relished the thought of you posing as not one, but TWO, hunks for the cover of *Song of Aaron* - especially since you’d been described as (I think I remember it correctly) "much too heterosexual"! You are clearly someone very secure in themselves and who cares not a fig for what people may think!

There should be more like you...

--Dick Jenssen (aka Martin, Ditmar)

**Friday October 8, 2004**

Earl: thanks for another great issue. I thought the covers and information about Greenleaf's sci-fi soft core was a real contribution to publishing history. The titles were a hoot, esp. *Sexy Saucer People*. Turns part of the Cold War hysteria on its head. Olaf Stapledon is well worth discovering, as the article and illustrations clearly show.

I have wondered what "comfort" accommodations a nation makes when it uses its young men to fight, have their mental balance permanently destroyed, and often die to keep the top 5% of its business executives living in the style they need. Drugs, beer, prostitutes--I am sure you are right about the safer (if there are any) cities of Iraq being turned into a "military bordello." The mantra about LBJ was "bombs, bullets, and bullshit." That's too mild for the Bush/Cheney crew. In their crudeness, Texas-sized arrogance, and equation of Democracy with taking weak country's resources, they deserve stronger censure than my imagination can provide. I would encourage you, however, to try to have your comparisons between Vietnam and Iraq published as a newspaper op-ed piece.

--Jay A. Gertzman

**Saturday October 16, 2004**

Thanks so much for continuing to crank out these bumper issues of *el*. I printed out all 122 pages of the latest one today, full-color on 24-lb. white paper, double-sided -this is how I've printed all the issues, by the way -- and have been perusing it this evening, stopping here and there to read and/or marvel over the contents. I enjoyed dipping in and out of your Vietnam memories, enjoyed Deckinger's piece on almost becoming Ivar Jorgenson, made a mental note that I really must read Gillespie on Stapledon completely, and landed finally on the Advent master archive.

It's amazing how many of these books I have, some in multiple editions. For instance, I have *In Search of Wonder* in the first edition hardcover (formerly Boggs's copy), second edition paperback and third edition hardcover -- got the last after it was so heavily praised on, where? Memory Hole? The original Wegenheim? *And All Our Yesterdays* in the first hardcover, second printing paper. *The Issue At Hand*, first edition hardcover (inscribed to Boggs by Blish), second edition paper. *Universes of E.E. Smith*, first hardcover and first paper. And not a multiple, but I'm pleased to have the original Fantasy Press edition of Eschbach's *Of Worlds Beyond*.

But what I didn't have and have just ordered is Eney's *The Proceedings: Discon*. When I spotted it, I went immediately to Bookfinder and found three copies: one for $9, one for $15 and one for $75. You can easily guess which one I got.

Anyway, thanks for continuing to entertain me -- and I'm looking forward to...seeing you again at Corflu next year.

--Robert Lichtman

**Saturday November 6, 2004**
It is post-election, and Dubya has bettered his daddy by getting re-elected. What's your reaction? The reaction of many has been to swamp the immigration offices of the Canadian embassy in Washington and Canadian consulates allover the US asking how they can move to Canada and/or become Canadian citizens. I have never seen a president scare the citizenry as much as Dubya. I'm scared enough to stay on this side of the border permanently. Even crossing into Niagara Falls, NY could become the beginning of a nightmare. The next four years will be a curse to the Western world. Perhaps one sign of redemption is Colin Powell's likely resignation from Bush's cabinet. He seems to be an honourable man, and the way he's been treated by Bush and his cronies would be too much for anyone. I can only hope that Powell will write a book exposing the whole mess of this post-9/11 era. Bush has the gall to say in one breath that he wanted to unite the whole country, and with another breath, say that he intends to follow his own agenda. A decisive victory, my ass... 48.5% of Americans voted for change, and they will be ignored. No wonder so many Americans want to become Canadian.

Jan Stinson's article about being a fan is a refreshment. I've had far too many people telling me otherwise over the years. If you are confident enough in your interests, and you feel you match up with the group you like, then you're a fan. Ridiculous argument, after all; who's going to make up the rules over who is and who isn't? Fandom at its worst bites its own entrails and eats its young over this argument. We should be happy that every so often, someone comes along and wants to join our happy asylum. Visitors are rare enough, and we may be excluding ourselves into oblivion over who's fannish enough.

I haven't read much Olaf Stapledon, and I know I should read more. How much does the British public know about Stapledon? If you know anything would they simply drop in the reject bin, or would they celebrate him alongside Wells? I would hope it would be the latter, but... I have found some early British SF to be a little ponderous, as if still vaguely connected to the Victorian novel which I often found impossible to get through, but a little effort and some patience often rewarded me with a good story. Tried the same with the Victorian novels, but there's only so much swamp you can struggle through before you sink.

-- Lloyd Penney

I know nothing about sex, because I was always married.
-- Zsa Zsa Gabor

EDITORIAL:
Ho! Ho! Ho!

By Earl Kemp

It's that time again. Another year is winding down, bringing with it the 2004 Annual issue of el. Winter is well underway. The frost is upon the land and the whole world is about to start giving. Hopefully, this year, things will be better than they have been for a while. Time to move on and think good thoughts and hope for the best. DC, take note.

Thirty-four years ago, the gang at The Porno Factory wanted to do something special for Christmas. It was all part of a continuously ongoing effort to create more and bigger and better and, above all, fantastically sellable periodicals. For that occasion we turned to the great Harry Bremner, Design Director for Greenleaf Classics, Inc.
Harry took his cue from the origins of William Hamling's Nightstand Books and decided to give a salute to the original printer, Howard Stephens of Stephens Publishing Company in Sandusky, Ohio. When Howard's presses weren't running pornography, they were running coloring books. Stephens Publishing Company was, at that time, one of the largest publishers of coloring books in the country. Because of this, whenever asked what kind of books we produced, for years we told everyone we made children's books. Harry seized upon this factoid from a filthy past and created, from scratch and mostly by hand, *The Dirty Ol' Man* coloring book. It was a complete sellout for the 1970 Holiday Season.

Remaining in the tradition of the season, *eI* is proud to present an excerpt from Victor J. Banis’ sensational *Holiday Gay* (CB545) to hopefully amuse you while you decorate your tree and hang your balls beneath the mistletoe.

Also, I feel the need to brag just a bit. For this Annual issue of *eI*, Bill Burns and I are giving you completely free an exceptional portfolio by Ditmar as our gift to our loyal readers. It is presented in stand-alone format for your additional convenience.

Enjoy…!

…And to all a good night….

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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

"...My true love gave to me...."*

By Victor J. Banis

Bright Red Balls

There was something about the holiday season and Christmas time that Jackie Holmes always especially liked. Most of all it was evenings like this one, set aside for trimming the tree.

Here he was in a cozy warm apartment. The fire was blazing brightly in the fireplace. A tall fir tree had been correctly placed in its stand and was already saturating the room with its delicious scent. Hot toddies had gone a long way to putting him in a dreamy mood. And to make the picture complete he had the benefit of delightful company. There beside him was one of those beautiful young men one usually just dreams about--tall, husky, with gray eyes behind long lashes, olive hued skin and erotically carved mouth. The picture couldn't have been more perfect.

"How do you like those balls?"

"Perfect," Jackie murmured appreciatively. He traced a finger over one of them.

"What about this, do you think it's too big?"

"Not at all. It looks better standing though than it did hanging. I wish we could put it
His companion laughed, a deep throaty sound that sent a shiver up Jackie's spine. "Too much weight, I'm afraid. It would bend the tree down."

"I guess you're right. But the color's perfect--that deep red crown." Jackie paused for a moment, devoting himself to his efforts.

"That's better," his friend surveyed the results of the efforts. "That gives it a shiny look, makes it glisten. I think that's more appropriate."

Jackie frowned thoughtfully. "Maybe just a little more," he suggested. After a moment, he added, "Christmas just isn't Christmas without sweets. Hard candy at that."

"I don't know when I've enjoyed the season more. I almost wish it were Christmas Eve. That part about going off up the chimney always gets to me."

"Sounds like a waste to me," Jackie answered. He turned slightly on the bearskin rug and his glance fell momentarily on the tall Christmas tree. Beside it, still unopened, was the large trunk in which he always stored the decorations. Oh well, he thought philosophically, I can always trim it tomorrow. As it turned out he had far more urgent things to tend to this evening.

He looked back at his companion. Like Jackie, Lorenzo was naked, reclining lazily on the soft rug. He smiled, his dark lips parting to reveal dazzling, even teeth. In the firelight his satiny skin gleamed maddeningly. Jackie reached out to the broad chest and ran one finger lightly over a brown nipple. His finger slipped downward over the rippling surface of a brown stomach. It curled in the thick patch of gleaming black hair and then it was back to its previous source of pleasure.

A massive arm moved about him, pulling him close again and Jackie felt himself drawn into the gray depths of those haunting eyes. His lips were crushed beneath another pair and then a warm tongue invaded his mouth. Jackie shivered as a strong male hand stroked his back, making its way downward.

"Beautiful box," Lorenzo managed to whisper. "I wouldn't mind getting some of that."

"I hope you don't want to wait till Christmas." Jackie tensed momentarily and then relaxed to the firm, confident exploration that was taking place. Sexually he regarded himself as a seasoned traveler; and the seasoned traveler, he had learned from experience, had to be prepared to travel whatever route necessary to reach his destination. At times that had meant traveling virgin territory--but not in this instance.

He was rolled gently over onto his back. For a moment they lay like that, the powerful weight of Lorenzo's body crushing him down against the rug. It lifted then and he felt his legs being raised into the air, balanced on wide, thickly muscled shoulders. He opened his eyes to smile up into Lorenzo's eager, thrilled face.

"Should I say please?" his companion wanted to know.

"Save your breath for 'thank you,'" Jackie informed him. They kissed and he felt the first tentative probings, then a slowly increasing pressure. He was reminded for a brief second of his companion's impressive size but the memory was not an unpleasant one. He moaned softly, more from pleasure than from pain and then he felt himself filling up, seeming to swell with pleasure as the sensations moved rigidly deeper.

Lorenzo kissed him and then buried his face in Jackie's hair, gasping hoarsely. "Dio, it's never been like this. I'm in Heaven."

"I'll be there myself by the time this is finished," Jackie informed him. "Because I think I'm going to have the hell screwed out of me."
He was right in his expectations. Until now it had been forceful but cautious. It moved on until its journey was completed, the lovely ornaments that Jackie had admired before brushing gently against the smoothness of his taut buttocks. Then, scattering goosebumps over his flesh, Jackie felt it withdrawing slowly, slowly - only to come crushing into him again, this time with an intense ferocity.

Jackie moaned again, arching upward off the rug. "Careful of the rib cage," he managed to gasp as the plunging became a roller coaster ride at breakneck speed.

"Ah, ah," Lorenzo sighed and sobbed, hurling himself against his partner. "So beautiful, so unbelievable, it's like a miracle."

Then so abruptly that it was shocking, he came to a complete stop. "It is a miracle," he exclaimed, his eyes wide with astonishment. "Listen, I hear bells!"

For the first time Jackie heard them too, filtering through the haze of his arousal-chimes actually, a special signal that only he would understand. "Christ!" he swore aloud.

This exclamation only increased his partner's consternation. "Then it is truly a miracle, a virgin birth--the second coming!"

"Hardly virgin," Jackie reminded him. "Although any birth from this would certainly be a miracle. Anyway I think we can forget about coming." He extricated himself from the now passive embrace of his befuddled partner. "Don't go away," he said, heading with reluctance toward his bedroom.

Annoying though it might be, he could not ignore the summons of the chimes. His training on that score had been thorough and he was dedicated to his duty. In the bedroom he went directly to the long, low dresser. On its surface was a figurine of a naked youth seated. Its appearance suggested nothing more than a piece of decorative art but in reality it was more than that. Jackie lifted it from the surface of the dresser, knowing that a concealed switch would start it operating at once. He turned the bottom side up and lifted it to his face. On this surface too it appeared perfectly innocent but concealed cleverly within the posterior anatomy of the figurine was a miniature speaker, into which he now spoke in low, terse terms.

"Holmes here," he addressed the porcelain buttocks. They were, he decided, a poor substitute for the lovely pair he had so recently been fondling.

"Jackie?" He recognized the familiar bass voice at once.

"Yes, Rich. What's up?"

"Maybe I should ask you that," the voice chuckled from the area of the porcelain crotch.

"Your voice has that come hither sound."

"Hither, thither--how can I get around to coming anywhere when these damned chimes are always going off before I do."

"Sorry about that," Rich said, then grew sober. "But this is really hot. Upton's called, he wants to see you pronto. Used Contact Hustler."

Jackie's annoyance paled--Contact Hustler meant something big. "I'm on my way," he answered. Without waiting for further comment, he replaced the figure on the dresser and started at once back to the living room.
Lorenzo was still bare on the bearskin rug, looking confused by the entire situation.

"Sorry," Jackie said as he entered the room. "But that was business, big business. I'll have to go out."

"What about this big business?" Lorenzo asked, indicating. For all the distraction his business was still up and throbbing painfully.

Jackie went past him to the table where he had left his gift-wrapping paraphernalia. He selected a large ribbon with a bow and, coming back to his companion, slipped it neatly around the prominent portion of Lorenzo's anatomy. "Put it under the tree," he suggested. "I'll be back to open it later, okay?"

In the bedroom Jackie dressed rapidly. As he did so the slender blond seemed to undergo a transformation. Naked and away from his work there was little about Jackie Holmes to indicate his homosexuality. He was small and slender but one quickly recognized the taut muscles rippling beneath the surface of his flesh. His daily routine included a program that would have exhausted even the finest athletes. Moreover he utilized every conceivable exercise to train his various facilities, racing through complex mathematical equations in his mind, testing his senses of hearing and smell and even reading daily in Braille to keep his touch keen. Few men could match the abilities of this slender, innocent-looking blond.

As he dressed however and prepared for 'work,' he donned another personality along with his clothes. Jackie Holmes—good looking, masculine, dynamic—became mysteriously a thin, limp-wristed homosexual. His blond hair was pulled down to flop over his forehead. He pinched his cheeks to a bright redness to give the impression of make-up. He adopted mannerisms and gestures typical of a certain type of homosexual known as a "queen."

In the end he looked anything but masculine or dynamic. Most important he looked utterly and completely harmless. It was a deliberate facade, one that had proved time and again invaluable to his work, for in disguising his true personality, Jackie was disguising his line of work as well. The small effeminate blond boy who stood a few minutes later before the mirror was in fact a secret agent of a most mysterious and unique sort. His true identity remained known to only a few but his reputation spread throughout the world giving hope to many unfortunate souls and striking fear in the hearts of countless wrongdoers. To these people he was not known as Jackie Holmes. To them he was simply the Man from C.A.M.P.

A private elevator whisked Jackie from his apartment to the garage of the building. Here too a facade was kept, for the building appeared to be an ordinary apartment house with a basement garage and Jackie's apartment as a penthouse. In fact, the entire building was his, the other apartments empty dummies and the long stalls of cars in the basement were all a part of Jackie's private collection.

He hesitated for a moment and then headed for one of the stalls. The vehicle he had chosen was nearly as unique as its driver. Its styling was audacious, exaggerated shapes and lines flowing into a sensual whole. The long hood was a wonderland of louvers and rivets and bright shiny things. It sported giant wire wheels and curling, chrome-plated external exhaust pipes.

Jackie opened the door and climbed into the Mercedes. The rim of the massive steering wheel was as thick as the banister rail of a stairway. It rumbled to life with a deep alto sound....

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*Excerpted from *Holiday Gay* (CB545, 1967). Copyright © 1967, 2004 by Victor J. Banis. All rights reserved.

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Sex is hardly ever just about sex.
-- Shirley Maclaine
Cherry Pink and Uncle Milty Time*

The Science Fiction Cover Paintings of Milton Luros

By Earl Kemp

In 1942 and ‘43, when I was 12 and 13 years old, I never heard of Milton Luros. I was, however, deeply immersed in comic books and exciting adventure reading for "young people." It would have been difficult to tell me from any other permanent resident of Oz or Barsoomia. I was right on the edge of sane reason and about to fall off into dreaded pulpdom.

When I did fall, I fell hard, and it was Weird Tales that caught me and saved me from sustaining any real damage. From there, being a horny kid, I naturally gravitated into things like Spicy Mystery Stories for the obvious reasons. And I still hadn't heard of Milton Luros.

Yet, during those same two years of 1942 and ’43, Milton Luros painted seven covers that appeared on Astonishing Stories, Future, Science Fiction Stories, and Science Fiction Quarterly. Then he quietly disappeared for seven years.

During that time, my addiction to pulp magazines reached a peak and I was devouring many of them every month. I got the copies that fed the flames of my desire wherever I could find them. There were new magazines from the drug store and used magazines traded with a friend or two who happened to share the same medical condition with me of deprived adventurousness and repressed horniness.

By the time Milton Luros reemerged as a pulp magazine cover artist in 1950 with the cover of Future Science Fiction for November—my birthday month; my 21st— I was a certified, committable science fiction junkie. And I was flexing my muscles and reaching out and latching onto everything and everyone remotely related to the thing that fed my lust. I was finding things like “Fandora's Box” in Imagination and Mari Wolf who sent me to Ed Wood for finishing some time around 1951. I was writing frequent letters of comment to my favorite artists and editors…people like Marty Greenberg at Gnome Press and Hannes Bok at Church Street Station. Now and then, in fear and trembling, a brief note to John Campbell…heroes all…residing on tall pedestals at the top of the only world I felt mattered to me.

Doc Lowndes (formally Robert A.W. Lowndes) also came in for a bunch of those fan letters from me, terminally embarrassing with run-on gushes about how much I liked the wonderful stories in his mag, and how well they were presented, and what wonderful interior artwork and awe-inspiring covers. "Won't you please send me some?"

And he did. And I was still such a novice, living a secret life alone in a science fiction world without contemporaries or peers, that I couldn't believe it. Those wonderful cover paintings hanging on my wall that Doc or Marty had mailed to me absolutely free and without obligation. I never had it so good.

Only thing is, now, looking backward, I don't have the vaguest idea what books those covers were painted for, or even the names of the artists for that matter. It is altogether possible that at least one of those unbelievably beautiful paintings could have been done by Milton Luros. And I also don't have the vaguest idea of what eventually happened to those cover paintings either.

During the five-year span covering 1950-54, Milton Luros painted 22 science fiction magazine covers, seven of which were reprinted in British editions. That's a total of 29 covers (plus 7 UK reprints), an impressive score for any artist to accomplish in such a brief period of time.

During those early to mid-1950s years I frequently visited New York City, thanks to having free-ride privileges from my then employer, the Pullman Company. I would pound the Manhattan pavements and force myself upon
all unsuspecting science fiction heroes. Hannes Bok came in for lots of attention, and we never even mentioned Luros’ paintings. I remember visiting Martin Greenberg and drooling over Gnome Press original cover paintings, and we never even mentioned Luros’ paintings. I remember visiting Doc Lowndes and thanking him for his welcomed generosity and, while we had the time, neither of us thought to even mention Luros’ paintings. So many memories….

In early 1954, Milton Luros disappeared again only to reappear a bit later reinventing himself all over again in grand style in southern California.

There were persistent rumors that Luros also painted covers for some of those *Spicy* pulps and some girlie, glamour type covers as well, and that he art directed a group of *Archie* comic books, but I have been unable to prove any of that.

Nor have I been able to locate a single original Milton Luros painting or piece of black-and-white line artwork in any collection anywhere.

**The Milton Luros Science Fiction Cover Paintings**

Following is a complete archive of Milton Luros’ science fiction covers in chronological order of their appearance. As an example of the UK reprints, one of them has been included in the last position. The caption is color coded in red in order to compare the British reprint with the original USA edition that also has a red caption.
When I moved to California with The Porno Factory in 1965, every facet of my life changed radically and much for the better. As odd as it seems in retrospect, one of the most influential people I was fortunate enough to become friends with early on was my boss’ biggest competitor, the very same once upon a time science fiction cover artist Milton Luros. Only things had changed considerably for the Luros’ in the previous decade.

Milton and Bea Luros had parlayed their experience in the periodicals publishing and distribution industry in New York into an impressive empire loosely known as Parliament News…slightly removed from the routine mob infestations of Times Square to the relative peace and quiet of Hollywood and its unending supply of beautiful, available, short-term rentable bodies.

In this milieu, Milton Luros was Numbero Uno and Bea was in Hog Heaven.

Never mind that Luros was William Hamling’s biggest competitor and best colleague. Never mind that it should appear that Luros and I should never associate with each other, never relate to each other, and absolutely never become friends. Good friends with each other. And not a moment of the time we shared together was ever spent in conspiring to do business of any sort together.

Milt and I had other things on our minds. It is so rare when one encounters a friend who is recognizably instantly as just that, even for the very first time. Our friendship was slow in growing because I couldn't believe it was happening in the first place and couldn't trust any of it to be real in the second.
As a thing of convenience for him, Bill Hamling would use me as his courier or bagman from time to time, whenever something of real significance was to be conveyed to any person for any reason. I did a lot of that, running back and forth from San Diego to Los Angeles ("beautiful downtown Burbank Airport") carrying things or verbiage for Stanley Fleishman, for the printer in Gardena, for the typesetter in Fallbrook, and for Milton Luros at London Press.

Because Stanley Fleishman was such a hero of mine, and I couldn't keep it from showing, I found myself becoming a good friend with him as well. It quickly became apparent to me that Fleishman and Luros also shared something quite special and unique—a friendship that transcended mere business matters. They let me inside, just the two of them, into the private world they knew and relished to the fullest extent possible.

It had nothing to do with business, whatever we did, Stanley, Milty, and me. I can't remember one single time when we ever even approached discussing business—whatever was ongoing or planned for the future at Greenleaf Classics or at Brandon House. We carefully kept a distance and rarely even lowered ourselves to gossip about either organization to the other. However, every other person within the industry was fair game. Some of our gossip and bullshit sessions about common industry associates like Rueben Sturman, Marvin Miller, Larry Flynt, Mike Thevis, etc. would singe the hair right off their heads if they knew of it, assuming that they still had any hair left at the time of course.

From Fleishman I got instant entry to most of his ongoing First Amendment trials, and the companionship of some of his brilliant apprentice specialists (some with access to some really good shit). And many hours of up front and in person courtroom experience watching The Great Man at work.

From Luros I got much more than I ever expected from anyone.

He quietly and quickly allowed me to become his friend. I didn't even know it was happening but suddenly there I was, understanding his half-implied but unspoken comments, replying in empathetic kind. He could convey volumes of words in a simple glance, his eyes swirling upward in mock chagrin and with an omnipresent silly little happy grin on his face. [This was Milt's signal to just ignore Bea and she would go away momentarily. After which our conversation would pick up right where it left off before the unexpected Tsunami overwhelmed us, dripping with pastrami on rye being brutalized by yellow teeth.]

He allowed me to feel secure in his presence...comfortable, safe, protected, invulnerable, inviolate, and almost beneficial. Together with Stanley, they tried to convince me that I was somehow bigger than life and that I not only had the right stuff but the obligation to use it to the fullest extent possible for the greater good.

Damn! I was one lucky sonofagun....

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He was always giving me something. Uncle Milty was. It could be shtick or Hebrew parable or plain old cliché, but he always gave it willingly and liberally. He was also always giving me copies of some of his books, the special ones that he took so much pride in producing but, I suspect, lost lots of filthy green by doing so. In the 1970s Milton had a subsidiary called Hogarth Guild. From this imprint he produced three large, oversized coffee-table books. They were hardbound with dustwrappers, printed on slick, acid-free paper, and sported really elaborate endpapers. They were designed for the serious pornography collector and were priced in the $25 to $35 range.

While I didn't personally care for this type of antique pornography, the artwork was reproduced flawlessly by Milton's London Press. Books in this series were varied, running from the very classic *The Forbidden Erotica of Thomas Rowlandson and Peter Fendi 40 erotic equarelles* to the more popular *Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana* that was heavily illustrated with original black-and-white photographs by William Graham, the famous nude glamour photographer. These three titles appeared in 1970.

Also in 1970, but under an Academy Press imprint, Luros produced a number of books in a similar series that were noticeably a bit more hard core. They were also large, coffee-table type books printed on excellent paper with superb color reproductions. They were also hardbound and wearing dustwrappers and fancy endpapers, but they were decidedly hard core and consisted of new photography featuring really attractive models. Titles in this series were a bit more "academic" as one would expect from Academy Press. Here we find the two volume *Sex in Marriage* and *Sex, Pornography & the Law*.

He always had something really good that he wanted to show and tell at a favorite restaurant. Over time, Milt introduced me to things that still make my taste buds start twitching. Gerkinsalat! What an incredible delight. Made to order mayonnaise, a taste beyond description. Deserts to die for. And he knew where the best restaurants were in New York as well as in Europe, the best waiters, the best dishes, and the best tables. He changed my life forever; I can no longer sneer at Bob Silverberg for flaunting his Fancy Expensive Restaurants.

Milton gave me multiple limousines. He gave me real fairy tale castles. He gave me real marble floors, top shelf
bottles, and really exclusive service.

He shared his love for art, for paintings, and for models with me. The intense, personal things about the female form that so excited and inspired Luros all the days of his life. The almost worshipful caressing of flesh tones recorded for posterity in color photographs.

Surrounded by such beauty, it was always very difficult for me to understand why...how even...that Milton could so obviously love Bea—who personified abrasiveness and was far from glamorous—as much as he did. "If you could see her through my eyes...?"

"Cherry pink," he always called it, that special incandescently radiant glow there just beyond the portals of paradise.

Luros was obsessed with the perfection of the human form, male as well as female, and in the equally perfect reproduction of that image in even more perfect color, of those hand-added glints in the eyes and apparent sexual sweat beading their flawless bodies. He would stop his presses and check the run-of-press colors many more times than was necessary.

As a manufacturer for hire, Luros proved his worth to me and to Greenleaf Classics on many occasions. He was one of the most honest and honorable businessmen we ever had any relationship with. He was the best of the best in every department because he insisted upon it. Milton and London Press was my first choice to produce *The Illustrated Presidential Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography* (GP555, 1970).

And Luros also printed the various advertising brochures for that book that eventually brought about our indictment and trial for "conspiring to distribute obscene matter." Then he folded, stuffed, and mailed those same brochures to various mailing lists, and the rest of that tale is already old hat by now....

Milton Luros was generous to a fault, always picking up the tabs and pushing more of the better stuff onto me again and again. There are times when I feel the need for total, uninterrupted luxury, and it is those times when I share anew some of our old favorites and chug a toast of Chivas Crown Royal in their honor.

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Bea Luros was as impossible to believe as she was to describe. She was short, very obese, and everything about her was pudgy. Her head, her face, her neck, her shoulders, her arms, her wrists, her fingers.... And everything that could be decorated with a diamond was. She glittered from the top of her dyed hair to the tips of her exquisitely manicured fingers. She dressed well and wore expense like a fine, floor-length mink.

She had absolutely no manners of any sort and was a healthy exhibition eater. Anything edible was fair game to her regardless of ownership as if somehow a divine right. She didn't care much for personal hygiene, neglected her teeth, and usually talked with a mouth full of someone else's entrée.

At first I was positive I hated Bea Luros. In fact, I had no experience at all with any overly rude, pushy woman. Always before I had either managed to avoid them or to get rid of them in some fashion including through rudeness. Only when the person you really want to get rid of as rudely as possible is incredibly married to your good friend, what are you going to do?

You suffer, is what. You endure. You squirm. Inwardly you rebel but outwardly you keep right on smiling.

Bea Luros was the most unforgettable person I ever met. That is because at the same time she was the rudest, crudest, loudest, most obnoxious boor who ever lived. Absolutely nothing was beneath her shame and she would loudly blurt out the most embarrassingly intensely personal questions in public situations. She would bellow voice her opinions about anyone or anything without provocation. She would condemn a tardy waiter to hell but not before capturing whatever edible goodies that waiter was carrying.
She would scream for attention across a crowded, very expensive, very snobbish restaurant, and she would be obeyed. She would eat from every plate within the reach of her pudgy, diamond-studded and -enwrapped arms and fingers. No food was safe near her. The four entrees she would order for herself only serving as appetizers for the other nearby diners’ plates.

She would make bellboys, busboys, maitre dés, and CEOs go faint and weak in the knees just looking at her turn harridan and listening to the ear-popping decibels of her foghorn voice.

Bea was The Bitch of the World.

#

She grew on me. Somehow, even though I really tried to keep it from happening, she slipped past the guard post and I gradually began accepting her as a somehow necessary Court Jester. I was delighted to discover that by thinking of Bea as being amusing, rather than the Avoidable all others saw her as, that I could tolerate her. In time, that toleration turned into begrudging admiration and, in retrospect, she gave me many hours of unequaled entertainment and amusement.

Together Milton and Bea built one of the largest, best run empires in southern California, and it lasted them well into the 1970s before deterioration, infiltration, and capturing set in too heavily. By that time, both of them were tired of the business and a great deal more. They had done just about everything they could think of wanting to do, repeatedly. They had been everywhere.

Age and medical conditions were taking their toll on both of them. Milt had, for years, suffered on-again, off-again gout, associated with good living and even better food. Bea, who had spent all those years trying to consume all of that good living and even better food, was ready for a little downtime.

When the mob made them the offer that they could not refuse, they accepted and retired gracefully to part of the half of Los Angeles County they had been secretly buying up with pornography profits over the years. Successful to the bitter end.

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*This one is for Brian Kirby; "I'll always keep an el out for you." Special thanks to Terry Gibbons for much help with this article and the Luros cover archive. Dated November 2004

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Life is a sexually transmitted terminal disease.
  --Colin Greene

[The following article was written in British English. Every effort has been made to retain this language intact and to not translate it into US English. -Earl Kemp]

A Checklist of Brandon House Library Editions*

By Patrick J. Kearney

California-based Brandon House Library Editions were, along with the Olympia Press in New York, one of the best of the many erotica publishers which sprang up in the United States following the effective collapse of censorship there in 1967. It was one of several subsidiaries of a larger, umbrella organisation called Parliament News, run by a man named Milton Luros with the help of his wife, Bea.
The success of the Library Editions, and also of another subsidiary called Essex House, was due primarily to the labours of their editor Brian Kirby, a young musician and science fiction fan. Kirby's choice of material, as will be seen from the listing, was adventurous, and included specially commissioned translations of French and German erotica, reprints of a number of important erotic classics, and new editions of some of the Paris Olympia Press titles with original 'Afterwords' by their authors. In addition, the books were often printed on good paper, and the choice of cover art included work by artists such as Rops, Labisse, and Munch.

I would like to thank the following individuals for their generous assistance in compiling this checklist. To San Francisco bookseller Andy Stafford, for giving me access to his own collection of Brandon House Library editions and his catalogue of them. To Victor Berch, for his notes on the pseudonyms of the translators and authors. And to San Francisco poet Jack Hirschman, for advising me of his own role in writing Introductions to some of the Library Edition titles. Assistance from other individuals is to be found credited in the checklist.

The numbers preceding each entry are the series number of the individual titles.

As always, I will be happy to hear from anyone with additional information on any of the entries, in particular those French or German works whose origins I've been unable to trace. Please contact Patrick J. Kearney at patk@sonic.net and the URL for my website is www.sonic.net/~patk/.

The Checklist


1760, and reprinted secretly at Bruxelles, probably by Jules Gay, about 1863. The Introduction by Aldous Huxley is extracted from an essay accompanying The Opportunities of the Night (London: Chapman & Hall, 1925), Eric Sutton's translation of Crebillon's La Nuit et le moment. The Brandon House edition of this work normally encountered is 16.3 centimetres in height, and has wrappers (front, spine and back) illustrated with a somewhat indifferent montage drawing of distinctly modern-looking women in various stages of undress. The Brandon logo—the turrets of a castle with an entrance gate between them—is in the top right-hand corner of the front cover, with the price 95¢ immediately below it. The title and author's name is enclosed in a fancy oval on the front cover with, at the foot of the front cover, the information that there's an Introduction by Aldous Huxley. There exists however, in the collection of Mr. Paul Bayrer, a variant edition of A Lady of Quality. The variant is a good eight millimetres taller, being in fact the same height as other Brandon House titles, and the front cover is illustrated with a rather more interesting picture of a single woman, her face partially obscured by a veil and holding a fan in her right hand. Instead of the Brandon logo, there is a small oval medallion containing the initials 'LP' and the price 95¢. The title and author are not enclosed in this variant. The spines of both editions are more or less the same, with the familiar logo of the letter 'P' enclosed within an oblong frame at the top and with the title and author printed down the spine in italics. Both editions have the number '903' across the bottom of the spine. The interiors of the two editions are identical. Which of these came first is difficult to know, as is the reason for the variant. Paul Bayrer gives precedence to the larger of the two, however, theorizing that when publishers wish to save money they tend to reduce the size of books and thus save costs on paper.

- An English version of Forberg's commentary to his edition of Antonius Beccadelli's Hermaphroditus (1824). This translation would seem to be a reprint of one published at Paris in 1899 by Charles Carrington.

- A good collection of erotic English verse from the late 17th century.


- Originally published in Latin, probably at Lyons about 1660. This edition is a reprint of an English translation first published at Paris in 1890 by Isidore Liseux.

- Histoire d'O was originally published in French by Jean-Jacques Pauvert in June 1954 at Paris. An English translation, anonymous but by Baird Bryant, came out simultaneously from the Olympia Press, also at Paris. The Olympia Press subsequently published a second translation, by Austryn Wainhouse, as The Wisdom of the Lash in May 1957 when it formed vol. 44 of its Traveller's Companion series. The present edition is a reprint of the second translation.

967. ED CRAY, editor. - The Fifteen Plagues of a Maidenhead and Other Forbidden Verse. 1966. pp. vii + 203 + ads. 95¢.
- An anthology of English erotic verse, mainly from the 18th century, including The Delights of Venus (1709, a fragment of Chorier's Satyra Sotadica de arcanis amoris et veneris rendered into verse), and the celebrated Essay on Woman (1763), usually ascribed to John Wilkes.

- The Merry Order of St. Bridget was originally published at London, 'Printed for the Author's Friends MDCCCLVI' [actually 1868], by John Camden Hotten.

- A 17th century play of gross obscenity and mordant cynicism, Sodom seems to have been written about 1671 and was originally circulated in manuscript copies amongst the courtiers and other hangers on surrounding King Charles II in England. Early printed editions evidently existed but have not survived, and today the earliest existing printed text is one published at Paris in 1904 by H. Welter. It was prepared very poorly for the press by L.S.A.M. von Römer from a faulty manuscript in the Hamburg State Library. The present edition is taken from a rather better version, edited (allegedly) by

- A translation of De SS. Martyrum cruciatibus ... liber, quo potissimum instrumenta et modi, quibus iisdem Christi martyres olim torquebantur, accuratissime tabellis expressa describuntur (Rome, 1594). The translation is probably a reprint of the one done by Alfred Richard Allinson for Charles Carrington and published at Paris in 1903.

- One of the last titles to bear the Library Editions imprint, numbered out of sequence. Green wrappers.

- A translation of a pornographic German work, originally published at Paris during WWII for the benefit of the occupation forces. However, Jan Moret, a Dutch collector, reports the following: "From the catalogue of Antiquariat Ars Armandi no. 16 Berlin: Das Bildnis des Dorian Gray. Roman von ***. Paris: l'Annee Bibliographique, Les Decouvertes Litteraires, um 1930. Pp. 227. Seltene Deutsche Ertausgabe.


- Originally published in 1815 at either Posen or Leipzig. A Facsimile reprint was published in 1910 at Vienna in an edition of 800 copies, which was in turn reprinted in 1965 at Hamburg by Gala Verlag.

- The original French text of this work, in expurgated form, was first published in J.-P. Sartre's periodical Les Temps modernes (no. 27, December 1947). Shortly afterwards the complete text was published clandestinely. An English translation, anonymous but rumored to have been by Robert Nurenberg, was published in April 1955 by the Olympia Press, Paris. This present edition is a reprint of the latter. In the same year as Brandon House published its edition of this work, another edition, with the author's full name on the titlepage and an Introduction by Simone de Beauvoir, was issued at New York by Brussel & Brussel.

- Original Italian text first published at Milan in 1886, in two volumes. The present edition would appear to derive from one of two different translations published during the 1930's at New York. The earliest appeared under the imprint of The Anthropological Press in 1932 and credited to 'James Bruce', a pseudonym of Solomon Malkin. The same translation was reprinted about 1935 by Benjamin Rebuhn's Falstaff Press. The second translation, by Samuel Putnam, was published in 1939 by the Eugenics Publishing Company.


- Original French text originally published at Paris in 1902. This translation is probably a reprint of the one done by 'Raymond Sabatier' [Solomon Malkin] that appeared c. 1934 from both the Falstaff and Anthropological Presses.

- A translation of the third dialogue of the first part of the Ragionamenti. The Italian original was first published at Venice in 1534. This present edition is probably reprinted from the translation published at Paris in 1889 by Isidore Liseux.
2006. IWAN BLOCH. - The Marquis de Sade’s 120 days of Sodom and The French Age of Debauchery. 1966. $1.25.
- A reprint of Marquis de Sade’s anthropologia sexualis of 600 perversions. 120 days of Sodom [New York, Privately printed by Anthropological Press, c1934].

- Originally published at New York in 1933 with a false Paris imprint. The supposed author was a well known film producer, responsible for a series of good low-budget horror movies in the 1940's by such directors as Robert Wise, Mark Robson and Jacques Tourneur.


- An English version of a French work that appeared originally about 1910. The present edition is probably a reprint of the translation done by ‘Robert Meadows’ [Solomon Malkin] that was published in the early 1930's in quick succession by the Anthropological, Falstaff and Panurge Presses.


- An abridged version of Ashbee’s celebrated three-volume bibliography of erotica, originally published in London between 1877-1885 under the pseudonym ‘Pisanus Fraxi.’

- Originally published at Paris in April 1956 by the Olympia Press as volume 23 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- An English version of a late 19th century German work. Possibly a reprint of the edition published at New York in 1933 by the Anthropological Press as Anthropological, Legal and Medical Studies on Pederasty in Europe.

- Originally published at London in 1893 in two volumes, by Leonard Smithers. The present volume is undoubtedly a reprint of the edition published at Paris in May 1958 by the Olympia Press as volume 62 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- Originally published at Paris in June 1955 by the Olympia Press as volume 14 of its Traveller's Companion Series at which time the authorship was ascribed to Trocchi's pseudonym 'Frances Lengel.'

- A reprint of a pornographic novel originally published at London in 1884, probably by Edward Avery in collaboration with the mysterious William Lazenby.

- Originally published at Paris in January 1954 by the Olympia Press as volume 2 of its Atlantic Library Series, at which time the authorship was ascribed to Trocchi's pseudonym 'Frances Lengel.'
- A reprint of a pornographic novel originally published at Paris c. 1896. No copy of the original edition has been located, although adverts for it have been found in clandestine catalogues of the period. The earliest known edition to have been reliably described is one published at Paris about 1900 by either Renaudie or Elias Gaucher.

- Originally published at Paris in April 1957 by the Olympia Press as volume 42 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- Purports to be the first translation of the erotic diaries of Margaretha Geetruida Zelle MacLeod, also known as Mata Hari.

- A reprint of a work originally published with the imprint: New York, Eugenics Publishing Company [c1935]


- The first English translation of l'Ecole des biches, an erotic French work that was first published at Bruxelles in 1868 by J.-P. Blanche. Prior to its original publication, the work circulated amongst amateurs in manuscript copies taken from a calligraphic manuscript prepared for Edmund Duponchel by the artist Ulm. See also entry no. 2039, below.

- Originally published at Paris in February 1955 by the Olympia Press as volume 1 of its Traveller's Companion Series.


- Originally published at Paris in August 1961 by the Olympia Press as volume 5 of its Ophir Books series.

- Translations of two 18th century French erotic novels. The first, Margot la ravaudeuse, seems first to have been published in 1750 with the probably false imprint 'Hambourg.' The original edition of Le Canapé was published at 'Amsterdam' [Paris?] in 1714, which circumstance makes it unlikely that Fougeret de Montbron was the author of it since he would have been about 10 years old at the time.

- Originally published at Paris during the first quarter of 1955 by the Olympia Press as volume 11 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- Originally published as School for Sin at Paris in March 1955 by the Olympia Press as volume 3 of its Traveller's Companion Series at which time the authorship was ascribed to Trocchi's pseudonym 'Frances Lengel.'

- The first English version of this famous 'naturalistic' novel concerning a Viennese prostitute. The German original was first published in a private edition in 1906. The ascription of the authorship to Felix Salten, better known for his children's novel Bambi, seems fairly well established. A translation of a spurious sequel will be found noted at no. 3002, below. An earlier translation, with illustrations by Mahlon Blaine, was published at 'Paris' [New York] in 1931 by either Jake Brussel or Sam Roth.

- Originally published at Paris in May 1954 by the Olympia Press as volume 7 of its Atlantic Library Series, at which time the authorship was ascribed to Trocchi's pseudonym 'Frances Lengel.'

- Volume One was originally published at Paris in April 1957 by the Olympia Press as volume 37 of its Traveller's Companion Series. Volume Two appeared at Paris in April 1958 under the imprint of the Ophelia Press, a subsidiary of the Olympia Press.

- A translation of a well-known German pornographic novel, originally published by August Prinz at Altona, now a suburb of Hamburg, in two volumes in 1868 and 1875. It purports to be the autobiography of the celebrated opera singer Wilhemina Schroeder-Dervent, an ascription that need not detain us. The earliest English version appears to be a translation of the first volume, with the curious imprint 'Privately Printed for the Cunnusburg Society, Harvard, U.S. A.' [probably published at Paris by Charles Carrington]. It had pp. 118 and was limited to 100 copies only. No copy seems to have survived. (See: Peter Mendes, *Clandestine Erotic Fiction in English 1800-1930*, Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1993, pp. 296,7.) A more complete, but still abridged, version was published in the same year, with the imprint 'Printed for the Erotica Biblion Society of London and New-York [i.e., also Paris].' There were a number of reprints of this in the years following, including one by the Olympia Press in June 1960 in its Ophelia Press series which was probably used as the copy text for the Brandon House edition.

- Originally published at Paris in March 1956 by the Olympia Press as volume 19 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- Originally published at Paris during the first quarter of 1956 by the Olympia Press as volume 25 of its Traveller's Companion Series at which time the authorship was ascribed to Trocchi's pseudonym 'Carmenicita de Las Lunas.'

- A reprint of an English translation of an erotic French work that was first published at Paris by Charles Carrington in 1898. The translator may have been John Stephen Farmer. The French original, reproduced from a calligraphic manuscript, was published at Bruxelles in '1860' [i.e. 1870] by J.-P. Blanche in an edition of just fifty copies. The similarities between the production of the original French edition of this work and of *l'Ecole des biches* (see no. 2026, above) leads one to surmise that Instruction libertine may have been a sort of erotic round-robin written by Edmund Duponchel, Frederick Hankey & Alfred Bégis. An alternative authorship suggestion, put forward by the bibliographer and publisher Jules Gay in the 1860's, was that the book was written by a lawyer named Benoit who died in 1863.

- Originally published at Paris in July 1956 by the Olympia Press as volume 30 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- Originally published at Paris in August 1958 by the Olympia Press as volume 61 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- Originally published at Paris in July 1960 under the imprint of the Ophelia Press, a subsidiary of the Olympia Press.
- A reprint of a pornographic work first published in 1894, with the imprint 'Chicago: Privately Printed.' The book comprises a series of erotic stories, told by students at a party, which recount its first sexual experiences. Although internal evidence in the stories themselves leads one to suppose the book was written by an American, the typography of the first edition suggests it was actually printed in France.

- Translations of two well-known French erotic works. *Histoire de l’œil* was first published under the pseudonym 'Lord Auch' at Paris in 1928 in an edition of 134 copies by René Bonnel and Pascal Pia. It was illustrated with eight lithographs by André Masson. *Madame Edwarda* was first published under the pseudonym 'Pierre Angelique' in 1941, with the false imprint and date 'Editions du Solitaire, 1937.' It has been suggested that Jack Hirschman was responsible for the translation of these two works, but it seems unlikely: Brandon House typically credited its original translations to somebody even when a pseudonym was used. What seems more probable is that these are simply reprints of the translations done for the Olympia Press in Paris by 'Audiart' [i.e. Austryn Wainhouse] in 1953, particularly in view of the curious re-titling of *Madame Edwarda* to *The Naked Beast at Heaven's Gate* which occurred in the original Olympia Press edition. It should be pointed out, however, that the 1953 Olympia Press edition of *Histoire de l’œil* appeared as *A Tale of Satisfied Desire* whereas the Brandon version carries a straight translation of the original French title.

- Originally written in the Bastille by Sade, the original French text of this extraordinary work was first published by Max Harrwitz at Berlin in 1904 in a poorly edited form prepared by Eugène Dührren [i.e. Iwan Bloch] with the false imprint 'Paris: Club des Bibliophiles.' Between 1931-35, a definitive edition in three volumes, superbly edited by Maurice Heine, was published at Paris. The present translation is a reprint of the edition issued at Paris in Jul 1954 by the Olympia Press. The translator was 'Pierallessandro Casavini' [i.e., Austryn Wainhouse].

- A translation of a spurious sequel to Josefine Mutzenbacher, oder Die Geschichte einer Wienerischen Dirne (1906). The German original would appear to date from c. 1945. An English version of the 1906 work will be found noted at no. 2033, above.

- Originally published at Paris in July 1956 by the Olympia Press as volume 31 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- A translation of an erotic German novel originally published by Himburg at Berlin in 1787 with the false place of publication given as 'Rom'.

- Originally published at Paris in April 1957 by the Olympia Press as volume 35 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- Originally published at Paris in May 1957 by the Olympia Press as volume 46 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- Originally published at Paris in February 1956 by the Olympia Press as volume 21 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- Originally published at Paris in February 1955 by the Olympia Press as volume 2 of its Traveller's Companion Series.


- Originally published at Paris in April 1956 by the Olympia Press as volume 28 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- A translation of an erotic French novel originally published at Paris in 1655.

- A reprint of a pornographic work originally published with the imprint 'New Orleans, 1864.' This first edition may indeed have been of American origin, although it was probably published at New York. Reprints published at Paris in 1903 and c. 1920 have been noted, and seems probable that the Brandon House edition was taken from one of these.

- The only English translation of Erinnerungen eines Lebemanns, a work published originally at Berlin in 1908 in two volumes and limited to 400 numbered copies. The authorship was credited to 'Philipp Lust,' the pseudonym of Felix Beidermann, who also wrote as 'Felix Dormann.' I am indebted to Peter Mendes for this information.

- Originally published at Paris in April 1957 by the Olympia Press as volume 41 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- Originally published at Paris during the first quarter of 1956 by the Olympia Press as volume 20 of its Traveller's Companion Series.

- An anthology of four shorter erotic works from a period covering the 17th - 19th centuries: **[Catéchisme libertin] The Libertine's Manual, translated by 'L.E. LaBan' [Lauraine Kirby]. Originally published in 1791, this work has been ascribed to Théroigne de Mericourt. **[Gamiani, ou Deux nuits d'excès] Gamiani, translated by L.E. LaBan. Usually ascribed to Alfred de Musset, Gamiani was first published in 1833. ***[Eve ressuscité, ou la Belle sans chemise] Angelique, translated by L.E. LaBan. First published in 1683. The authorship is uncertain. ****The Amatory Experiences of a Surgeon, a reissue of a late Victorian pornographic work by James Campbell Reddie, first published, posthumously, at London by the mysterious Lazenby with the burlesque imprint 'Printed for the Nihilists, Moscow, 1881.'

- English versions of two erotic French novels, the first originally called Dany et le Plaisir (Marselles: Andre Danvers, 1960) by 'Ginette Lambert,' and the second called Clayton's College. Clayton's College was first published c. 1950 at Paris by Editions de l'Alma. The novel appeared under the name 'Connie O'Hara', the pseudonym of José-André Lacour. Together with several other novels published around the same time, including Ne sont pas morts tous les sadiques (1949) by 'Ernst Ratno' [Ernest Lévy] and J'irai cracher sur vos tombes (1946) by 'Vernon Sullivan' [Boris Vian]. Clayton's College was suppressed and enjoyed an underground existence for a number of years. Concerning Clayton's College, a correspondent in Holland, Jan Moret, writes: "I have got a French edition: Editions de l'Alma. Cover illustration (a drawing in black & white with the title in red) of a man with eyes his bulging out of his head and a dead girl. No year of printing."
According to [Pascal] Pia this is the first edition, published about 1950. I have got two English translations, one by Brandon House (1968) and the other by The Erotic Print Society in London in 1996. But… neither book is complete. Both translations end with chapter 17 of the Alma edition, which has 22 chapters. Neither English editions have chapter divisions. In the last [5] chapters of the Alma edition there is a lot of murder and rape.


- An English version of one of the at least fourteen pornographic works by Dumoulin to have been published at Amsterdam or Bruxelles between 1887-1894 by Auguste Brancart.

- A reprint of an English version of *Mémoires d'une danseuse russe* (1894). The French original was ascribed on the titlepage to ‘E. D.,’ the pseudonym of Edmund Dumoulin who wrote at least fourteen pornographic works for the publisher Brancart in Amsterdam and Bruxelles between 1887-1894. Stylistically, however, this novel doesn't seem to be similar to Dumoulin's other works. The English version reprinted here seems first to have been published in 1901 at 'Monte Carlo', but actually at Paris by Charles Carrington. Interestingly, the pagination of this first 1901 edition matches that of the Brandon House reprint, establishing with precision its copy text. Curiously this volume is printed on low-quality paper, uncharacteristic of the Brandon House Library Editions.


- Originally published at New York about 1933 in two volumes (pp. 236, 264) with the false imprint: ‘Paris: Isidor [sic] Liseux, 1928.’ The work was illustrated with 8 plates. For the second volume of the Brandon House reprint see below, at no. 3024.


- The history of this work is complicated. Henry Spencer Ashbee notes an edition in two small volumes of 105 and 85 pages respectively, which he says "...appeared about 1840, but is not the original, which was, I believe, entitled *Evalina.*" He then notes two later editions, dated c. 1843 and c. 1860, the first published by Anthony Dyer and the latter by the notorious William Dugdale. (See: Ashbee, Catena Librorum Tacendorum, pp. 142-4.) In 1904 there appeared at Paris from the erotica publisher Charles Carrington a novel called *The Modern Eveline* in three volumes. According to the Preface, this is a sort of expanded adaptation of the earlier work, created by one of the publisher's hacks from his memory of the original which he read many years earlier. It seems probable that it is from this 1904 edition that the Brandon edition was reprinted.

- A reprint of a pornographic novel that seems first to have been published at Paris in 1957 by the Pall Mall Press.

- Volume 1, together with a note on the history of the work, will be found at entry no. 3027, above.

- Therese is a translation of Thérèse Philosophe, a mid-18th century erotic work usually ascribed to the marquis d'Argens.

- An English translation of Jour et nuit, an erotic French novel that seems first to have been published at Paris in 1963 by Claude Tchou in his series 'Cercle du livre précieux.'

- An English version of an Italian work originally published at Naples between 1530-1540. It seems likely that the translation was done from a French text rather than from the original Italian. However, an English edition translated directly from the Italian by Samuel Putnam circulated in manuscript for a number of years before eventually being published in 1968 at City of Industry, California, by Marvin Miller as one of his Collector's Publications. It deserves to be better known.


- 'Although the work purports to be based on that of the authentic Japanese poet and novelist, Ihara Saikaku (1642-93), the translator, "the late Dr. Hideki Okada," is actually Glassco himself. Glassco's translation, or as he terms it, "interpolation," largely derives from Ken Sato's hilariously inept translation, Quaint Stories of the Samurais, published by Robert McAlmon, Paris, 1928. "The stories in this volume are examples of a literary form unknown to the Western world - the erotic collage, or interpolation of libertine phrases, dialogue and incident on the body of classical texts. This art has long been practiced in Japan where, far from being regarded as a desecration of the original, it is applauded as an elegant embellishment which calls for the execution of the greatest taste, humour, delicacy and restraint." The mock-scholarly talk about collage is invented. Philip Core's illustrations were done according to Glassco's instructions.' (Fraser Sutherland, John Glassco: An Essay and Bibliography, Ontario: ECW Press, 1984, p. 53.)

- Frank Hoffman's Introduction suggests that this novel may have been written by Percy Shostak. However, it seems more probable that the novel was first published by Shostak. In Compendium, the combined catalogues of Brooklyn bookseller C.J. Scheiner, the original edition of the first edition is described as having been published by Shostak in either New York or Chicago, with the false imprint 'Dijon, France', in 1935. It had seven full-pages illustrations by
'Jacques Merd' [William Bernhardt], and numerous in-text illustrations by Emile Ganzo. The edition was limited to 700 copies.

   - According to Frank Hoffman's Introduction, this novel is a reprint of an American work first published in the 1930's.
   - There is a German translation of this edition: *Das Sex Mal Sex Of Funny Hell* (Veitshöchheim bei Würzburg: Verlag Andreas Zettner Kg, n.d. c. 1975) 8vo. pp. 285. Linen wrappers. Translated by Dr. H. Baltuch. I am obliged to Jan Onderwater for this information.


   - A reprint of *Anecdota Americana: An Anthology of Tales in the Vernacular*. Edited Without Expurgation by J. Mortimer Hall [pseud.] Second Series, a work first published at New York by Vincent Smith in 1934. A reprint of the First Series of this famous collection of erotic humor will be found at no. 6024, below.


   - A reprint of an erotic novel first published openly by Charles Carrington at Paris in 1899.

   - A reprint of a work originally published at London c. 1867 by William Dugdale, and which has been tentatively ascribed by one leading authority to the journalist George Augusta Sala.


   - Two novels: *Madge Buford* and *Gus Tolman*. The former is probably reprinted from an American edition of the early 1930's, although the novel undoubtedly is much older. A typescript catalogue compiled c. 1956 of the collection of Nicholas Brown, a bookseller of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, notes an edition with the false imprint 'New Orleans [?Paris], 1892.' This could be the original edition, but the possibility exists that, like *The Life and Amours of Kate Percival* (no. 3013), *Madge Buford* could have originally appeared in the United States in the 1860's or even earlier. See: Peter Mendes, *Clandestine Erotic Fiction in English 1800-1930*, Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1993, pp. 240. Concerning *Gus Tolman*, Jan Moret describes what may be the original edition from which this edition is taken: "I have got a copy of *Gus Tolman, or, The Philandering Pianist* by William B. Le Feure. Paris-France: Sociétés des Livres Erotique, 1932. 157 pages, with 4 poor drawings. Limited to 750 copies.

   - The title page gives the original French title as *Les Carrefours des ivresses*, with no further identification. In fact, the book appeared c. 1960 with the false imprint 'Munich' and the authorship ascribed to one Hilde Schoen.

- Reprints of two short erotic novels. The first, The Amorous Widow, is unknown to the compiler, at least under that title. The second, The New Epicurean, was written by Edward Sellon and originally published at London in 1865 by William Dugdale.

- Jan Moret writes: "A translation of Im Weissen Rosl am Wolfgangsee. Sommererlebnis eines Journalisten. My copy: Editions les Livres d'Or. No date. Vol. 4 of a series called 'Klassiker der erotischen Weltliteratur.' However, the original German edition has the imprint Bibliophile Gesselschaft die 'Guggentaler' [c. 1937], 250 numbered copies. I am indebted to Peter Mendes for this additional information.


6021. PIERRE CHEVALIER, pseud. - Confessions of Christine. 1968 pp. 176. $1.95.


- Probably a modern confection, although the Introduction claims this novel to be a newly discovered MS. by the author of Gynecocracy, a well-written s&m novel originally published, secretly, in London in 1893 by Leonard Smithers in collaboration with the booksellers Robson & Kerslake. The author of Gynecocracy is rumoured to have been an English barrister named Stanislas Matthew de Rhodès (1857-1932), who was also credited with The Yellow Room (1891) and The Petticoat Dominant (1898). While these latter works were on the same theme as Gynecocracy, they were much inferior and it has been suggested, without much more than circumstantial evidence, that de Rhodès did write The Yellow Room and The Petticoat Dominant, but that Gynecocracy was by another hand entirely, possibly Havelock Ellis whose authorship of the work was first proposed by the English erotica collector Charles Reginald Dawes and later supported by G. Legman. For the background to this, see Peter Mendes, Clandestine Erotic Fiction in English 1800-1930, Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1993, pp. 247,8.

- Two pornographic novels. The first, Count Alexis, appears to be of English or perhaps American origin, suggesting that Mr. Alexander's labours as translator were confined to the second novel, titled Caresses, and here credited to Jean Marie Tallien. The earliest edition of Count Alexis known reliably to the compilers is dated approximately 1892, and typographically appears to be English. References to an earlier edition dated 1885 and described as a 'publication Americaine d'un ouvrage très bien écrit, dans le genre de Le Roman de Violette have been noted. (See Peter Mendes, Clandestine Erotic Fiction in English 1800-1930, Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1993, pp. 230.) Count Alexis is credited in this Brandon house edition to a 'M. Dormeuil'. Caresses, the second novel in this collection is a translation of Caresses... ou Mémoires intimes de Jacqueline de R... (Paris: Éditions du Couvre-Feu, 1933).

- An epistolary novel, allegedly from the period between the two World Wars.

- A translation of Les Cousins de le Colonelle, an erotic work first published at Bruxelles in 1880 by J. J. Gay with the false imprint 'Lisbonne: Chez Antonio da Boa-Vista'. Les Cousins de le Colonelle is generally thought to have been written by a woman, specifically the marquise de Mannoury d'Ectot, née H. Le Blanc, the grand-daughter of the inventor Nicolas Le Blanc. At the time of the Second Empire, she lived at a large country house near Argentan where she was something of a bluestocking, and entertained the important poets and artists of the day. Later, "veuve et ruinée par plusieurs gigolos successifs" as one writer puts it, she opened a matrimonial agency and wrote three novels exposing the depravity of the reign of Napoleon III. She is also supposed to have written another erotic work, Le Roman de Violette ('Lisbonne: Chez Antonio da Boa-Vista, 1870', i.e. Bruxelles: Auguste Brancart, 1883). For a translation of volume 2, originally published secretly at Bruxelles in 1882 by Mlle. Doucé, see no. 6035, below. In 1972, Brandon Books (no. 6256) reprinted the two separately published volumes of The Cousins in one volume as The Colonel's Nieces, and credited the translation to Adrian Meadows.


- See entry no. 6030 above for the history of this work.


- The Library of Congress Copyright Office information on this title states that the text was previously published abroad in 1959. This is a reprint of a novel called The Life Line, credited to the same pseudonymous author, that was issued at Paris in 1962 by the Armor Publishing Company. Jan Moret informs me that The Life Line was also published as The Moonlit Night (Marseille: Massilia Press, n.d) by 'Charles Doolittle.' He adds: "All my four Armor Press books were also published with new titles by Massilia Press, but I don't know who was stealing from whom."

- The Library of Congress Copyright Office information on this title states that the author's name is Troy Devies, and that the text was originally published abroad in 1950.


- Translations of two anticlerical works, Lustful Nights and The Lascivious Monk.

- The Library of Congress Copyright Office information on this title states that the text was previously published abroad in 1931.

- A work called Arabellas Opferung by Alexander Mauritz Frey was published, by Horodisch & Marx in 1927. Copy in the British Library at shelfmark YA.1989.a.17061. It is unlikely that an openly published book in 1927 would be as explicitly erotic as the Brandon House volume, and we must assume that either Hilary Holt added pornographic elements to an
otherwise respectable text, or else a clandestine German publisher in the late 1920's did.

- A reprint of *Sentimental Journey* (1962), published by Armor Publishing at Paris, one of a number of seedy competitors to the Olympia Press. Jan Moret notes that it was also published as *Our Darling Girl* ((Marseille: Massilia Press, n.d) by 'Emma Spur.'


- Two novels: *Forbidden Paths* and *Perverted Lady*.

- A work of complicated ancestry. The French original, by 'Fuckwell', one of the many bizarre pseudonyms of the prolific Alphonse Momas, was published about 1898 as *Petites et Grandes Filles*, presumably at Paris. The following year, an English translation, in two volumes, called *Green Girls*, also credited to 'Fuckwell', was printed at Paris for the London publisher Leonard Smithers and his French partner 'Duringe'. An American edition was published at either New York or Philadelphia about 1930, and it was here that the name 'Jo Tyler' seems first to have been used in association with the novel. The complication arises with another work by the redoubtable 'Fuckwell' called *Fruits verts* ['Green Fruit', published in 1902].

- A translation the second part of Emmanuelle II is noted at entry 6054, below. A translation of the first volume of *Emmanuelle* is noted at entry no. 6034, above.


- A translation the first part of *Emmanuelle II* is noted at entry 6052, above. A translation of the first volume of *Emmanuelle* is noted at entry no. 6034, above.


- The Library of Congress Copyright Office information on this title states that the text was previously published abroad in 1931. Jan Moret writes: "I have a copy of *Flossie in Bondage* by Florence H… Paris-France: Privately Printed, n.d. 188 pages, with drawings. (USA?)."


- Originally a fin-de-siècle French erotic novel called *En plein air*. A copy is preserved in the British Library, at pressmark P.C. 14. h. 11. In the absence of a translator credit, one must assume this present edition to be a reprint of an American translation published in the 1930's. About 1970, Grove Press also published an edition of *Wide Open*, with the authorship credited to 'Jem', the name used to sign the French original.

- First published at New York - 'Privately Printed' - about 1950. Limited to 150 copies with 6 erotic plates.


- A reprint of a pornographic American novel published in the 1930's.

- A reprint of a pornographic novel published at New York about 1933 with the false imprint 'London, Privately Printed.'


- The Library of Congress Copyright Office lists the author of this book as a pseudonym of P.M. L'Istelle.


- The Library of Congress Copyright Office lists the author of this book as a pseudonym of Roger Lovin.


* * *
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"Tout ce qu'il éditait avait le souffle de la liberté."
-- InSCRIPTION ON ERIC LOSFELD'S TOMBSTONE.
Everybody Loves Milton*
Rabbi Porn

By Stephen J. Gertz

"He's a diffident little guy with a slouch, a comfortable paunch hanging over baggy slacks and wearing a
rumpled short-sleeved shirt...a constant bemused smile beneath his slightly crooked nose...continuously
jingling keys and coins in his front pocket...[he] never speaks above a whisper, even when angry and more than
anything loves reciting Talmudic parables and aphorisms for the benefit and enlightenment of his employees."

He is Milton Luros, and perhaps his dreamy, bemused smile reflects a thought that surely must have been
floating just below the conscious level during his waking hours: how did a nice Jewish guy, a haimisher mensch,
an artsy schlump like me wind up building the biggest, classiest, most successful porn operation on the planet?

Start with brainpower. Born in 1911, Milton Luros, with no formal training, possesses keen business acumen.
Marry that to a trained, artistic sensibility: Luros begins his career in the fine arts in his home, New York City,
but has to eat and so illustrates covers for science-fiction magazines. For close to 20 years prior to entering the
porn trade, he designed covers for Astonishing Stories, Science Fiction Quarterly, Future, Science Fiction
Stories, Dynamic Science Fiction, a few of which were reprinted in the UK. His earliest, according to the cover
index for the Science Fiction, Fantasy, & Weird Fiction Magazine Index, appeared in 1942. His cover for the
May 1951 issue of Science Fiction Quarterly has an image prescient of his second career--a triumphant, edge-
of-orgasm-featured bare-chested future-bohunk wearing a pharonic headdress behind a full glass space-helmet
with a submissive, scantily clad future-babe wrapped around his midsection, supported by his muscular arms.

A complete archive of Milton Luros' science fiction cover paintings can be found in "Cherry Pink and Uncle Milty Time"
elsewhere in this issue of ef.
- Earl Kemp

As the science-fiction market begins to decline during the mid-late '50s, Milton moves over to cover art for
"spicy" men's magazines, selling work to, among others, Bentley Morris for his Adam and Knight magazines
after moving to Los Angeles. Morris recalls:

"He's a very charming guy, and an intellectual. The first time I meet him, he's sitting in the reception area of our
office-- this is the late '50s--and he's got his portfolio of art; he's there to sell us some artwork. He's really an
artist, a very fine artist. He's got pastels, oils, charcoals; a very, very talented guy. He's like, 'you want erotica?
Michelangelo? Whatever you want.' He was an art director in New York [Former Luros art director Jerry Pecoraro seems to recall that Milt A.D.'d Archie comics for awhile but he's not certain]. Extremely good. Came out here, needed work. The best part about it was we didn't have to pay him top dollar!"

This last remark by Morris is telling. Formerly a highly paid illustrator, Milton is now hustling for money. He's got a wife and two sons. A man's got to do what a man's got to do. He's got contacts in the periodicals business going back nearly 20 years, specific experience in the post-Roth decision world of spicy men's magazines. And so….

Apparently deciding in the true can-do spirit of American entrepreneurship that he can do better than the people he's working for, in 1959 he parleys his experience with his need to feed himself and his family and sets out on his own, in all likelihood contracting with a local LA secondary periodicals distributorship and receiving an advance for printing costs after selling them on an idea: a high quality girlie magazine at a time when most have poor photography and production values. Milton, like William Hamling of Greenleaf Publishing in San Diego, one of his competitors during the 1960s, and Hamling's chief editor Earl Kemp, who also began his career in the science-fiction world, understands the public's appetite for sex and violence in media. Milt opts for sex but one thing is certain: he's a mild-mannered citizen, not an in-your-face type, and definitely not looking to break the law. Marvin Miller, perhaps the most notorious porn publisher during the era, says, "I admire Milton Luros, no matter what he thinks of me [not much]. He starts out small, he works hard and saves his money; he's a hard worker and he deserves all he gets."[1] Coming from Miller, who has little good to say about anybody else in the business, this is high praise indeed. Luros is, in fact, the most highly respected publisher/distributor operating during the era, and the word "honorable" comes up often when people speak of him, this in a business where "honorable pornographer" is for the most part an oxymoron. He pays his bills. This is such a singular phenomenon that people can't help but mention it. Milton isn't looking to move beyond the legal curve; he, as
much as possible, plays it safe, allowing others to fight the battles before he steps in, though he is, as Bentley Morris observes, "the master of the stretch," the cautious, incremental pushing of boundaries. Not that his caution will make much difference: because of his success and the ultimate size of his organization, he becomes a favorite target for prosecutors. He begins with, by today's standards, tame girlie mags of the bare breasts, legs, lingerie 'n lace ilk then moves into nudist magazines which, due to a recent Supreme Court decision, are deemed not obscene and thus legal. Nudism magazines are allowed to show full frontal nudity for men and women; girlie magazines, no way. The earliest concrete evidence of this activity is the corporation he sets up to umbrella his nudist-mag operation, Sun Era, Inc.

Stan Sohler, an ex-president of the Western Sunbathing Association and two-time former American Sunbathing Association president, is, at the time, with Ed Lange of Elysium, the premier nudism photographer in the country and a social nudist of long standing within nudism society. But he's a renegade. The community's insistence that eros and nudism remain mutually exclusive to protect nudism and its publications from being deemed obscene strikes Stan as a somewhat absurd parsing of reality. In their beginnings, nudist mags have bizarre standards: at first, men and women can't be featured in the same issue, then they can but not in the same photograph, later they can be in the same photograph but not touching. In the late '50s Sohler, armed with a single Rolleiflex camera, a boat and five models shoots a series of photographs depicting people enjoying social nudism in a remote, safe, and beautiful location on a few of the atoll islands amongst the Florida Keys. Nude men and women touching! Tasteful displays of affection! Stan sells the entire package--text, photos, and layout--to Ed Lange who publishes it to great success.

But the American Sunbathing Association's official magazine publishers go into a tizzy: this is heresy! Next thing you know, nudists will be depicted holding hands, kissing, and, God forbid, having sex! In the early '60s Sohler approaches Milt with the idea of publishing an entire line of legitimate but much more liberated and aesthetically artful nudist magazines, including the titles Sun Era, Photo Field Trip, Backyard Nudist and eventually several others. Milt loves the idea and creates Sun Era, Inc., an entirely new division. To the nudist community Luros is a johnny-come-lately, hopping on the bandwagon after the hard-won battles for legitimacy have been fought at great personal and financial sacrifice by nudism pioneers like Ilsley Boone, whose obscenity conviction for publishing "obscene" nudism magazines is overturned on appeal to the U. S. Supreme Court. Plus, the Luros nudism magazines kinda blur the line between "pure" nudism and what?, less than pure nudism?, which is to say, they have appeal beyond the small hardcore nudist community to the larger world of sex-starved, voyeuristic America. Sohler and Luros see that nudism magazines are pretty dull affairs: photos of happy though not particularly attractive people playing badminton, breasts and genitals flying about as crazily as the badminton bird they're ostensibly batting back and forth, with dreary articles extolling the virtues of Vitamin D and suntan lotion. Milton and Stan improve the aesthetics of the genre with better photography and well-written text. Their quality is the best in the business though disappointing to the nudism faithful who view Luros as strictly an opportunist and Sohler as a traitor.

Concurrently, in the wake of the Roth Supreme Court decision which legalizes soft-porn, Luros, in early 1962,
begins publishing original soft-core novels--as Parliament Books but after a handful of titles drops the Parliament name in favor of Brandon House--as an extension of his magazine lines, the first title being *Hollywood Sex God*, by "Bob Howard" [William Stroup]. Harold Straubing, formerly the comics editor at the New York Herald Tribune, is executive editor of the Brandon House line; he's been with Milt from the very beginning as magazine editor. Many of the Brandon House novels are written by science-fiction writer Richard E. Geis under his own name or the pseudonyms "Peggy Swenson" and "Robert N. Owen." Others, by former jazz pianist Duane Rimel aka "Rex Weldon."

The Brandon House line generally features strong plotting--with sex, lots of it but not at the expense of story--Straubing via Luros insists upon it. "Milt Luros does it well, superbly well--his books are fast, entertaining, good writing," Bentley Morris recalls.

This must have been a popular subject for Richard Geis and Brandon House, regardless of byline confusions.

And, while on the subject of confusion, check out the artwork on these two covers:

--Earl Kemp

Not all Brandon House books are porn; Milt apparently sees commercial potential in other areas of interest to men:

**YOU CAN SAVE YOUR HAIR IF YOU ACT NOW!**

Those first few loose hairs in your comb are a grim warning, but not a sentence to inevitable baldness--if you begin at once the simple, inexpensive program of treatments described in this book. No costly treatments are involved--only practical homemade remedies, exercise and diets which include elements that have the extra effects of keeping your body younger and healthier.

The important thing is to start at once, before the hairline recedes and major damage is done. Get your copy of *YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE BALD* today. Send only $.95 - less than the cost of the usual economy size bottle of hair tonic--a tiny price to pay for a book that can do so much for you! " [2]

**SMOKE WITHOUT PANIC**

The Truth About The Smoking Scare

*By Joseph R. Rosenberger*

For the first time in one concise and carefully documented book, many of the myths and fallacies so strongly promoted over the years by the Anti-Tobacco forces are dramatically exposed as basically illogical. It is NOT true that every cigarette you smoke is another nail in your coffin! Light up your favorite brand and settle back to read SMOKE WITHOUT PANIC. You'll enjoy it more!" [3]
After reading SMOKE WITHOUT PANIC, be sure to read SNAP BACK FROM YOUR HEART ATTACK.[4] Then pick up HAS DR. MAX GERSON A TRUE CANCER CURE?[5] You'll be glad you did!

In 1961 Milt sets up his own distribution arm. Soon afterward, he establishes his own printing shops. He's sown the seeds for empire. American Art Agency is his corporate umbrella for publishing; Parliament News for distribution; London Press and Oxford Bindery for printing. American Art Agency initially operates out of offices on Magnolia Blvd., later moving to 6344 Coldwater Canyon Blvd. in L.A.'s San Fernando Valley. But in the meantime, Sohler has another idea, pitches it successfully to Milt and a new genre of nudism publications is born. The line between girlie mags and nudism mags beginning to blur, Sohler takes it beyond the blur and into the fuzz with Jaybird. Stan's son Gary recalls:

"Every Sun Era magazine had a Letters to the Editor section and, like every good executive editor, my father read each and every one of them. One day he received one from a Pacoima housewife who admitted that she spent the entire day, after she'd shoveled her husband and kids out the door of course, 'naked as a jaybird' while she did the housework. My father had an epiphany over this and realized here was a whole world of unexploited nudity; ordinary people practicing nudism in their own homes and backyards. Once again, he sold the idea to Milt and the first Jaybird Magazine featured an illustrated spread of, you guessed it, the actual Pacoima housewife doing her housework in the nude. Big fucking deal, you say? If you think there wasn't an implied and very strong voyeuristic aspect to this, then think about it again. Milt Luros was no fool."

Stan Sohler eventually leaves the Luros organization in the mid-'60s and after Keith and Iris Bancroft, well-respected members of the nudist community, have a turn running his nudist magazine operation, Milt hires Robert Reitman as Executive Editor for Sun Era; later, Reitman will ascend to Executive Editor for American Art Agency and all its constituent divisions, including Sun Era, as well as write a handful of non-fiction sex titles.

It is Robert Reitman who turns Luros’ nudism magazines into stroke mags that enjoy all the legal freedoms and protection that nudism publications possess but are married to soft-core values to create a semi-hardcore publication that is 100% legal. Reitman's evil genius is to lose all the amateur, true-believing nudists in spontaneous situations and hire very attractive professional models of both sexes to pose for trained professional photographers, adding va-va-voom to a genre distinctively lacking such: I recall with no little amusement seeing a vintage "pure" nudism photo depicting a slice of nudist life featuring a bunch of skinny and paunchy men and dowdy women wearing nothing but carpenter's tool-belts as they merrily hammer and nail away at a small nudist camp structure, blithely ignoring every safety rule that one can when using potentially dangerous tools that can sometimes strike unintended objects or body parts. Reitman puts his stamp on Jaybird, and the magazine soon features males and females in legally protected full frontal nudity in "non-sexual" situations that are Clinton-esque in their disingenuousness: who can forget the timeless article on Self-Defense for Nudists wherein a gorgeous babe and buff hunk engage in full-contact Ju-Jitsu? During the Limbo dance craze, a totally nude chicklette can be seen--and how!--bent backward like a sapling in a hurricane, legs spread, her pudendum in classic split-beaver as she carefully limbos under the bar. "How low can you go?" sings Chubby Checker on his hit record, Limbo Rock. Low enough to perform a full visual gynecological exam. Everybody Limbo! But no sex, please.

Jaybird, no surprise, is a major hit; every issue sells out. And under Reitman's supervision Jaybird sales rise to 13,000-plus copies each.[6] Others try to copy, and soon there's a little newsstand guerrilla war going on in the marketplace. Joel Warner, whose L.A. based Continental News distributes nudist and girlie mags is pissed: Luros, on the heels of Jaybird, has published Continental Nudist, a mag featuring European nudist activity -- containing a short story by "The Saint" author, Leslie Charters called "The Reluctant Nudist." In retaliation, Warner issues Parliament Nudist, whose masthead is set in the same font and design as the Parliament News
Mercifully for the public, Warner's *Parliament Nudist* folds after one issue--don't try to beat Milton at his own game.

Soon, Reitman expands *Jaybird* into an entire franchise: *Teenage Jaybird*, "healthy young Jaybirds enjoying wholesome recreations outdoors and in"; *Urban Jaybird*, "the city Jaybird at play in the country and at home in the city" (which begs the question, how can you distinguish a city Jaybird from a country Jaybird in the city or in the country if they're nude?); *Weekend Jaybird*, "shows and tells what 'barefoot to the eyebrows' really means;" *Utopia* (which begins life as one of social nudism pioneer and traditional nudist-mag publisher Edmund Lea's legit nudism mags packaged for Milt) featuring "the activities of female naked social groups--a new Jaybird development" (having absolutely nothing to do with the daughters of Bilitis, of course); and *International Jaybird, Metropolitan Jaybird, Suburban Jaybird* "the Jaybird exurbanite in his natural surroundings--real cool;" *Jaybird Happening, Campus Jaybird* "the nude revolution scene, as photographed around college and university locations;" *Ladies Home Jaybird* (!); *Lance* "for and about the young male Jaybird in his natural state--naked and free" (and if you think the title and content have anything to do with appealing to gay men's prurient interest, then honi soit qui mal y pense to you, gentle reader!); and *Jaybird Safari*, which, though I've only seen advertised, I presume has something to do with nudists with a yen for exploring the wild-life or wildlife--in either case, no sex, please. The only title missing from the mix, unfortunately, is *Bird-Watching Jaybirds*, a title just pregnant with possibilities: male Jaybirds with binoculars spying on female Jaybirds; straight female Jaybirds and gay male Jaybirds with binocs spying on penises in their natural habitat; real bird male jaybirds scoping out the action during mating season; or, conceivably the most boring nudist publication ever, nudists actually engaged in bird-watching.

Nightcap, Snap, and Tip Top. Heels & Hose appears in early 1962, its first issue containing the features Nylon Nymph; Antoinette in French Net; The Intimate Touch of the Lacy Decorator; Leather Pumps and Sleek Pins; Lola, The Leg Model; Stripper With Black Seams, and Hose-Happy Harriet. Fairly innocuous content: bare breasts, ensheathed buff legs and beautiful feet, pudenda in shadows or artfully covered by a crossed leg. (This is a distinct improvement over the late '30s--early '40s "art" magazine, Girl Beautiful from Graphic Arts Studio in Chicago "for serious students of art photography only," which featured art studies of beautiful nude women wholly neutered by having not just all pubic hair airbrushed out but their entire pubic mound and cleft). Steve Lee, a recent college graduate who is hired by Harold Straubing for this his first job after being referred to American Art Agency by an employment agency, recalls that Milt "has a genius for spotting fetishes that will sell." Milton is, indeed, an ace at identifying and exploiting untapped niche-fetishes. Accordingly, after a stint writing jokes and Letters to the Editor for Broadsicle, Milt's attempt at a "class" men's magazine, Lee becomes editor of Lasses & Glasses, for readers who fantasize about the lioness within the librarian, the hot babe behind prim pose; a variant precursor, one supposes, to composer Randy Newman's song, "You Can Leave Your Hat On."

After the 1966 Supreme Court obscenity decisions, demureness is gradually shown the door, and with the Supreme Court's 1967 Redrup v State of New York decision, the door slams shut behind it. Robert Redrup is substituting for a sick friend the day he's arrested at a newsstand for selling two 1964 Greenleaf Classics paperbacks, Lust Pool (PB841) and Shame Agent (EB943), to a plainclothes NYPD officer. Convicted of violating Section 1141 of the Penal Code of the State of New York, which prohibits the sale of any "obscene, lewd, or indecent book," his case is appealed, his conviction ultimately reversed by the U.S. Supreme Court. The message is clear to the industry and First Amendment attorneys throughout the country: if these two books--non-classic (unlike Fanny Hill) explicit originals--are adjudicated to be non-obscene, than anything goes. With the Redrup decision, the legal striptease shedding the emperor Comstock's new clothes that began with Ulysses in 1933 is well nigh complete.

This decision is the symbolic shedding of the pasties and G-string; with the Court's 1969 Stanley v Georgia decision,[9] the spike heels are removed, the strip-show complete.

In the aftermath of Redrup, Hose-Happy Harriet's still "hose-happy" but for a distinctly different sort of hose. Milt's now publishing "Groovy Men's Magazine's": Electra, "adult entertainment in full-color photos, great centerfolds, fantastic features and feisty fiction [so feisty, we presume, that the mag refuses to remain in one's
hands, escapes, lands in your crotch and fights for your soul--of, by, and for the people of Now" [if you're a
Later kinda person, you're outta luck]; Fanny; Bottom; Loving Ends; Loving Rears; Housewives; Panties and
Pussies; Cocksure Teaser; Skirts Up; Shaved Beaver; Action Wives; Trojan; Black Magic; Bronze Spice;
Pussycat; Cloud 9; Quickie; French Follies; French Frills; Affair; Dash; Female Fiesta; Les Dames. These are
just a drop in the gism bucket; there are countless others. They all sell out. But according to Steve Lee, Milton,
a courtly, old-school gentleman, though thrilled that the magazines are doing so well, has mixed emotions:
creative and imaginative, Milt bemoans the fact that now you can show everything.

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Gary Sohler follows in his dad's footsteps, becoming one of the most successful figure photographers in the
business. He grows up in the social nudism movement, studies at L.A.'s Art Center College of Design, and
works in Luros' photo lab (Milt, of course, has one of the best in L.A., mainstream or otherwise). He becomes
one of two staff photographers for American Art Agency. He recalls:

"Milt always insists on better quality product in spite of the fact that market research will probably show his
readership to be lower-middle income, blue collar working stiffs (no pun intended) who won't appreciate the finer
touches Milt puts on his publications. He employs two very talented art directors, Wil Hulsey and Jerry Pecararo
who oversee the design, layout, and photo selection of every single magazine. They also review and pre-
approve each and every model before the staff photographers can book them. Milt also employs an entire
stable of salaried copywriters and a savvy copy editor as well as a whole roomful of airbrush artists who
meticulously retouch every single black-and-white photograph. This to remove wrinkles and blemishes but also
to add highlights to the model's skin, giving it a glow that looks exactly like the thin rime of sweat during sexual
excitation. He also uses airbrush techniques to increase or decrease background values (lightness and
darkness) to make the model jump out of the background. Milt takes a great deal of satisfaction from
surrounding himself with artistically talented, creative people. Doing this adds to the quality of his magazines
and lends an aura of respectability to what for most people is a shady business at best. Milt's attention to detail,
need for control and obsession with quality extend to the printing of every magazine on glossy starch-coated
stock, a technique unheard of in the porn business and employed only by the high-end men's entertainment
magazines."

With the windfall profits generated from the magazines, Luros hires the best writers, the best photographers, the
best everything. He buys a cluster of buildings in North Hollywood, at and around 7311 Fulton Avenue, to house
all the publishing, distribution and printing activities. By 1964-65, it's estimated that he's doing $350,000 in
volume a month, much of it by mail.[10] Luros, of course, builds the best, most modern and sophisticated mail-
order operation in the business.

Housing Development in L.A.

Regent House is Milt's mail order operation, Barclay House his non-fiction sex book division, and Brandon
House his soft-core erotica imprint. Soon, he'll add Brandon House Library Editions, Essex House, and the
short-lived Hanover House and Sheffield House, other erotica imprints, to the mix, as well as Cameo Library
and Bristol Library Press, a knock-off of Liverpool Library Press. Later, Milt will add Academy Press, a
hardcover, non-fiction sexology imprint that includes studies of pornography, censorship and the law, and Socio
Library Paperback Books, a trade-paper size line of sex educational materials.

It is a measure of Milton's obsession with quality that he sets up a fact-checking department to support all the
non-fiction work, which includes reprints of the major sex studies of the late 19th--early 20th Centuries. Dennis
Rodriguez, an editor and writer who has worked at a few of the major porn publishing houses, recalls his 1969-
1970 stint as editor at Barclay House with pride; every original "non-fiction" manuscript (an entire genre of
fictionalized "case histories," sexumentaries) is meticulously pored over by the fact-checkers who insist on
veracity no matter how inane or silly the "case history." Most of these sexual-science fiction titles are quite well
written, though; again, Milt insists on quality and instructs his editors to hire only the best writers, the best
anybody can find.
Everybody on staff is a college graduate; "it's a very intelligent, interesting group of people," Steve Lee recalls. Robert Silverberg, the award-winning science-fiction writer, authors many sexumentaries under the pseudonym of "Dr. L.T. Woodward." Editor Bruce Anson is a former announcer/newswriter at KTTV in Los Angeles; he used to intro bombastic local anchorman George Putnam's broadcasts. Editor Herb Oxstein is formerly a professor and screenwriter. Prolific writing contributor Morris "Morry" Goodman's day job is with NBC—-in the network's Broadcast Standards and Practices department, where he routinely censors teleplays for potentially offensive material. Wil Hulsey ultimately rises to head the art department for all of American Art Agency; he hires the most talented, best-trained illustrators he can find for the staff, including Kati Tint, a brilliant illustrator trained in her native Estonia.

In mid-1965, Brian Kirby, a young jazz drummer and rare book collector and dealer from Detroit who has recently moved to L.A. and who counts John and Alice Coltrane, Elvin Jones and other jazz luminaries among his friends, is introduced to Milt through the graces of a mutual friend. "Milt brought me to Stan Fleishman. I gave them Candy in return for a long interview with Milt. Candy made Milt a fortune and he suggested during our next interview that I come to work for him, see the business from the inside." As a jazz musician and rare book dealer, by definition Brian needed the money. Brian's friend had told him of Luros' success issuing a reprint of Fanny Hill, which Brandon House had issued despite the fact that the book—-judged obscene—was still working its way through the appellate process and its ultimate fate would not be determined until the next spring's U.S. Supreme Court term. Luros wanted to follow up on the book's success but hadn't found the right property. So, the meeting of Luros and Kirby was fortuitous for both. Candy, by Maxwell Kenton, the Terry Southern-Mason Hoffenberg comic erotic masterpiece originally published in Paris in 1958 by Maurice Girodias' Olympia Press was, like Fanny Hill, in the public domain;[11] anyone was free to publish it. Its legal status, though, was still questionable but change was in the air and as long as Fanny Hill remained within the appellate process no Federal prosecutor was going to waste time and effort duplicating another Federal prosecutor's efforts. It could be safely published now; if events took an unexpected turn, it could be dropped from the catalog—-long after it sold like hotcakes. After all, it is the periodicals business; the books only have a 30-day shelf life anyway. If anybody wants to press charges and suppress, well, too late, the evil's already left Pandora's box.

Fanny Hill was so popular for Brandon house that they issued these four sequels.

Soon after Brandon House issued their edition of Candy, Brian was at a Hollywood party attended by Terry Southern. When Southern learned Kirby's identity, he went into a ferocious tirade over lost royalties that Brian still shudders over in recollection.[12]
Brian has exquisite taste, he knows and appreciates fine literature and art, as does Milton. Milton grows quite fond of Brian; Brian, in turn, respects and has great affection for Milton. "He was like a father to me," Kirby recalls with deep, genuine sentiment. And Milton does something extraordinary, absolutely unheard of in all of American publishing. Long before mainstream publishers set up key, favored editors with their own imprints, Luros does just that, establishing Brandon House Library Editions for Brian. Brian will have offices apart from the rest of the publishing operations and answer to Milton only, a degree of independence unheard of within the porn business, much less mainstream publishing. Kirby has insisted on this; he is not a corporate type, hell, he is part of the counterculture, in his twenties. No way is he going to trade his freedom for a stifling hierarchy. Milton, possessed of an artistic temperament himself, understands Kirby's attitude, undoubtedly viewing it as a plus. Suffice it to say, Robert Reitman, now Executive Editor for all of Luros' publishing activities, ain't happy about this arrangement. He's become a favorite son (if Milton likes you and you produce, he practically adopts you), and probably feels a degree of sibling rivalry. He undoubtedly feels a loss of power; Reitman has developed a reputation as a control freak, and Kirby's elevation must stick in his craw. The two hate each other's guts. Reitman, "a goofball, a total idiot who doesn't know how to write, who doesn't know anything," according to Milton Van Sickle, another editor at American Art Agency, doesn't, to put it mildly, impress Kirby, who is far from a goofball, not an idiot, knows how to write, and knows a lot. Both are stubborn; they will often clash. And "Reitman's a schemer," according to Steve Lee. But Reitman is petty in addition to his other personal qualities. Van Sickle recalls a standard Friday morning meeting of the editorial staff. There's some international mail lying on the table. Kirby, a philatelist, picks up a letter. "I'd like to keep this stamp," he declares. "You can't," Reitman says, "it's my letter." Reitman doesn't collect stamps. But Milton Luros has a plan, and it doesn't include Robert Reitman.

Milt, in the wake of the March 21, 1966 Supreme Court decisions, has a lofty ambition: to create a high-class imprint featuring the finest erotic literature ever published; it appeals to his artistic temperament and passion for quality. It also appeals to his business sense: Milton often has great ideas married to ulterior financial motives. With Brandon House Library Editions he can indulge his fine taste with a legal bonus: erotic classics possessing clear literary value have been cleared for take-off by the air traffic controllers, the U.S. Supreme Court; the imprint will be legally unassailable and lend respectability to his organization. Milton gives Brian the green light and, more important, the long green to achieve the goal. Brandon House Library Editions are printed on fine, acid-free paper (no browning; these books' leaves are as white today as the day they came off the press). Their covers feature erotic imagery from great artists: Aubrey Beardsley, Egon Shiele, Magritte, Leonor Fini, Félicien Rops, etc. Because Milt has always insisted on quality, Brian will have the luxury of only having to issue two to three titles a month so he can attend to detail. Kirby designs the covers himself, over two hundred of them, choosing the artwork, doing the layout, writing all the copy for the covers, often writing the introductions, which are quite literate, informative and accurate in contrast to many intros from other publishers which are quite the opposite. He goes on buying trips, scouting out and purchasing texts from esteemed collector, scholar, and dealer J.B. Rund in New York (under the legal pretext of buying material for Milton's personal collection of erotica; Milton will amass one of the finest private collections in the world--I examined it after his death--but actually for reprint) who brokers the sale of classic erotic texts from the collection of Karl Leonhart, a wealthy collector in Hamburg, Germany, and from booksellers and agents throughout Europe. He also haunts the rare
Brian initiates one of the greatest programs of foreign language translations in the history of the business, commissioning first English translations of fine German and French erotic books heretofore unavailable to the English-speaking reader.

The first translation (he does not recall the book) is done by an L.A. translation service but at $15 a page, 192 pages, it blows a hole in his unusually large budget. So he puts together a string of three highly skilled, fluent translators: his wife, Lauraine, who works under her maiden name, L.E. LaBan; Mark Lawrence, a free-spirited hippie who sorts lives, sorts bums in the ranch house on the Will Rogers estate in L.A.'s Pacific Palisades, is a friend of parapsychologist to the stars Peter Hurkos, and who works under the pseudonyms Mark Alexander and Paul Anhalt; and Hilary E. Holt, PhD, an Austrian emigré to L.A., a "sad, old man" according to Brian, and a former professor living in a small, dumpy apartment in Hollywood who will translate under the pseudonyms Rudolf Schlieffer, Andre Gilbert, and Franz Mecklenberg; he will also supply Kirby with many German erotic works from his personal collection. Mark Lawrence/Alexander and Lauraine Kirby sometimes collaborate under the pseudonym Henrik van Breda. According to Kirby, Lawrence and Holt share a mutual dislike for one another; aside from personality clashes (Holt being very old world, Lawrence being not of this, or any other world), they fiercely compete for assignments. Holt will also write introductions for the imprint, sometimes under his own name (when he has done the book's translation under one of his pseudonyms), sometimes under the pseudonyms John S. Murphy, James E. White, Albert W. Lowy, or Allan D. Warner. His intros are always well done and insightful. But credit for the best Brandon House Library Editions introductions belongs to Jack Hirschman, PhD, one of the better post-Beat poets of the era and a popular professor at UCLA. Whether written under his real name or under the pseudonyms Geoffrey Lowndes, Rudolph Conway, or Steven George, Hirschman's writing invariably demonstrates a keen literary sense and appreciation for the genre with sharp psychosexual insight. Perhaps due to guilt regarding his reprints of Olympia Press titles, Kirby commissions Alexander Trocchi aka "Frances Lengel," and "Carmencita de las Lunas," and John Stevenson, the famed "Marcus Van Heller" of Olympia Press-Paris to write postscripts for the Brandon House Library Editions of their works, actually issuing the classic Trocchi Olympia Press titles, Helen and Desire; its sequel The Carnal Days of Helen Seferis; School For Wives; White Thighs; and Thongs under Trocchi's name, the only U.S. reprints of his books issued thus.

While it is true that all porn publishers during the era are issuing many of the same public domain titles, almost all manage to unearth books that they alone reprint during the era. In addition to first (and only) English translations of works such as T.E.A. Hoffmann's anonymously written Schwestern Monica, issued under the title Sin and Sister Monica (the tale of Hoffman Jules Offenbach took a pass on when composing his opera, Tales of Hoffman); Jean-Louis Fougeret de Montron's Margot la ravaudeuse, et ses aventures galantes paired with a new translation of the anonymously written La Canapé, issued as The Amourous Adventures of Margot and The Scarlet Sofa; Felix Beidermann's (aka Felix Dormann) pseudonymously written Erinnerungen eines Lebemanns by "Philipp Lust," issued as Confessions of an Author; José-André Lacour's pseudonymously written in French Clayton's College by Connie O'Hara, issued as the second title in the volume Dany & Pleasure; and many other fine French and German translations, Brandon House Library Editions issues first (and only) openly reprinted editions of vintage English and American erotic treasures like the anonymously written The Life and Amours of Kate Percival which, though originally issued with the imprint "New Orleans, 1864," was most likely published in New York at approximately the same time; The Memoirs of Madame Madeleine, an excellent, two volume novel issued from New York, ca. 1933, with the false imprint "Paris: Isidor [sic] Liseux, 1928"; The Temple of Pederasty, purportedly based on a work by Ihara Saikaku (1642-93) and translated by "Dr. Hideki Okada," but in reality written by poet John Glassco (author of the masterful, oft reprinted Olympia Press classic The English Governess by Miles Underwood, aka Harriet Marwood, Governess) based upon a gloriously bungled and inane 1928 English translation by Ken Sato of the original Saikaku text, Quaint Stories of the Samurai; Madge Buford, a mid-19th century American original, and Gus Tolman, or The Philandering Pianist, likely originally published in 1932, the two issued as Of Vice and Virtue; Count Alexis, an English or American novel originally published ca. 1892 here paired with the only English translation of the anonymously written Caresses…ou Mémoires intimes de Jacqueline de R…, published in 1933, and issued as The Pangs of Venus; the only complete edition of The Abduction of Edith Martin aka Edith's Strange Desire, an excellent American original from the 1930's; and P.M. L'Istelle's pseudonymously written two-volume The Memoirs of Mitzi by the anagramic M. Pelletils, arguably the most fantastic of all bookstores along Hollywood Boulevard--Book City, Cherokee, Satyr, etc.--seeking the ghosts of erotica past.
pornographic fantasies, featuring the inexhaustible Mitzi recalling every single sexual encounter she has ever had, a total of 516 pages of one sex scene after another without a shred of plot, written by Mitzi at warp-speed during an orgy!

* * *

Milton Luros inspires incredible loyalty amongst his employees; they all love him. Though entry level employees tend to earn peanuts until they prove themselves, Milt ultimately pays the highest salaries in the business, too. Hard not to like that. If you are one of Milton's favorite sons, you are rewarded handsomely, even extravagantly: Milton rewards Robert Reitman with 5% of the stock of Jaybird Enterprises. (The title to the other 95% is held in trust for Milton by Title Insurance and Trust Company of Los Angeles,[13] a solid, dominant Southern California real estate escrow and trust provider since 1893, the news here being that Jaybird Enterprises--and, presumably, the entire Luros empire--is organized under a real estate holding company with publishing assets). Milt buys a house for Brian Kirby and his wife. But not everybody stays beyond a few years. Robert Reitman probably enjoys the longest tenure, followed by Kirby. But editor Milton Van Sickle doesn't last more than a few years, nor Dennis Rodriguez. There are two reasons why everybody loves Milt but few stick around: Milt always has a bad cop to play to his good cop, and one of his primary bad cops is Robert Reitman, "a pedantic, anal retentive, insufferable asshole" according to Gary Sohler, whose controlling, somewhat paranoiac personality will inspire many a practical joke guaranteed to bring out the "who stole the missing strawberries!?" ala Captain Queeg in The Caine Mutiny, in Reitman. Dennis Rodriguez recalls with undisguised glee meticulously retyping an index card ad for a $45 lamp that Reitman has posted on the office bulletin board to precisely match Reitman's with the following change: he prices it at $40, and has to keep from falling off his chair as Reitman checks out the bulletin board and sorta just stares in bewilderment at the ad. Two days later, Rodriguez does the same thing, this time lowering the price to $35. Finally, at the end of the week as Rodriguez has lowered the price two more times to $25, Reitman realizes he is not going crazy and throws a shotgun conniption fit to all within earshot.

Milton's other bad cop isn't a man. If everybody loves Milton, there ain't a lotta love lost between the staff and Milt's wife, Bea. Talk to people and you form the impression of a Chinese dragon lady crossed with Philip Roth's worst Jewish mother nightmare, a woman described by a former employee as "morbidly obese who hasn't used a toothbrush in years" who sits at her desk with a huge half a pastrami on rye in one hand and hatchet in the other, her fingers ringed with precious rocks the size of meteorites. She has an office right next to Milt's with the bark-paneled walls (not knotty pine but, yes, bark) but, mercifully, isn't there much. Lookout when she is--she has a habit of calf-roping hapless employees who make the mistake of walking by her door and forcing them to endure "at least 30 minutes of meaningless blather and personal advice" or intense haranguement. There is no escape. Though without official title or position, her hands are in all business affairs when she so chooses. "She's like a predatory octopus in her lair and everybody avoids her like Ebola virus. It's a common practice by all employees who need to get to Milton's office on business to peer around the corner of Bea's door and wait until she turns her head, takes a bite of her corned beef sandwich, dials the phone, or is otherwise distracted, then leap stealthily past her like a frightened insect ducking a praying mantis," a former employee observes. Gary Sohler recalls being in Milton's office on more than one occasion talking business only to be startled shitless by Bea's low-tech intercom system, a ninety decibel "MIIIIIIIIIILT!" to get his attention, whereupon Milton rolls his eyes, looks heavenward, slaps his forehead, mutters "gevalt!" then dutifully rises up and trots next door to Bea's office where he gets the treatment. In tough negotiations, it is Bea who does the handling and hold onto your balls, boys, there is a good chance you will leave the meeting without one. Art Kunkin, whose Los Angeles Free Press is, for a period, distributed by Parliament News as well as printed by Luros' London Press (Milt is also West Coast distributor for many other '60s sex and Counterculture publications that can't get distribution through standard channels) recalls the time when Parliament owes him $200,000. He meets with Bea. By the time he is finished with her, she has finished him off and is picking her teeth with his bones: rather than pay him with cash, she is negotiated to supply him with $200,000 worth of books. $200,000 worth of $1.95 books will not fit into a bank vault much less a bank account and so Kunkin, in order to get any cash out of the deal, is forced to spend more money and open the L.A. Free Press Bookstores to sell the damn things.

Esteemed dealer and scholar of vintage erotica, J.B. Rund, recalls Milton as a very paternal, grandfather-type, a warm, Jewish zayde, easy to deal with and always trying to impart a little wisdom to nice bubelehs he is acquainted with. "He advised me to go to college, get a degree, and forget the erotic book business," Rund
recalls. "I didn't take the advice." Earl Kemp, Executive Editor for William Hamling's Phenix/Greenleaf Publications, knows the Luroses well. "They're good friends, sort of like a rich Jewish aunt and uncle letting some of it slop over onto a dumb young poor relation." Kemp will often come up to L.A. from San Diego and visit them. Sometimes they take European trips together mixing business (buying erotica) and pleasure. "They are incredible eaters (gourmet food preferred) and know all the best restaurants in L.A., New York and Europe."

Bea is apparently hell on the restaurant hired help, behaving like the model for one of comedian Jackie Mason's routines: "I'll have the chef's special but I want only three asparagus spears, parallel to each other on the far side of the plate so they don't touch the filet mignon, the filet should be medium-well, wring the juice out, I hate the sight of blood, not too medium, not too well, brownish-pink only; I want a few lumps in the mashed potatoes but no more than three, strain the gravy but not too thin, I like it to run at 1.5 mph no faster, no slower, serve it separately on the side; arugula in the salad? no more than four leaves, it overwhelms the raddicchio...julienne the carrots to a hair's width--no more or less--and cut them on the bias; I hate them with straight ends..." until the waiter is ready to cry or commit murder.

One friendly with the Luroses observed of Bea: "It was not possible to 'like' Bea. I tolerated her, withstood her, endured her, I was embarrassed by and for her. Mostly, she amused me. I have never seen anyone get away with the things she routinely got away with."

Faced with tough money decisions--giving a raise, an advance against salary, expense account approval--Milt always defers to Bea: "Oh, shit, if I do that Bea will kill me, she'll KILL me! But if you want to go ask her yourself..." Few do. Bea has the last word. When Milt offers to buy the Kirbys a house, Brian and Lauraine shop around until they finally find one they fall in love with. They invite Milt and Bea to take a look-see. The house is in the Hollywood Hills; few homes there are at ground level with the street and when the Luroses pull up and get out, Bea eyes the long flight of stairs that leads up to the entrance and turns to Brian and Lauraine. "Find another house." They do.

To be fair, Kirby has enormous affection for Bea, despite all, and Art Director Jerry Pecoraro considers her "a great gal."

* * *

In order to operate in the pornography industry, you have to have heavyweight legal counsel--despite the fact that it's a legal business--and Milton, no shock, has the very best First Amendment/obscenity lawyer in the trade, Stanley Fleishman. "When you hired Stanley, you didn't get a lawyer, you got an insurance policy," one who knew him recalled. Milt has given Stanley an office of his own at American Art Agency so Stanley can work comfortably when he needs to be on the premises; Fleishman is essentially confined to a wheelchair with the use of only one arm due to polio contracted as a youth. Despite his infirmities, he is a legal athlete of Olympian proportions; in the field of obscenity law he is without peer. He successfully defends many porn publishers before every Federal court in the nation and is so astute in discerning the legal and logical flaws and fallacies in obscenity statutes and prosecutor's arguments that cases brought against his clients are blown away like chaff in a storm and ultimately amount to nothing more than very expensive harassment. And this, in the end, is what frustrated prosecutors and attorneys general resort to because no argument, no matter how well reasoned, can stand against Fleishman's acute demolition of the illogic upon which it rests. For a few months in the mid-Sixties, Milt is arrested every Friday at 5 pm, the day, time, and precinct location calculated to make it as inconvenient and annoying as possible: if your lawyer isn't johnny-on-the-spot, you're on an all-expenses paid weekend vacation in jail. Because of Stanley Fleishman, Milt never spends a nanosecond behind bars. But Milton does have his legal woes. The Comstock Laws, which govern the mailing of "obscene" materials, give the Post Office more than enough ammo to go game-hunting, and the wealthiest, biggest game-animal on the smut savannah is Milton Luros.

Now, up until 1958, if the Post Office wants to prosecute an obscenity offender, the only possible venue is in the jurisdiction where the offender operates. Since most obscenity offenders work out of L.A. and L.A. is notorious among prosecutors for not guilty verdicts something must be done. So, in 1958 Congress obliges by altering the wording of the Comstock Act so that a publisher/distributor can be prosecuted not just where the material is mailed but where it is delivered, and it is up to the Post Office to decide in what delivery venue the greatest gravity exists. In 1965, the P.O., after amassing their evidence, chooses Sioux City, Iowa--culturally about as far
away from Los Angeles as you can get--as the best possible site for nailing Milton, and convinces a Federal Grand Jury there to present a 25-count indictment against Milt. Included in the indictment are Bea, one of their two sons, who has a low-level job with the company while he attends college, and nine others, including some Brandon House writers (Victor Banis, Richard Geis, and Sam Merwin, Jr.), as well as Parliament News and a short laundry list of Milt's other corporate entities which he has set up with the help of his corporate accounting whiz, Harold Ross. (Milton has a Byzantine business structure created to maximize and protect his assets and take full legal advantage of corporate tax laws; the fact that this corporate maze makes it very tough for district attorneys to follow a paper trail to Milton's ass is but a welcome side benefit surely calculated by Milt). That the jury in Sioux City will likely be made up of unsophisticated rural conservatives no doubt influences the Post Office's decision. Predictably, the trial jury consists of ten heartland housewives and two farmers.

The trial begins in Sioux City on October 18, 1965. The charges are based on violations of Title 18 §1462 USC, producing lewd, lascivious and obscene literature, and Title 18 §1461 USC, mailing obscene matter--ten of Milt's nudist magazines. The trial proceeds for some weeks whereupon the jury returns a guilty verdict on all counts. Federal Judge William C. Hansen dismisses the convictions against all of the individuals involved except Milton, who nobly assumes personal responsibility for the actions of his employees. Fleishman appeals. Conviction reversed. [14] Milton continues to be harassed by authorities and, according to Kemp, Milt's quiet motto is "Fuck the Feds," but with Stanley Fleishman's big stick to Milt's soft-speaking, they tread carefully. They don't want to get their asses caught in one of Fleishman's legal slings; it is the '60s and the conduct of authorities in general and the police in particular is being seriously challenged for the first time in U.S. history. Milton Luros will not have any serious legal problems until later in the decade.

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Twenty-three-year old Gary Sohler is miffed. Rancor over money issues has alienated his affection for Milt, who blames Bea, who cries poverty while buffing her rings on her blouse. To prevent Gary from bolting, Milton makes Sohler a dream offer he can't refuse: an assignment to send Gary and his wife to Europe for a year, all expenses paid including buying them a car, to produce three high volume nude photo shoots a week, at a large increase in salary. The Sohlers move to London. Gary is soon producing some of the finest quality work of his career. As usual, Milt has an ulterior motive and sending Gary on this lavish, once in a lifetime assignment to mollify him will kill two birds with one stone.
Milt has *tsouras* in Great Britain. He has successfully been sending thousands of copies of unsold or returned (remainders) magazines and books to his distributor in London at a large discount yet respectable profit but recently a British customs agent has awakened from years of bureaucratic slumber. Now, so many shipments are seized by British Customs that the whole arrangement becomes unprofitable. Gary becomes the official addressee for these shipments, the drop box for Milt’s British distributor, Ben Holloway of Ben’s Books, London’s foremost pornster. Gary, upon receipt of the shipments, calls Ben and Ben sends two of his minions to pick them up from Gary and deliver them to the warehouse. The plan works perfectly--Harold Ross has set up a dummy corporation with legit documentation to mask the true identity of the sender--Gary’s justifiable fear of being incarcerated in Newgate unfounded. Unfortunately, Milt isn’t fulfilling his side of the bargain: the large raise and expense reimbursement fail to materialize and the Sohlers are soon in a financial bind. Letters and phone calls to Fred Fixler, Milt’s photo editor at American Art Agency and Gary’s immediate boss, accomplish nothing. Gary has to ask Ben Holloway for financial assistance, which he mercifully provides against what he owes Milton for the mags no doubt understanding that he can not let the golden goose starve without threatening the supply of golden eggs--compared to the tame fare in England, the Luros product is hard-core and Holloway sells all he can get. (Even when something doesn’t sell, the axiom still holds: Everything, ultimately, sells). After four or five months, the situation is untenable--British Customs has finally caught on and Sohler has to perform some fancy footwork to avoid arrest--and after much agonizing the Sohlers drop their leased house, ship the car back to the U.S., sever all their London ties, and hop a plane back to Los Angeles without a word to Milton or Fixler. The following Monday morning, much to Luros’ shock, Sohler shows up at the office and terminates his employment. He presents Milton with a bill for all money owed. Milt pays in full. But Gary has had enough. He becomes a free-lancer, a contract-packager of skin mags for Greenleaf (Phenix) Publications.

Meanwhile in 1967, Brian Kirby’s Brandon House Library Editions unit is doing very well. Each title is selling close to and sometimes over 50,000 copies during their 30 days of life to the industry standard 32-40 thousand, aided by the fact that Kirby has his own sales force over at Parliament News to place product in locations previously unserviced. Convincing Luros (who does not need to be convinced of a patently good idea) to take the plunge, Brian has Parliament send its salesmen into college bookstores and mainstream booksellers in college communities. The Kirby titles possess clear literary value and have covers that are aesthetically pleasing without a trace of salaciousness; they can be displayed openly in all but the most conservative locations. Considering that college campuses and bookstores located in college towns are the least conservative sites in the entire U.S. during the mid-late '60s, and that the entire Brandon House Library Editions line is devoted to sex-lit a college-educated individual can appreciate and even engage in philosophical and literary discussion about (in the '60s, two college-age individuals having a conversation about an erotic book with Miles Davis or Jefferson Airplane playing in the background is a sure fire way to wind up in bed together--along with the less intellectually challenging and just slightly less effective seduction gambit, “you turn me on, let's get high and make it”), this idea is a no-brainer.

What is not quite a no-brainer is the line that Brian Kirby launches in late 1967 - early 1968. He wants to publish erotica by fine American writers and poets. He wants them to have total freedom of content but insists that they not write under pseudonyms. The books will have the same high production values as Brandon House Library Editions: well-designed covers featuring fine erotic art reproductions, acid-free paper, fine printing. Over the next two years Brian will issue 42 titles through this imprint, Essex House. With Essex House, Kirby becomes the Maurice Girodias of American porn.

Michael Perkins, an L.A. poet who “wanted to shake the world awake to its sexuality,”[15] wrote eight novels for Essex House to facilitate that ambition, and who takes credit for suggesting the imprint to Brian, recalls:
"Writers for Essex House were free to be experimental, outrageous, funny, and absurd in content and even style, as long as they remembered Kirby's dictum: like Lionel Trilling, he didn't see why good writing couldn't also turn you on...It was a wonderful, quixotic experiment at the right time--the '60s--in the right place, California."

All Essex House authors received a $1,000 advance against royalties, and all rights ultimately reverted to the author by contract, a very generous arrangement at a time when most publishers were buying all rights, outright, with no royalties paid at all. Average initial print runs for Essex House, according to Brian, were 50,000, and they apparently sold very, very well; Essex House books are amongst the hardest to find in the collectibles market.

Essex House, without question, issues the finest body of original erotic fiction the nation has ever produced, outdoing Girodias at his own game when the famed Parisian publisher moves to Manhattan and initiates the Olympia Press - New York. Novelists and poets David Meltzer, Barry Malzberg, Philip Jose Farmer, Henry Toledano, and L.A.'s poet-laureate of the depths, Charles Bukowski, are among the authors whom Kirby commissions work from for Essex House. He also commissions writers like Robert Creeley, Norman Spinrad, and Harlan Ellison to write afterwords. Milt's foreign distribution arrangements are of such reach and penetration that Perkins recalls seeing a display of Essex House novels in a bookstore window in Venice, Italy in 1969. Suffice it to say, the chances of a display of Essex House titles in a bookstore window occurring in the United States--even in 1969--were nonexistent. The Parliament News sales team was good but not that good.

But while, for a time, Essex House titles are selling the same numbers as Brian's Brandon House Library Editions, they ultimately suffer the same fate, slowing sales, for while in the initial wake of the *Fanny Hill*
decision everything published sells, now the reality of the porn market in the late '60s becomes manifest: high quality doesn't matter, it may, in fact, be detrimental to an imprint's success. As Dennis Rodriguez recalls, "at a certain point, the bad drives out the good. If a book's content and appearance aren't sleazy enough, the perception is that it's not 'the real thing.'" This sales slump of late 1968 through 1970 is felt by everyone in the business; sales don't rebound until the core-content hardens further. Slowing sales spell the ultimate doom for Brandon House Library Editions and Essex House; with high production values, the attendant costs cut into profit margins.

Too, there is a sea change occurring in retail distribution. As material becomes more and more explicit--"hardcore"--the number of otherwise legitimate retail outlets for sex-lit declines. In 1969's Stanley v. Georgia, the Supreme Court upholds that an individual may privately possess so-called obscene material but approves the validity of regulatory action taken to protect children and unwilling adults from exposure to materials deemed to be obscene. For all practical purposes, sexually oriented literature can be banned from all the "straight" retail outlets it is then found in. And it is. From coast to coast, communities pass legislation effectively proscribing sex-lit from any retail store a child might wander into. Thus, the need for and rise of the adult bookstore, which has always existed but now experiences explosive growth. Milton, as does every other major distributor, opens a string of them.

But despite the slowing sales, as long as Milt is in charge, Brian's got nothing to worry about. But Milt's role in the company is undergoing change.

By 1969, Milton has bought World News and Pacific News, two mid-size distributors in the San Fernando Valley. He is now the largest distributor west of the Mississippi. As capstone to a career in porn, in 1969 Milton decides to establish his own high-end hardcover imprint, Hogarth Guild, spending a fortune on production. For the Hogarth Guild edition of the *Kama Sutra*, Luros has scoured Europe for appropriately artful, explicit images to illustrate the text. And at New York's JFK airport, Milt is busted by Customs for attempting to import 37 "obscene" images for commercial purposes, the Federal law banning the importation of obscenity being on the books since 1842. It is the beginning of the end. First, the Hogarth Guild titles--only three, released in January 1970: *The Kama Sutra*, *40 Erotic Aquarelles by Peter Fendi*, and *The Forbidden Erotica of Thomas Rowlandson*--die in the marketplace. A palace coup erupts; Milton is forced out by Hogarth Guild's board of directors--who include Reitman and Kirby. Milton misunderstands Brian's role in this and a serious rift between the two is opened. The legal fallout from the obscenity importation case has placed Milton in serious jeopardy. Though he wins the case at the Federal district level, Federal prosecutors appeal the decision. Losing the appeal, the Feds take it to the Supreme Court and on May 3, 1971 the Court reverses Milton's acquittal and remands the case back to the District for retrial.[18]

Milton arranged for famous glamour photographer William Graham to shoot a lavish series of original nude photographs to illustrate the Hogarth Guild edition of the *Kama Sutra* in the absence of his original images. The title appeared on
It is a curious decision. Acquitted and upheld by the Federal district court on the grounds that the Court's 1969's Stanley v. Georgia decision established the right for citizens to privately possess pornographic materials--the offending photos were discovered in Milton's luggage--the post-Warren Court contended that Stanley's conviction was reversed by the Warren Court because the offending material was discovered in the man's home and while a man's home may be considered his castle, his person or luggage is not. Justice Marshall, in his dissent, called this reasoning "disingenuous."[19] Though Milt stipulated that he intended to used some of the photos to illustrate a book that would later be distributed commercially, Justice Marshall further stated that "the seized items were then in his purely private possession and threatened neither children nor anyone else. In my view, the Government has ample opportunity to protect its valid interests if and when commercial distribution should take place. Since threats to these interests arise in the context of public or commercial distribution, the magnitude of the threats can best be assessed when distribution actually occurs; and it is always possible that petitioner [Luros] might include only some of the photographs in the final commercial product or might later abandon his intention to use any of them. Moreover, the items seized in this case were only a component of a product which might ultimately be distributed, and viewing them in isolation is inconsistent with the principle that determination of obscenity should focus on an entire work, see, e.g., Roth v. United States, 354 U.S. 476, 489 (1957). I find particularly troubling the Court's suggestion that there is no need to scrutinize the Government's behavior because a 'border search' is involved. While necessity may dictate some diminution of traditional safeguards at our nation's borders, I should have thought that any such reduction would heighten the need jealously to protect those liberties which remain rather than justify the suspension of any and all safeguards."[20] Take heed, John Ashcroft. The newly reconstructed Nixon-Burger Court is here beginning its backtrack on Warren Court obscenity decisions deemed too permissive, a process that will continue through to its major 1973 obscenity decision when the Court rejects the Warren Court precedent set in 1966. Much tortuous reasoning will dictate the new Court's decision-making process.

The Books That Got Away

Brian contracted with famed science fiction writer Philip Jose Farmer for a novel for Essex House, *Love Song of Hiawatha*, which would incorporate Native-American themes and mythology and hardcore sex. "But when Essex House was killed I had him give me the manuscript for a softcore porn novel he'd written in the early '60s that had remained unpublished to cover the $1,000 advance I'd given him for the unfinished *Love Song of Hiawatha*. After I left, Reitman issued the earlier manuscript as Love Song. Piers Anthony wrote *Pornucopia* for me; it was never released as an Essex House title but was later issued in a limited edition by a specialty press."

Just prior to leaving the Luros empire in 1970, Brian was in the midst of negotiations for what might have been the best-selling title Essex House had ever released, hell, the best-selling title the entire business had ever seen, a title whose potential for crossover into the mainstream was enormous, whose potential for profitability astronomical. Brian had been in talks with Jim Morrison, lead singer and poet-lyricist of the rock group The Doors, for the rock star's first book, an erotic novel yet to be written. Though a moody man who will often work an entire day without saying a word to anybody and the next be positively garrulous, Kirby's soulful, artistic sensibility is a lightning rod for talent. Brian's departure kills the deal.

Though Milt is not running the show in its entirety, he is still quite active, and in 1971 he buys a huge facility on Lassen Street in the northwest San Fernando Valley community of Chatsworth to house all operations under one roof. He and Bea move out of their mansion and buy a nice, huge home in Northridge in the Valley. By 1972, however, Milton's legal woes have taken a serious turn for the worse.

*Ceci n'est pas une Pipe*

Artist Rene Magritte's got nothing on Milt. The legal climate regarding obscenity has turned chilly with a newly reconstructed Supreme Court and in 1972, Federal prosecutors bust Milt for a collection of 17 *objets d'art érotique*. Seventeen Meerschaum pipes. They ain't Dr. Grabow's. Federal prosecutors, with Freud in mind, don't believe that sometimes pipes are just pipes but do believe, harkening to Magritte's masterpiece of reality versus symbolism, that these particular pipes aren't pipes at all. Sometimes pipes, particularly if they're carved so, can represent that most dangerous of cylindrical tubes, the male penis, and scandalous, pornographic behavior.

Also in 1972, the retrial on the importation of obscene photographs case looms.[21] Additionally in the same year, Federal prosecutors bust Milt's London Press, and all the Luros corporate entities they can identify, including Parliament News, Seven Towers (Academy Press), American Art Agency, and Meridian Entertainment. [23]

In 1974, with the U.S. Supreme Court's new obscenity standards ruling only a year old, Milt's busted yet again, US v Obscene Films and Cards.[24]

Milton's life has turned into a giant splitting legal migraine; *tsouras* to the max. This is not what Milton Luros signed up for.

What happens next is unclear; there are conflicting reports that Milt has either been forced out of his empire by the Mob, or that Federal prosecutors have threatened stiff jail time if Milton does not get out of the business. We may never know with absolute certainty. This much we do know: Milton Luros sells out. Just who he sells out to is, strictly speaking, opaque. The nominal new owner is Paul Wisner, who worked as a salesman for Parliament News in the early '60s, had risen to become Parliament's head man and whose son-in-law, Mike Cohn, assumed executive in charge duties after the sale, having given Robert Reitman the heave-ho. But the governor is, reportedly, a guy who has been working quietly behind the scenes, a man who will ultimately control the entire national and much of the international porno business in one way or another.

Wisner was an associate of Reuben Sturman; he worked with Sturman in the comic-book distribution business during the '50s. Sturman apparently pulls the strings from his headquarters in Cleveland, and has likely bankrolled Wisner's purchase. The Luros empire is not cheap; few people in the business have the wherewithal to come up with the requisite dough. Reuben has got the do-re-mi. Sturman is reliably reported to be protected.
by the Gambino crime family; they've got to invest their ill-gotten cash somewhere legit, even if it is shady legit (and extremely profitable). And Milton and Reuben know each other; they have been doing business together since the early '60s; FBI investigators state that Luros is Sturman's biggest supplier of magazines and books. [25] There are reports that Milt and Bea, and Reuben and his wife Esther socialize; that Reuben learns all he knows about sophisticated corporate financial structure and maneuvering at Milton's feet. (Though Bentley Morris asserts that "Esther had the brains;" perhaps the real story here is that Bea Luros and Esther Sturman—whom Sturman foolishly divorced—were the true powers behind their husbands' porn thrones).

What's a wise man to do?

What seems likely is that with all the negative legal attention and potential repercussions, Milton considers retirement. By 1974, he's 63, he's got all the money in the world (court transcripts reveal that Milt and Bea have bought the San Fernando Valley, or at least a huge chunk of it, real estate all over the place owned by a slew of corporations whose names are the addresses for each of the properties, with Milton's corporate lawyer holding the presidency for each of them ),[26] he's a family man with a lawyer and a doctor as sons—they've gotten to an age where Dad's activities are not reflecting well on their professional lives—and a jail sentence is not the sort of quiet plan he envisions for himself as he enters senior-citizendom. Milt likely says to himself, "I'm getting too old for this dreck, who needs it? Time to sell." Reuben's likely been hocking Milt to sell the business to him—Reuben's been in the process of patching together a national porn syndicate through strategic alliances and investments with, and strawman purchases of, other regional distributors—but not calling upon his patrons to put the muscle on Milt; this is not a hostile takeover. These are two guys who know each other personally and professionally taking advantage of a bad situation that will benefit them both.

But it would be naive to suggest entirely benign circumstances; there is probably a degree of anxiety and just good business sense involved in Milton's decision as well. In 1970, James Picarelli sues Milton.[27] In 1963, for reasons that remain unclear, Milt went to New York on business and while there solicited a $10,000 loan from Picarelli. Now, in 1970, Picarelli claims that in exchange for the loan, he is given a one-third interest in all of Milton's enterprises, the other two thirds presumably belonging to Milt and Bea. According to FBI files,[28] Milt admits that he borrowed the ten thou but paid Picarelli back the ten plus $17,000 or 170% interest. Not a bad return on a loan. At some point, he also gives Picarelli 30 boxes of free merchandise in lieu, one supposes, of cash (think Bea). It appears that Milt is the victim of a shakedown by a mob moneylender. Picarelli's lawyer may think the case won't reach a jury; Milt will settle and Picarelli will receive a generous settlement. If so, the lawyer miscalculates. The civil case proceeds, and the jury finds for Milton; they believe that Milt's repayment to Picarelli has ended the issue.

According to the 13th Annual Report of the Temporary Commission of Investigation of the State of New York issued in 1971,[29] the Picarelli family was big in the adult bookstore business, and directly connected to organized crime. Of James Picarelli specifically, the Report states: "known to law enforcement as a member of the national crime confederation in the Genovese family. A witness in the public hearing, Picarelli refused to answer questions…he is reliably reported to have operated a sex-oriented distribution materials outlet on the
West Coast.” The clear implication is that Picarelli was running Luros’ Parliament News, but Picarelli, aka “Jimmy Rush” and “Charlie Bones” may just have been bragging--mobsters are notoriously vainglorious, ego-inflated bullshit artists--spreading the word that he was a part owner in Parliament. It does not appear that Picarelli owned any part of Parliament News in any way. If Picarelli really were that powerful, that well-connected, and so deeply entrenched in Luros' business, why would he be taking Milton to court in 1970 to assert his ownership when strongarm methods are the usual means for resolving such disputes? It is a puzzling situation but there may be an answer.

Speculation, but what may have happened is this: perhaps due to a cash-flow crunch, expansion, or any number of other legitimate business reasons, Milton needs money. As with many other American businesses that are either financially (the garment industry-high-risk, capital-intense) or legally (the legit yet morally questionable sex industry in all its manifestations) vulnerable, porn operators cannot get loans from standard banking and loan sources and have to solicit non-traditional lenders for needed funds. Milt later has regrets and pays Picarelli off in 1966. By 1970, Milton's empire is a goldmine, Picarelli wants back in but he's restrained from harming a hair on Milton's head: as we've learned, Milton's been Sturman's largest supplier of magazines and books, they know each other, they've socialized. The Gambinos protect Reuben; Reuben needs to protect Milton: Luros is one of the few people in the business that can be trusted, a valuable asset, and has the best product--don't want to screw that up. Since the death of Vito Genovese, that mafia family is rudderless and Carlo Gambino has assumed de facto control of the Genovese mob.[30] No doubt that the word went out to Genovese soldier Picarelli to lay off on muscling Milt.

In the same FBI interview, however, Milton admitted that lately he'd been hiring more people from New York. It is difficult to know what to make of this with any degree of certainty but it implies that Milton was not just hiring old friends from the neighborhood. It may be that Milton--a man of many talents but a pragmatic opportunist above all--was paying for a go along to get along attitude with elements of Eastern organized crime that may have been intended to keep the undesirables at arm's length while necessarily doing business with them; there is evidence that he had been distributing in the West, handling mail-order, and printing the books for Star Distribution of New York, run by the notorious Robert "D-B" DiBernardo, a member of the DeCavalcante crime family who later defected to the Gambinos, who is reportedly assisting Reuben Sturman in his quest to establish a centralized national distribution syndicate. In a business fueled by gossip, there can be no doubt that Milton knows of Sturman's connections. He is surely aware that a few years back Sturman was the sole guest at a private party hosted and catered by a member of the L.A. mafia where he was served knuckle sandwiches, forcing him to run to his Gambino patron, Terry Zappi,[31] for protection. Another factor is at play here: since 1969, representatives of Eastern OC families have been coming to Southern California to stake their claims.[32] Though not in periodicals distribution in the area in any significant way, they begin to acquire the bulk of the adult bookstores in LA, and, with the success of Deep Throat, have entered the X-rated film business.[33] In a very real way, Milt's surrounded and may feel the squeeze. It is therefore likely that Milt sells to Sturman on a friendly basis with dark foundation.

Then, too, if Milton was upset by the trend to show everything back in 1969, by 1974 he has got to be
depressed by the utter lack of imagination now manifest in the creation of pulp erotica. This is not the business he entered. It must surely offend his artistic sensibilities. And so, adios, auf Wiedersehen, shalom…

As for pressure from the Feds? No direct evidence of it; the new cases are won on appeal, or ultimately dropped in the wake of the Court's 1973 Miller "community standards" decision - while it is difficult to exceed community standards for obscenity in Los Angeles, there were now potentially a zillion standards in a zillion U. S. communities[34] to contend with. More likely that Stanley Fleishman, carefully calculating Milt's chances to get through any more legal troubles successfully in these new times, advised Milt that the time had come to completely get out. If Stanley thought that there was any chance he could get Milton off, it would not have mattered how much pressure Federal prosecutors were exerting, Stanley would fight.

By the end of 1974, there is a new porn distributor in Los Angeles, Red Lion. It distributes Lenny Burtman and Reuben Sturman's Eros magazine and Eros Goldstripe books, and it is housed at 7311 Fulton Avenue in North Hollywood. Same address as Parliament News' former HQ and home to Pacific News. Reuben takes L.A., Milton rides off into the sunset.

Epilogue

Milton Luros had retired but could be seen around the office from time to time. He was still a relatively young man, had a pile of money, and enjoyed life with Bea. He became involved with California politics, and was a generous contributor to Jerry Brown's campaign for governor. When the Luros connection was reported in the papers, Brown returned the money. Milt and Bea became quite active in their synagogue, Stephen S. Wise Temple, and were now Southern California real estate magnates with two sons--a brucha (blessing) to their parents--a successful doctor and a lawyer. Michael S. Luros is currently sitting judge to the Superior Court of Los Angeles - Mental Health Division, and absolutely refuses to discuss his father. Provide your own irony. Bea died in 1996; Milt in 1999.

In the late 1980s, I wrote a few porn novels for Pacific News. My editor was Dennis Rodriguez who would periodically return to the business between television writing gigs. Dennis provided me with a Canadian Customs Notice with a long list of porn no-no's for the Canadian market. At the very top of the Customs Notice, which was a fax, ran the following: "9/28/88 [telephone number] TransMediaGrpUSA Parliament News." Luros' former empire, under Sturman's arm's length leadership, was now part of a global conglomerate, corporately safe as milk. And completely shady. Dave Gardner, who worked as an art director at American Art Enterprises (Milt had changed the name from American Art Agency in the late '60s as part of a corporate restructuring) in the early '80s recalls:

"I worked under Jerry Pecoraro [who may be the longest surviving staff member of American Art Enterprises, having worked for Milt Luros--an in-law--since the early '60s] who was doing mostly old-style cheesecake stuff. I worked the softcore side, doing magazine layout and typesetting. They also published some crappy fiction (not porno but cheesy science-fiction, westerns, mysteries, action, etc.), to somewhat legitimize the operation… The 'other side' of the building was off-limits. It housed Paul Wisner's office, other administrative offices, and London Press…One of the other artists had a friend working in London Press, so I got to go over there just once to see the hardcore work they did, but otherwise it was an unwritten law to stay away from there, a separation of smuts, so to speak.

"I saw Paul only occasionally, as his office was on the 'other' forbidden side. Once in a while I'd see this small Italian guy come in and walk around like he owned the place. I asked one of the guys about him, who told me to cool it, that this guy was a serious Mafioso who came up to collect bags of cash, and not to ask any more questions about him."

Under Luros' ownership, American Art Enterprises and all of the Luros constituent division offices were typical offices, just open the door and walk in. Not so now. Dave Gardner continues:

"At American Art, you had to get buzzed in after being scrutinized by the receptionist. One time, word went through the building that we were going to be raided by LAPD vice. I sure as hell didn't want to go to jail, but the
boss wouldn't let us go home. So all day, I sat there shaking and wondering when the cops were going to bust through the door and lead me off in handcuffs. It never happened, though. The overall feeling at American Art was crass; I learned how to be ashamed of my work. It had the air of true smuttness about it. I got the feeling we were just a mob front at American Arts. It was not a very pleasant experience.”

As a measure of their contrasting characters, it is instructive to view Milton Luros, the leading pornographer of the '60s, with Sturman, who ruled the porn world from the '70s through the late 1980s, through the nomenclature of their organizations. Luros was the prime minister of the business, first among equals in the house of lords, a democratic parliamentarian: Parliament News, Regent House, Barclay House, Essex House, etc. Sturman had ambitions to absolute monarchy, as evidenced by his corporate entities: World Wide News Company (WWNC), Sovereign News, Royal News, Crown News, etc. His ego secure, his goals reasoned, Luros prospered, safely retired, and enjoyed his dotage, his soul intact. Sturman, in stark contrast, was a business imperialist, an affable despot whose goal was to rule the porn world as its unquestioned emperor—which he accomplished through legal if highly unethical, heavy-handed economic extortion backed up by the tacit threat (occasionally realized) of the iron fists of his mob partners. And as hubris consumed the great kings of ancient Greece, so too in the end it destroyed Sturman, who died a miserable death behind bars as porn's King Lear—King Leer?—a vain, mistrusting paranoiac cursing the Fates and all those he'd "helped" along the way who had in the end justifiably betrayed him.

Milton Luros is sincerely missed by all who knew him.

Acknowledgments

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A gallant tip of the hat to Bruce Brenner, Brittany Daley, Tom Brinkman, Tony Jacobs, Miriam Linna, Ryan Richardson, and others for providing cover scans from their collections.

Footnotes

08. I am thankful to doyenne of girlie-mag editors Dian Hanson for pointing this out to me.
Recollections of a Porno Photographer

By Gary Sohler

I have a mental image of Milton Luros that is indelibly etched in memory. I worked for him for nearly two years as one of his two top staff photographers for the Parliament News line of girly books. Part of his genius was in bringing a new level of elegance and fine art to the porno magazine publishing business. Somebody once told me that Milt’s background was in fine art and it influenced every aspect of his magazine production. During the middle and late ’60s when I worked for Milt, the general mill run and ruck of girly magazines was hastily thrown together with mediocre photography, thoughtless art direction, no-talent models, sophomoric copy writing, and were printed on cheap paper. This pragmatic approach did not matter. It was content, in other words flesh, that sold magazines, and very few smut magazine publishers were out to win any industry awards.

Milt, on the other hand, always insisted on a better quality product in spite of the fact that market research would have probably shown his readership to be lower-middle income, blue collar working stiffs (no pun
This is my all-time favorite photo of Gary Sohler revealing his true spirit. Photo by Earl Kemp, Cañon de Guadalupe, Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico, circa 1966.

intended) who couldn't appreciate the finer touches Milt put on his publications. Nevertheless, he employed two very talented art directors, Wil Hulsey and Jerry Pecerrera, who oversaw the design, layout, and photo selection of every single magazine. They also reviewed and pre-approved each and every model before the staff photographers could book them. Milt also employed an entire stable of salaried copywriters and a savvy copy editor as well as a whole room full of airbrush artists who meticulously retouched every single black-and-white photograph. This to remove wrinkles and blemishes, but also to add highlights to the model's skin, giving it a "glow" that looked exactly like the thin rime of sweat during sexual excitation. He also used airbrush techniques to increase or decrease background value (lightness or darkness) to make the model jump out of the background. Milt took a great deal of satisfaction from surrounding himself with artistically talented, creative people. Doing this added to the quality of his magazines, and I think it lent an aura of respectability to what for most people was a shady business at best.

Milt's attention to detail, need for control and obsession with quality, extended to the printing of every magazine on a heavy, glossy starch-coated stock; a technique unheard of in the porn business and employed only by the high-end men's entertainment mags such as Playboy and a couple of others, the names of which I cannot remember. Eventually Milt hired the expertise and bought the buildings and equipment necessary to create a totally self-contained vertically integrated company that included every facet of magazine publishing from creation through distribution. He gave each division innocuous and respectable-sounding names such as, American Art Agency, Parliament News, London Press, Oxford Bindery, etc. Unfortunately these aristocratic company names were not enough to keep the federal marshals away when the raids inevitably came.

Milt's impeccable business acumen and his insistence on a better quality product eventually made him a very wealthy man. With the exception of a very few loyal and trusted inner circle employees however, who stayed with him for many years, most of the people that worked for him eventually left after a year or two amidst much rancor. I knew several people who departed Milt's empire insisting that they had been screwed in one way or another. I was one of them.

When I began to think about quitting as a staff photographer and going mainstream commercial and legit, Milt stepped in with an offer I couldn't refuse. He agreed to send me and my wife to Europe for one year on a paid assignment, buy us the tourist delivery car of our choice, give me a large raise and of course pay all expenses. I jumped at the chance. It turns out that Milt had an ulterior motive. He had been sending thousands of copies of unsold and returned magazines to his distributor in London at a large discount, but so many shipments had
been seized by customs that it was no longer profitable. Part of my assignment, in addition to producing three photo shoots a week, was to be the addressee for these magazine shipments. I agreed to this even though I was probably facing several years in The Queen's Prison for conspiracy to pornograph. Compared to what was being marketed in London, Milt's magazines were considered "hard core." The plan worked. I received several shipments in my name and everyone was happy, especially the London distributor, a wonderful man named Ben Holloway who eventually became a close friend.

After getting my act up and running in London in less than two weeks of my arrival, I was producing three high-quality, high-volume photo sessions per week, but sadly, both my expense reimbursement checks and my new large raise failed to materialize. I put up with this for almost three months, all the while phoning and writing letters to Fred Fixler, Milt's photo editor and my immediate boss. Eventually, after carrying this financial burden far past the point of comfort, I had to turn to Ben for assistance, which he readily provided. The situation became untenable and I began to suspect that Milt and Fred were fucking with me, secure in the delusion that because I was 7,000 miles away, I was in no position to argue. They were wrong. After much agonizing my wife and I dropped our leased house, shipped our car home, severed all London ties, and hopped a plane back to California. I showed up in Fred Fixler's office the following Monday morning, much to his and Milt's shock and dismay, and terminated my employment with a few choice words. Attempts to mollify me were futile and before leaving I dropped a large invoice for money owed, wrote up a contract for the repayment of the loan on our new car, and returned all of the company's camera equipment. Milt eventually paid the money he owed me and I paid off the car loan to him, so no permanent damage was done and it is all blood under the bridge now. I did walk away from American Art Agency with an invaluable education that I have used all my life.

Bea Luros occupied an office right next door to Milt's, but mercifully wasn't there much. Of course she had no job title, no job description and no real function in the company, but she swung a lot of weight, did show up occasionally to shuffle papers around on her desk, eat enormous quantities of deli food and capture hapless employees who made the mistake of walking by her door. If this happened, and it happened to me several times, it was necessary to come in, sit down, and endure at least 30 minutes of meaningless blather, personal advice and Jewish parables, none of which had any relevance to anything whatsoever.

Bea was like a predatory octopus in her lair and everyone avoided her like the Ebola virus. It was a common practice by all employees who needed to get to Milt's office on business to peer around the corner of Bea's door and wait until she turned her head, took a bite of her corned beef on rye, dialed the phone or was otherwise distracted, then leap stealthily past her like a frightened insect ducking a praying mantis. My favorite memory is being in Milt's office talking business only to be startled shitless by Bea using the Jewish Intercom and bellowing at 90 decibels, "MIIIIIIIIIIIIILT!" to get his attention. Milt would roll his eyes up in his head, slap his forehead and mutter "Gevalt," or some other epithet, then dutifully rise up and trot off to Bea's office where he would get the treatment. Hell, maybe there is justice in the world.

I didn't really get to know Stanley Fleishman until after leaving Milt and going to work with Earl Kemp at Greenleaf Classics, but he was certainly one of the most fascinating characters in the industry. A First Amendment trial lawyer with Supreme Court privileges, Stanley was thoroughly crippled and wheelchair bound. He wore some elaborate and archaic-looking body braces and could get about most dramatically with the help of one crutch. He reminded me a lot of a Stephen Hawking, who couldn't move around and talk without the aid of a computer-generated voice machine. I'm sure he was just as brilliant.

Stanley successfully defended countless porno publishers before every federal court in the land and was so astute, so well prepared and so incredibly crafty that the cases brought against his clients fell like chaff before a storm in court and eventually amounted to nothing more than expensive harassment. In the end, in complete frustration, that's what prosecutors and attorneys general had to resort to, since no case, however well reasoned, could stand against Stanley Fleishman's arguments.

It was as a magazine "packager" for Greenleaf that I got to know Stanley quite well. Packaging a magazine
entailed creating (shooting, writing, and designing) all of the material, assembling it to camera-ready status, and delivering it to Stanley for final approval before printing. For nearly a year and a half I produced two and sometimes even three and four 64-page magazine titles per month for Earl Kemp.

These are the type magazines Gary Sohler packaged for Greenleaf Classics. Scans courtesy Tony Jacobs Collection.

Since Stanley only had the use of one arm, and poorly at that, I would arrange a large stack of black-and-white photos I proposed to use in the magazine, set up a light table with a magnifying glass for viewing color transparencies, and slowly turn the photos one at a time while Stanley would relegate them to a "yes" or a "no" pile. Since I brought 30% more photos than were necessary, we always ended up with a good magazine, but I was endlessly fascinated watching Stanley's mind gears whirl as he scrutinized each photo and determined if, in some future hypothetical court case, in some as-yet undetermined jurisdiction, he could defend it. It was a purely brilliant intuitive process and I would carefully study both the "yes" and the "no" piles when I got home to see if I could glean some guidelines for future photo shoots since my biggest value to Earl Kemp and Greenleaf was my ability to absolutely "push the prurience line" in my photos. In fact, one of my Naked Now titles I believe was the only Greenleaf magazine ever to be busted on a federal pornography rap and go to court. Of course Stanley got the case thrown out on the first day. He wasn't an attorney; he was an insurance policy.

Even though Stanley Fleishman's billable time was worth hundreds of dollars per hour even back then, he told me that he always scheduled extra time for our "reviews" so that we could bullshit about the business, the models, his court cases, or the latest industry gossip. I felt very privileged by this and enjoyed every minute of his company. I will never forget walking into his Hollywood office one day and seeing a sign taped up on Stanley's door that had obviously been stolen from the County Courthouse by one of his mischievous staff members. The sign said, "Public Defender," and the "L" in Public had been very carefully covered over with whiteout.

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It became clear to me early on that people at all levels get into the porno business for basically three reasons:

1) They have unresolved personal sexual issues and prurient interests that just can't be worked out anywhere else.
2) They are genuine libertarians, free-thinkers, and sincere defenders of the First Amendment.
3) They have found out that it is a way to make a very fast and large buck.

Of course in reality people usually get into the business for a combination of reasons. I was probably one of those people. When I hit my stride with Greenleaf in the late '60s I was, as I said, packaging two to four mags a month for a price of $2,500 to $3,000 per. Since I worked out of my house, hired and directed the models,
arranged the photo shoots, had my own photo lab, and did all of the copy writing and graphic design, my only overhead expenses were model fees, film, lab supplies, gasoline, location fees, and typesetting, therefore the net profit on each delivered magazine was around 90%. Gloria, my wonderful wife at the time, was my assistant and was invaluable at calming the rookie models, selecting the lingerie outfits, and doing the models’ minimal hair and makeup.

The ‘60s being what they were; a time of unprecedented social upheaval, generational divisiveness and general rebellion, sexual liberation and drug-fueled anarchy, there was never a shortage of young, open-minded people who were the cannon fodder for endless adult photo shoots. During my heyday it was typical to hire two to three models (m&f) for a one-day shoot, three times a week and seldom use the same people twice. Model fees were $45 for a half day (4hours) and $70 for a full day (6-8 hours.) For a full-day shoot, the model received $50 and the model agent got $20. Cash. No checks.

In those crazy days it seemed that there was an endless supply of starry-eyed vagrant young women (and guys) who had migrated to California and especially to Hollywood from all over America hoping to find…what? Freedom? Fame? Love? Money? The vast majority ended up wandering the streets and many ended up in front of my camera for cash trading on the only commodity they had; their young attractive naked bodies. There were at least seven "legitimate" model agencies catering to the needs of approximately 20 full-time L.A. porno photographers. I use the word "porno" here to mean mainstream soft-core porn; not the hard-core suck ‘em, fuck ‘em, do the animals, B&D, S&M stuff.

My experiences with these Hollywood model agencies and the seemingly endless array of good-looking young naked bodies was covered in "Acres of Nubile Flesh" in e/15 August 2004.

--Earl Kemp

During this era my photos for both Milt Luros and Earl Kemp contained full frontal nudity (both male and female), "split beaver" e.g. full vaginal exposure, implied penetration by either a guy, a finger or an object, lesbian sex (with very limited actual touching,) group sex with the previous proscriptions, and female masturbation.

As I mentioned about Stanley Fleishman, the above "rules" were not rules but guidelines. The "legally defensible prurience envelope" was dynamic and fluid depending on lighting, camera angle, story line, body part proximity, context, and a hundred other variables. This made coming up with constantly new ideas and posing the models infinitely challenging, but also infinitely interesting.

Though I was told many times by many people that they would literally kill to have my job, there were built-in drawbacks to photographing beautiful naked women all day for $100K a year, and one of the drawbacks eventually drove me out of the business for good. I called it pussy burnout, and that's exactly what it was. Try to imagine working three times a week with beautiful young naked women in front of a camera where it is necessary to constantly evoke from them blatant sexuality that will "read" on film. It seems like a movie cliché, but it really was necessary for me to enter into a very intimate and vigorous dialogue with my models, seduce them with words and gestures, and maintain a high-pitched level of sexual tension for hours in order to extract the kind of "look" and camera presence I needed to really capture the emotion.

This intensity coupled with the necessity of literally spending hours and hours looking at, evaluating, and sorting through thousands of explicit photos of tits, ass, and snatch eventually overloaded my sexual circuits. Now some guys would say, "Yeah shit, what a way to die," but it was not fun at all and it finally interfered with my wife’s and my sex life. Interfered to the point that I couldn't stand the sight of her body even though she was quite attractive and we were young, healthy, and normally libidinous. We interpreted this to be a sign from God that it was time to get out of the business, take our money and run, and move to Hawaii, which we did.

There was one other incident that happened concurrent to pussy burnout that clinched my decision to abandon
the porno business. I received a hysterical phone call at 3:00 A.M. one morning from a fellow photographer and part-time model agent telling me that one of the biggest and busiest Hollywood model agents we all patronized had just been shot through the head at his apartment by the husband of one of his models. When I finally managed to get the story out of this guy, it went like this:

Jack (can't remember his last name) the model agent was a self-styled poor-man's Hugh Hefner. He ran a well-organized model agency out of his Hollywood apartment and acquired his models right off the mean streets of Hollywood, very often picking them up just as they had spent their last dollar and were facing homelessness and hunger. He had a good eye for the pretty ones and would take them home, feed them, shoot a proof sheet of them, and hustle them out to myself and the other active photographers. The only problem with this was that he would, more often than not, work them into his bed, sometimes as many as three at a time.

One girl in particular, a real fresh-faced, corn-fed 19-year-old stunner had run away from home somewhere in the Bible belt much to the chagrin of her family and her fiancé. The fiancé had family money and hired a detective agency to track her down, which they did, right to Jack's apartment. Reading the very detailed P.I. report, the fiancé went batshit, got himself heavily armed at a local gun shop, kicked in Jack's door, and promptly shot everyone in the apartment; Jack, his fiancée, and two other models. According to the detective who found the bodies, they were "So full of lead they had to remove them with a forklift." God spare us from L. A. cop humor.

But it gets worse. Not only was the berserk fiancé still on the loose, according to my photographer friend, he had had the presence of mind to pick up Jack's personal phone directory, which of course contained the names of all of his client photographers, and was presumably on his way to methodically assassinate each one of us in turn. My wife and I spent the rest of the night at her sister's house in Redondo Beach and the next morning we promptly boarded a flight to Hawaii for a little unscheduled vacation. I later heard that every single porno photographer in town did the same. The fiancé was apprehended a couple of days later and locked up forever, but when he was arrested he had in his possession a Hearn L.A. Street Atlas and had clearly marked the homes of about half the photographers, including me. I didn't need any further encouragement to drop out of the wild, wonderful, and crazy porno business and go become a professional surfer in Hawaii.

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I never actually saw Bea and Milt Luros do the "good cop / bad cop routine on anyone. I do know that whenever faced with a tough decision (read: a tough money decision such as a request for a raise, a request for an advance against salary, etc.) to which he wanted to say "No," but found difficult, he would simply say, "Oh, shit, if I did that, Bea would kill me. She'd KILL me. But if you want to go ask her yourself…." End of conversation.

I didn't know that Milt started out as an illustrator of science fiction magazines, but it makes sense. He had a highly developed artistic sense and was always striving to elevate his publications in the direction of fine art.

Old Leather Hide

The Stan Sohler and Barbara Gordon that I first met in 1965 are shown in the photograph to the left. Stan had arranged to meet me at Greenleaf Classics and talk me into buying packaged magazines from him about naked people. Along the way, he was determined to change my life and the lives of everyone near and dear to me.

On the occasion of that first visit to my office in San Diego, Stan and Barbara created such a presence in the office as to be almost disruptive because, among other things, they began trying to solicit the editorial and clerical staff into joining them in a totally naked lifestyle. Not exactly the most ordinary way to begin any relationship, but relationship it was.

Stan had a permanent grin on his face and a robust, booming laugh. Around his neck he wore garlands of peace symbols and strings of "organic love beads," but so did many other people in those anti-Vietnam War days. Only Stan's organic love beads were very special because he gathered them up and strung them himself.
He proudly showed them off to anyone who would look at them, touch them, listen to him...telling them how he would collect the rabbit shit pellets personally at the peak of their stratification and painstakingly string them to adorn not only his but the necks of many close, personal, otherwise completely naked friends.

During that same first visit, while they were abusing the staff, my secretary came and told me privately that, "some unusual people were there to see me, with old, burnished leather hides." Unknown to Stan, the nickname of "old leather hide" followed him around our offices for a number of months.

In no time at all, Stan Sohler by any other name was packaging *Naked Now* for Greenleaf Classics. And, between photography sessions, leading me and my lifestyle astray. He took me to Cañon de Guadalupe, the exquisite private hot springs resort near Mexicali in Baja California, Mexico. He touted me to the fabled beachfront hot springs in Portecitos, in the same state. He treated me to many sessions of ogling gorgeous naked models as they posed coyly at his direction.

A year or so later, when Stan Sohler formally promoted me from Nude Nerd to Naked Man, he presented me with an official American Sunbathing Association Gold Medal Member medallion for superior exhibitionism. I still have that medallion and keep it safe among my best treasures. That's a picture of it to the right (see photo).

Then he sneaked off with Barbara for a bit more rolling around in hot springs but not before he dumped a real load right on me.

Gary, Mel, and Randy, the fucking Disney Duck nephews...almost too much for any deity to withstand. I was lucky when I discovered how easily Gary could be bribed, and how wonderful it was to just drift away on "White Bird" wings with Mel or dream expansively with Randy about a nevertobeland.

--Earl Kemp

**The Sun Era Era:** Yes, it is true that my father Stan Sohler did in fact work for Milt. He not only created the entire line of Sun Era Magazines, he created the entire line of Jaybird titles as well, as I'll explain later. Stan, who later changed his name to Jayson Loam, came to the publishing business through the social nudism movement. Our entire family, from as early as I can remember, practiced social nudism, and at one time Stan was president of both the Western Sunbathing Association (WSA) and, for two consecutive terms, the American Sunbathing Association (ASA). I can say with all humility that Stan Sohler was an innovator and a pioneer.

In 1958 he convinced the Santa Cruz County Council to let him hold an experimental clothing optional beach outing at Davenport Beach, just north of the City of Santa Cruz. He called it XB-58 (Experimental Beach-1958) and it was a smashing success, receiving lots of favorable press coverage in the local and San Francisco papers, including carefully screened photos and long shots of naked people roaming the beach and freezing their asses off because it was colder than Siberia in January on that beach.
During our nudist adventures, Stan met Ed Lange, later the owner of Elysium Fields in Topanga, but in the early days a widely respected publisher of legitimate nudist magazines. My Dad went to work for Ed as a photographer, writer, editor, and general collaborator. Stan and Ed were fast friends and both enjoyed nudist politics and competing on the volleyball team from their traveling nudist club, Sundial.

Stan eventually broke away from Ed and went out to freelance on his own, shooting layouts for the ASA official publications, but became disenchanted with the organization and its doctrinaire positions on singles, tasteful displays of affection in camps, social nudity only within the sanctioned boundaries of bona fide ASA/WSA member nudist camps and several other burdensome restrictions. In the late '50s Stan went to Florida armed with a single Rolleiflex camera, a boat and five models to shoot a new idea of his called "Photo Field Trip." This was Stan thumbing his nose at the nudist establishment, and he ended up shooting enough film to put together an entire magazine based on people enjoying social nudism in a remote, safe, and beautiful location; in this first case it was in the Florida Keys on some gorgeous atoll islands. I believe he sold the package (text, photos, layout, etc.) to Ed Lange, who published it. It was a smashing success and it pissed the ASA official magazine publishers off to no end. They wanted to burn my father for a heretic.

Expanding on the idea, Stan approached Milton Luros sometime in the early '60s with the idea of publishing an entire line of legitimate, but much more liberated and artistically aesthetic nudist magazines including the titles Sun Era, Continental Nudist, Photo Field Trip, Backyard Nudist, and eventually several others. Luros went for it in a big way and created an entire new division called Sun Era, Inc. The magazines, created by Stan and produced by Milt's now totally integrated publishing and distribution company, were very successful and satisfied Stan's crusade for greater personal freedom and healthy self-expression through nudism, and of course Milt's never-changing agenda of making a buck off a good thing.

It was during this time that Stan met, through Ed Lange, a photographer by the name of William (Bill) Graham. Not the San Francisco rock promoter, by the way. Bill Graham was an extraordinarily gifted photographer who had done work for many national magazines such as Esquire and Playboy. He had thirteen Playboy centerfolds to his credit and, despite the fact that he was a mystic, a loadie, and a dirty old man of no small consequence; he had an unsurpassed eye for beauty, lighting, composition, and the human form. If you can ever get your hands on a hardcover book called What Is A Woman (published by Ed Lange), you'll see just how gifted this guy was. Bill Graham and my father became fast friends, mostly through their association with Leary, Alpert, and Metzner. Yes, the same trio of acid-dropping Stanford professors who made history in those early days of LSD. In fact, I did my first acid trip at 17 years of age on pure pharmaceutical Sandoz LSD courtesy Tim Leary & company, my father, and Bill Graham. But I digress.
Back to Bill Graham. I could never figure out why Bill Graham would want to come and work for Milt (actually for my father at Sun Era) shooting wholesome nude photos when he could have continued forever photographing and boinking *Playboy* centerfolds and hanging out at Hef’s Mansion, but he did. Much of the success of the Sun Era magazines was a result of Bill Graham’s extraordinarily beautiful and innovative photography. Bill became my mentor and taught me much of what I know about photography today.

It was also during this time that my father arranged to have me promoted out of Milt Luros’ photo lab where I was working full time while going to Art Center College of Design part time as a photography major. I became the junior (to Bill Graham) staff photographer. Though nepotistic, my father’s argument was sound: I had a long-time background in nudism and therefore “knew” the business. I was a budding and fair-to-middling photographer, and besides he had several magazines to fill with photos every month. These were the days when the Sun Era line of magazines were far outselling even Milt’s well-established line of Parliament girly books, so my father pretty much got whatever he wanted.

For the next year or so my father, Bill Graham, and I planned, directed, and executed dozens of location photo shoots to both nudist camps and to remote areas all over the western states and Mexico, using local nudists in the camps for models, or hiring professional models (from the same model agencies I mentioned earlier) for the traveling location shoots. It became a challenge to see how wild and extravagant we could be in coming up with far-away scenically beautiful locations, and many of

Stan Sohler (now Jayson Loam) directing and photographing a shoot in Gary’s kitchen in Manhattan Beach, California for one of the magazines he packaged for Greenleaf Classics. Circa 1969.

Jayson Loam (then Stan Sohler) writing articles for American Sunbathing Magazine out of the back of the family station wagon at Lupin Lodge, a nudist camp between Los Gatos and Santa Cruz, California. Photo by Ed Lange dated 1958.
these turned out to be in Baja, California where the sun always shined, the backgrounds were breathtaking (especially on the Sea of Cortez), the weed was cheap, and we could be assured of being completely alone for several days.

Many of the locations we chose could only be reached by either boat or airplane and I recall many location shoots where Bill and I were in charge, accompanied by five or six young beautiful models for four to five days on stunningly beautiful remote beaches with tons of gourmet food, booze, our camping gear, and a shopping bag full of marijuana. My father, who often could not accompany us on these extravaganzas due to the pressure of his executive editor position, would give Bill and me only one admonition as we headed out the door: "Just bring back the damned film, boys." And we always did. No matter which of us three ventured out on these bacchanals, we never failed to bring back hundreds of gorgeous photos; far in excess of what was expected or what was needed to fill the magazine we were shooting for. Thus we traveled and lived like decadent Bedouin sheiks all on Milt's nickel.

Milt often shit a brick when presented with our expense account reports which always arrived on his desk in advance of the actual photos, but quickly recanted when deluged by the avalanche of good, solid, useable photos that looked nothing like any other publisher could even dream of. He always got more than his money's worth even though we routinely made a deal with the models up front to work our asses off for the first two or three days of the trip and get the shoot in the can, then kick back for the remainder of the trip and get completely fucked up out of our minds. It was the '60s version of the Protestant Work Ethic.

In an era when paranoia about pornography was running at a high pitch, it was absolute anathema to depict anyone under 18 years of age in any girlie publication. In fact I think Stan Fleishman found himself defending a couple of court cases in which the models were legitimately 18 (or so it said on the model release), but looked to be much younger. There was, is, and always will be a market for pedophilia and Milt discovered early on that because the Sun Era Magazines were "legitimate" nudist publications-they later received an endorsement from the ASA/WSA thanks to my father-they could show nude pictures of teenagers, adolescents, and even children all day long and there wasn't a damned thing the law could do about it since that issue had been settled years ago in a supreme court case in which the ASA publication spent a fortune to defend its position and won.

Needless to say, having several magazine titles chock full of high-quality photos of good-looking teenagers and kids didn't hurt sales any. My father was well aware of this, and when I braced him on the moral implications one day, he told me, "Hey, yeah there are always going to be hordes of drooling perverts out there who buy the magazine solely to stare at the young girls and the kids, but as a famous man once told me, 'there's no such thing as bad publicity, only publicity.' By exposing anyone to the idea of nudity in a social context, maybe
we've opened their minds just a little bit." Yeah, my father was a visionary and an optimist, but he was also a real pragmatist.

**The Jaybird Era:** Here is how the Jaybird line of magazines came to be: Every Sun Era nudist magazine title had a letters to the editor section and, like a good executive editor, my father read each and every letter. One day he received one from a Pacoima housewife who admitted that she spent the entire day, after she had shoveled her husband and kids out the door of course, "Naked as a Jaybird" while she did her housework. My father had an epiphany over this and realized that here was a whole world of unexploited nudity; ordinary people practicing nudism in their own homes and backyards. Once again he sold the idea to Milt and the first Jaybird magazine opened with an illustrated feature of, you guessed it, the actual Pacoima housewife doing her housework in the nude. Big fucking deal, you say? If you think that there wasn't an implied but very strong voyeuristic aspect to this, then think about it again. Milt Luros was no fool.

After the first issue went out, Stan was inundated with letters from people in all sorts of unusual situations, both at work and at home, who regularly lived their lives naked. From the dive shop in The Valley which conducted non-publicized but popular naked SCUBA trips to Catalina Island, to the U.S. Forest Service female fire-watch ranger who spent the whole summer naked up in her fire-spotting tower in the mountains, there was a whole new endless supply of people being naked in the most unusual, though non-erotic circumstances. Naked artists with their naked models. Naked horse trainers and their naked horses. The noodle shop owner who wore nothing but a short apron to keep his nuts from getting scalded. The professional dance troupe that did all their rehearsals sans leotards. And on and on it went. There was no shortage of situations. The big challenge in the editorial meetings was deciding what to leave out so that Jaybird-and later Jaybird International-didn't become "The Gong Show."

My recollections of Robert Reitman are vague since I only met him a couple of times. I believe he came on board and took over my father's position at Jaybird right after Stan and Milt had their eventual, acrimonious, and inevitable split over some philosophical difference or another. I do remember Bob Reitman as a pedantic, anal retentive, insufferable asshole whom everyone hated.

**The Gary and Jerry Illustrated Paperback Show**

Earl Kemp gets the credit for introducing me to Jerry Murray. I was one of Earl's magazine packagers and Jerry was one of Earl's top paperback writers, so I suppose the marriage was inevitable. I wrote about this adventure and visiting in Mexico in "Disgracias Con Diablo El Mismo" in e3 July 2002.
Illustrated paperbacks were not a new idea, but I guess Earl decided to resurrect the format for Greenleaf as an experiment. It proved to be a winner.

After an initial meeting in Earl's office in San Diego, Jerry and I agreed to take the ball and run with it. Jerry already had a story ready in galleys and we figured we'd go ahead and try to illustrate it. I hadn't read the story yet, so Jerry and I agreed that he would write up a "shopping list" of models, props, and backgrounds, send it to me and then I would arrange the shoot whereupon he would drive up to L.A. to act as technical consultant and story supervisor, which means that he would get to ogle and drool on the models officially and get paid for it. I'll never forget receiving Jerry's "shopping list." I may be exaggerating a little, but I think it looked something like this:

Models:

- 3 male midgets
- 2 young guys; one very hairy, one no body hair. Both well hung.
- 1 uncircumcised old man with one leg
- 1 guy with a dick like a bullfighter's sword
- 2 young ravishing blondes who will perform analingus
- 1 old hag with tattoos and no teeth
- 1 guy who looks like Benito Mussolini

Props:

- 1 WW II Sherman tank
- 1 baseball bat
- 1 bullfighter's suit of lights
- 1 30-foot Saguaro cactus
- 1 full set medieval "Inquisition-grade" torture instruments
- 1 bowl of hot tomato soup
- 1 WW II Fokker airplane
- 1 London 1800's typical street gas lamp
- 30 feet of manila rope
- 1 large cucumber

Backgrounds:

- The Taj Mahal
- The inside of Ernest Hemingway's boat
- The Hollywood Bowl
- Typical Japanese Geisha bedroom
- Madrid bullfighter's "ready-room"
- An Istanbul jail cell
- A Napoleon-era French walk-in closet
When I had calculated the budget for this at around $300,000 (1969 dollars), I called Jerry and reluctantly told him that we were going to have to scale back a bit. After much haggling we settled on the two chicks who would lick assholes, one well-hung guy, the baseball bat, and the Valley house. The result was a smashing success and from there we went on to do several more illustrated paperbacks. In time Earl even let us do a remote location shoot in Baja, California at a beautiful place called Guadalupe Canyon, but only because he had never talked to Milt Luros and didn't know about my history of travel expense budget abuse.

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Special thanks to Gary Sohler for making his family photo albums available for use with this article and to Tony Jacobs for the cover scans accompanying it.

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Sex is the mathematics urge sublimated.

-- M.C. Reed

Milton Luros' Times Square Wise Guy

By Jay A. Gertzman

Milton Luros, like other entrepreneurs pioneering a new approach to success, was a highly inventive and independent person. In California, he proved himself with his smart business decisions, his moxie, and his respect for various approaches. He built a reputation for his helpfulness to colleagues, his shrewdness in choosing friends, and his ability to make his decisions obeyed and respected. He knew almost uncannily the borderline between erotic and pornographic text and images, and he knew talent when he saw it. Under his Essex House imprint, he published fiction and poetry by Charles Bukowski, Barry Malzberg, Dave Meltzer, and Philip Jose Farmer. Certainly, William Hamling and Rueben Sturman learned a lot from him, including how to use corporation law to their advantage. When, in 1966, a reporter from the World Telegram Sun insisted on an interview, Luros told him who he was:

Back East I was an art director, and I don't think I'm bragging to say that I was one of the very finest. What's happening now [censorship of sex pulp paperbacks] is exactly what happened when Manet hung his "Luncheon in the Park" in the National Gallery... A relatively short time has passed, but it is considered one of the world's great masterpieces.

Maintaining his respectability with a reclusive lifestyle, he avoided as much as possible the moral pabulum and "human interest" gossip disguised as TV and newspaper journalism that hurt Hamling and Sturman. He and his wife Bea supported people such as Stanley Fleishman, the brilliant First Amendment lawyer, and Governor Jerry Brown. The Luros' two sons became a judge and a physician respectively.
Before moving to California in 1961, Luros learned about the business of borderline publishing in New York. Therefore he must have known not only illustrators, writers, and publishers of under-the-counter magazines, strip sets, calendars, and novelties, but also distributors of the materials and bookstore personnel. As Steve Gertz has documented, Luros was illustrating science fiction, and then girlie magazine covers, before he went west. Some talented people working with him were Richard E. Geis ("Peggy Swenson"), Hank Stine, and Andrew J. Offut ("John Clese"). We do not know much about his New York contacts, but two of them were significant. The first was Sam Merwin, Jr. who moved from science fiction with Luros and wrote a number of Parliament's best-selling novels as "Jerry Crowell," "Stanley Curson," and possibly others.

The second was a man with organized crime connections, being allied with the Genovese family. This was "Jimmy Rush," from whom Luros borrowed money. His real name was James Picarelli, and he haunted Luros for at least a decade after Parliament News began operating in North Hollywood.

Luros' FBI dossier includes many pages of surveillance of his activities. A 1971 report states, "On Nov. 13, 1969, Luros admitted to Sgt. ____ and ____ , intelligence decision, LAPD, that in 1961 he borrowed $10,000 from a friend of his in New York named James Picarelli [sic] and that individual has since that time claimed to be equal partners with Luros." The report goes on to say that Luros paid $17,000 in 1963, but that Picarelli "still claims to be a part owner of all the corporations in which Luros is involved." It is not clear whether that amount was to pay back the loan in full, or to buy out Picarelli's share in Parliament, but the jury clearly though the later was the case. In any event, by 1970 Luros had built a lucrative business, and with the typical gangster's voracity for money and power, Picarelli wanted in. In 1971, he filed a civil suit against Luros, who was represented by Harold Fahringer. Testimony showed what the consequences were of borrowing money from a disreputable source. In 1966, Parliament News sent "Jimmy Rush" three large shipments of publications consisting of 11, 10, and 12 cartons respectively. Picarelli contended that these shipments were simply "gifts," and that he was not
required to send Luros any percentage of the money he received from selling the items, which were magazines with pictures of nude women. In addition, a witness for Luros stated that as an employee of Parliament he send Picarelli two envelops; the sole contents of each were $5,000 in cash. Picarelli wanted the judge and advisory jury to conclude that he owned a third of Parliament News. He failed. The jury agreed that there was indeed a contract between the parties "for the sale of one third interest in Parliament News Company." But they stated that if Luros paid Picarelli $13,000, his debt had been honored and he would never have to concern himself in future with Picarelli's demands.

Picarelli was not primarily a loan shark; he was a pornographer who, with his brother Vincent, owned several adult bookstores in Times Square. But the so-called "vices" and the rackets were interconnected. Pariah capitalists logged convictions for pornography as well as theft, loan sharking, extortion, pimping, and gambling. Here are some examples. Book trade rumor specified one Benny Glass, whose store was near Bob's Bargain Books, as having gangland connections and fencing stolen goods from the Garment Center. In 1975, then elderly, Glass was identified by Martin Hodas, the first entrepreneur to place peep booths in Times Square bookstores, as the mob-connected go-between to whom he paid $5,000 a week in protection money. Eddie Mishkin, 42nd Street's Smut King in the 1950s, began his career in bookmaking and the publishing of "Dream Books" featuring numbers combinations. Perhaps the booksellers whom fetish artist Eric Picarelli knew--if Stanton was leveling with his interviewer--as "On the Level Willie," "Mousy the Rat," "Fourteen Carat Freddie," or "Subway Pete" [Vaccarella; a partner of Eddie Mishkin] were members of Times Square's sporting subculture. If so, they needed the quick and easy money that selling erotica could bring them to pay off gambling debts or lawyer's fees. Such men would have been under pressure from their loan shark, who paid the debts and therefore owned the gambler. The loan shark might in fact have forced a gambler-bookseller who could not pay the "vig" to sign the business over to him or to make him a partner, so that he could use the store to claim legitimacy for his financial transactions, or launder money through it. When word got back to the mob bankers that a bookstore owner had run up debts, his store became yet another reason for the presence of gamblers, loan sharks, and extortionists in the area.

In this subculture Vincent and James were prominent, as a 1971 report of the New York State Temporary Committee of Investigation details. In the mid and late 1960s, they owned at least four adult bookstores with peep machines, all on West 42nd Street. Victor, who was the principal owner of the stores, received a salary of $300 per week (about $1,550 in 2004 currency) from VIP Novelties, and an additional $150 from both the Bee See Book Shop and L&R Book Shop. At least some of that loot was stashed in his attic, as is common practice with gangsters who cannot afford to have it traced, and who resent paying taxes. Victor also owned Palace Books, Inc. When these four stores were raided in 1968, police found 8 mm. films, magazines, photo sets, and decks of cards. They also uncovered hard core materials in a safe at VIP worth almost $7,000. Most of the profits from the Picarelli stores came from what was then considered hard core.

Victor employed James and another brother in all four bookstores, in various capacities. Now, this was five years after Luros moved west, but it must be assumed that the Picarellis were major forces in both hard and soft core retailing at the time Luros was in New York. Even given the vested interest of civic and state investigators in making dramatic claims, and the consequent exaggeration and inaccuracy of their reporting, the smoke immersing James' and Victor's operations conceals some fire.

The Picarellis dealt with some mob-related criminals. Victor was a principal shareholder in Martin Hodas' Island Amusement Corporation. Hodas was the originator of the peep booth machine in New York City, and from 1968 on had organized crime connections (it isn't clear whether he approached the mob for protection or whether he was threatened). Investigators also noted the presence of several important mob figures in the Picarelli's bookstores. Anthony Riccardi ("Kid Chocolate") was a member of the Colombo family. Charles "The Blade" Tourine had been involved in a variety of racketeering, and was indicted in 1969 for arranging with fetish publisher Lenny Burtman a smuggling scheme involving pornographic booklets imported from Denmark. Joseph ("Joe Bikini") Brocchini, owner of three bookstores and a magazine and film distributorship, was the first insider who challenged Hodas' peep show monopoly. After the 1971 shooting of Joe Colombo weakened Hodas' chances of protection from the Colombos, Brocchini replaced Hodas' machines with his own. Brocchini, who owned the notoriously sleazy Black Jack Books, had been involved in extortion and loan sharking. Garrett Williams was another owner of several bookstores; he was mentioned prominently in a survey of Times Square porno outlets in the mid 1960s. The Temporary Commission of Investigation reported that Victor Picarelli's 37
bookstore employees included some with criminal records for a variety of crimes. The convictions were for vagrancy, disorderly conduct, bookmaking, burglary, weapons possession, and assault, as well as for selling obscenity.

Milton Luros might not have known any of the individuals the Picarellis dealt with. However, the brothers were part of the inner entrepreneurial circle of the porn trade, and a number of writers and artists must have had some acquaintance with them, and their insalubrious clerks. Luros must have decided to involve himself in erotic book and magazine publishing before he moved to California. He would have needed to learn the trade. Above- and under-the-counter publishing, and wholesaling and retailing of titillating, prurient interest material required skills in printing, marketing, transportation, networking, and First Amendment law. Times Square was the logical place to learn what to do and on whom one needed to rely and borrow money.

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*Love is the same as like except you feel sexier.*

— Judith Viorst

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**To Bea or Not To Bea**

By Victor J. Banis

I met Milton and Bea Luros under less than auspicious circumstances. My very first book, *The Affairs of Gloria* (by “Victor Jay,” BH906, 1965), had been published by Brandon House books. To my great dismay, some months after its publication, I was informed that I (we) had been indicted on a Federal charge of conspiring to distribute obscene material. It was at our indictment at the Federal Court House in Los Angeles that I was first introduced to the couple, along with eight fellow defendants including writers Richard E. Geis and Sam Merwin, Jr. Subsequently, we spent four months together in Sioux City, Iowa, on trial—you get well acquainted at such a time—and later, I did much business with their publishing houses. So, I got to know them on a personal level (admittedly, a forced one) and on a business level.

I adored Milt Luros. What was not to adore? He was intelligent. He was an artist. He was, yes, diffident, soft spoken, one of the most courteous persons I have ever known. He was, in short, what we used to call a “Gentleman of the Old School” (which, in case you didn’t know, burned down some years ago). With the possible exception of some prosecuting attorneys and a postal inspector or two, I think everyone adored Milt.

Here is the surprise part: I also adored Bea. Now, when some of you pick yourselves up off the floor, I will tell you why, in my usual roundabout fashion.

Some years ago I was having lunch with friends at Musso and Frank's on Hollywood Boulevard. If you are a book person, and you haven't been there, you need to go. In the heyday of the movies, the '40s and the '50s, Musso's was known as the Algonquin West, the place where the writing community hung out - Dorothy Parker, Christopher Isherwood, the rest. It is a bastion of old style class in the midst of Hollywood's decay. The service is brusque, New York fashion, and the food is excellent. They make a wonderful martini and the bar is ancient mahogany. In other words, it's a "writer-ly" sort of place.

I didn't start out to give you a restaurant review, however; the real story was that, at the next table to us sat Shelley Winters. This was shortly after the release of *The Poseidon Adventure* and Shelley was, to say the least, far more than the least size-wise. Dining with her—at least ostensibly dining—were two men—one, an oldish
gentleman, I took to be her agent or perhaps her manager; the other, we decided, was probably a boy-toy.

I say "ostensibly dining" because in fact neither of them got much to eat. What was fascinating—indeed, alarming—about the scene we were privileged to witness was that throughout the entire lunch, Shelley managed to eat everything on her plate and most of what was on theirs, fork flying in every direction, and all without once missing a beat in her non-stop monologue. It was an awesome performance. The only thing that prevented us from afterward labeling Shelley a slob was that she was a movie star and, as everyone knows, movie stars aren't slobs, they are, well, movie stars.

Bea Luros was no movie star. She was a slob. Par excellence, if one might so put it. If Shelley's performance was masterful, Bea could approach the level of the Nobel Prize for slobbiness. Two other plates? Fie. I saw her clean an even half dozen without a mishap. Woe befalls the French fry that might slip from her mighty fork. My friend, the legendary Lady Agatha, watched one of these events with amused admiration. He would aim for a morsel on his own plate, only to have his tines strike bare china, the morsel having vanished in the twinkling it took his fork to travel those few inches. "Like a laser beam," he described the movement of her utensil, "The human eye can scarcely track it." And like Shelley, Bea could at the same time keep up an endless stream of chatter, shifting moods and stories with the skill of Al Unser at the gearbox: morose, bawdy, uplifting, scolding, bemused, fascinated, horrified. All to the rhythm of her open-mouthed chewing.

How could anyone like this woman, you might well ask? Ah, well, in the years since I first crawled about my mother's parlor—that is to say, when I drank my first pitcher of martinis—I have come to see that there are other things to consider in a person than their table manners, or lack thereof.

Milt was intelligent; Bea was shrewd. Together, their minds performed awesome feats—usually at someone else's expense. Well, gentleman or no, I never suspected Milt of being in the business for charity purposes.

Bea was funny. Together, in fact, they made a wonderfully comedic team, Bea often relating some wondrous tale with Milt adding wry observations and sotto voce asides to telling effect, sometimes—but not as often—reversing their roles. I more than once suspected them of rehearsing these shticks; or maybe they were twice told tales and I was getting the repeat, and polished, version. Whatever. I laughed then and still do to recall some of them—Bea's narration of their first flight on El Al, for example: "Our airline," as she put it, eyes rolled prayerfully heavenward. "We were so proud, right up until the cabin door closed," Her story finishes with the stewardess chasing them onto the tarmac in Jerusalem demanding the return of the deck of cards she had given Bea en route.

I can forgive an individual much for the sake of amusement. But Bea was more than a source of laughter. During the months in Sioux City, I was forbidden by Stanley Fleishman to engage in any gay activity, lest it get back to the jury pool and prejudice our case. I was a twenty-something fledgling gay activist. I walked, talked, and breathed gay, and here I was suddenly shoved back into a closet I thought I had finally broken free of. Well, sort of shoved into the closet. It would have been a pretty dull Iowan indeed who couldn't guess my sexual orientation, and though I might refrain from dragging those farm boys into the haystacks, be damned if I was going to butch it up, jury or no jury.

Still, I felt a bit persona non grata, the lone gay among all those heterosexuals, most of whom seemed disapproving (though some of that might just have been that I was feeling prickly). The exceptions were Paul Wisner (more about that later) and Bea.

Bea was downright welcoming of my gay-ness. I don't know if it was the Jewish Mama syndrome, or just an old fashioned good heart, or it might have been prurience plain and simple. Whatever the reason, she went out of her way to make me feel accepted. She often lent a sympathetic ear and talked quite frankly and with unabashed—sometimes perhaps a bit excessive—curiosity about my activities, romantic situation, etc. Well, all right, sometimes she got almost clinically personal. She wanted details, not generalities. It wasn't enough to
know that my boyfriend was older and attractive. She wanted the goods. Including how he was hung and on
which side. Still, a dirty mind never bothered me overmuch. We had many a good chortle. Usually, these were
without Milt’s presence. With Milt, it was don’t ask, don’t tell. With Bea, ask anything and tell all.

I wrote about that trial in "Paperback Virgin" that appeared in el6 January 2003

Richard E. Geis, one of Victor Banis’ codefendants in that Sioux City trial, wrote of his experiences in “Write
It Down And Dirty” that also appeared in the same issue of el/
--Earl Kemp

Our ordeal in Sioux City began in the fall and we all had hopes of its ending by Christmas; alas, it did not, and
we found ourselves, a dispirited group, wending our way back to Los Angeles a day before Christmas Eve with
the trial still hanging over our heads like stockings stuffed with time bombs. In Chicago, our flight was seriously
overbooked. Of course everyone was anxious to get back to families, wives, and children. Milt said, "Someone
will have to stick around here," and all eyes turned to me. I volunteered.

To my astonishment, Bea volunteered to stay with me, though she could have left on the earlier flight with the
others. It was actually more like eight hours that we spent schlepping together about that busy O'Hare Airport,
and of course another four or so in the plane. She was good company. I was glad to have her with me. And by
the time we got on the plane, she had let her hair down to the extent that she was entertaining the rest of the
cabin. I half expected her to do a Charleston down the aisle, though that might have put us all in some danger. I
don't know how much stress those planes are engineered to endure, but that would almost certainly have tested
the limits.

The trial ended in January. Over the next several years I did much business with Milt and Bea, and I was
always treated with the utmost courtesy and respect. Indeed, I was made to feel that I was an old friend. It is
probably difficult for anyone who hasn't gone through it (and I wouldn't wish it on anyone), but that shared
experience in the federal court house creates a special bond. We had been together through the trial by trial.
Fagella or no fagella, the message was, I had paid my dues. I was entitled.

I sometimes saw Milt and Bea work their good-cop, bad-cop routine on others. They never did with me. My
every proposal was heard politely and judged fairly, and with rare exceptions, bought generously. I have read
where Patrick J. Kearney, Steve Gertz, and others commented on the generous advances ($1,000) and royalty
contracts that were eventually offered to writers at the Essex House Division of Brandon Books. From our Sioux
City adventure on, I got at least that much on everything I sold Milt and Bea, and eventually far more for the
hard-core illustrated books --$7,000 per, in fact. And I got royalty contracts (but not on the illustrated books),
though I never saw any royalties. Nor did I with any of the other pulp publishers of the day, however. I know that
The Gay Haunt which was published by Girodias’ Other Traveller series, sold in excess of 150,000 copies, for
which I received not a sou in royalties. And while some of my books for Milt sold very well and might very well
have deserved royalties (Paul Wisner, who was in charge of shipping, confided to me that one reason the
federales were so interested in me was that my books were among Milt's best sellers) I have no doubt that
some of them failed to earn back their costs, but Milt continued to buy from me and pay top dollar, so I probably
came out about even in the long run.

By the mid-sixties Earl Kemp at Greenleaf Classics was having a grand success with gay paperbacks. Other
publishers quickly followed suit. Milt was a major holdout, however. When I finally did persuade him, it was Bea
who cast the deciding vote. I like to think it was out of gratitude for some of the juicy details I had provided her
about my boyfriends. Or maybe she just liked what was on my plate. In any case, I was grateful to her. It
opened up another major outlet for gay writers and over the next few years, Milt published a fair amount of gay
material. I was glad to have made a difference.
I don't think I ever visited the Parliament complex that Milt didn't come to see me personally, even when I was visiting others: Bob Reitman, e.g. Nor can I think of an instance that Bea didn't find time as well to say hello. At the very least. Usually we found time to chat, and I still enjoyed hearing her outrageous stories. And she still liked to hear everything that I was doing on the gay scene, with all the lurid details: the sex, the bars, the sex, the boyfriends, the sex, the marches, the...well, you get the picture. Milt always fled before we got to that part, and Bea would close the door, park herself at her desk, and flash those enormous, astonishingly innocent-looking eyes at me.

"Okay, give," she would say, and we would be off on a goggles and giggle session that might have made Lady Agatha blush.

Call her a fag-hag, call her a bitch, call her a slob. I was happy to call her my friend. And I still am.

#

As an afterword, since they were mentioned in the previous article, I thought I would offer my thoughts on a couple of others involved with the Luros enterprises. I worked often with Bob Reitman. I agree in general that he was an asshole, but he always trod cautiously with me, I think in large part because he knew that Bea and Milt were fond of me. I can tell only one interesting story, and even that I cannot personally vouch for, though I had no reason to doubt that truth of what I was told.

When Milt's company began doing the hard-core illustrated books, Reitman took it upon himself to "interview" models—generally couples—in his office. I was told by one rather unhappy couple that, once the door to his office was closed and locked, they were told to strip and perform. They did, and I heard that Reitman's hand remained beneath the level of his desktop the entire time, moving energetically. There's no business like show business, is there?

I said earlier that while we were in Sioux City the general attitude of my co-defendants toward my homosexuality was one of tacit disapproval, except for Bea and Paul Wisner. Paul seemed to think it was a hoot. He actually "cruised" for me by proxy. That is, whenever he met anyone in town who he took to be gay, he would rush to tell me of the discovery. I never acted upon any of these tips, since that was verboten, but I found his eagerness to be helpful quite endearing. It's hard for me to imagine Paul in the role of a Mafia captain. But those were strange times and they produced strange bed-partners.

Of course, Bea had to hear about them.

Love is the triumph of imagination over intelligence.
-- H.L. Mencken

[RACE MATHEWS was, as this article shows, one of the founder members of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club, and since 1992 has returned to an active interest in sf. To the rest of the world, however, he is Director of the Institute of Politics and Public Affairs in the Graduate School of Government at Monash University. He was Victoria's Minister for Community Services (1987-88) and Minister for the Arts and Minister for Police and Emergency Services (1982-87). He represented Oakleigh in the Victorian Legislative Assembly from 1979 to 1992, and Casey in the federal House of Representatives from 1972 to 1975, and was a Councillor for the City of Croydon from 1964 to 1966. He was Principal Private Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition in Victoria (1976-79) and federally (1967-72). His Australia's First Fabians: Middle-Class Radicals, Labour Activists and the Early Labour Movement was published by Cambridge University Press in 1993, and he is currently writing about the co-operative movement in Britain, Canada and Spain.

Race Mathews opened each of the 1975 and 1985 Worldcons, both held in Melbourne.
--Bruce R. Gillespie
First encounters

Any account of the origins of the Melbourne Science Fiction Group (MSFG), which later became the Melbourne Science Fiction Club, must in the nature of things be as much about biography as history. In order to understand how the MSFG was established, it is necessary also to understand how in the first place the Group's founders acquired tastes for science fiction which were tantamount to an addiction, and what it was that led them on further to the point where an organisation was required. In as much as what follows sets out the development of my own reading habits to the point of my discovery of science fiction and membership of the MSFG, it is offered as a paradigm from which the experiences of others may differ in detail, but which in a broad sense reflects the group as a whole.

By definition, there are as many accounts of first encounters with science fiction as there are readers of science fiction. The English novelist Kingsley Amis has described how, at the age of 'twelve or so', he discovered science fiction while rummaging through a display bin in a neighbourhood Woolworth's store. The bin was labelled 'Yank Magazines: Interesting Reading'. Frederik Pohl - a prominent American science fiction writer - has described coming across his first copy of *Science Wonder Stories Quarterly* when he was nine. Predictably, a scaly green monster dominated its cover. As Pohl recalls, 'I opened it up. The irremediable virus entered my veins.'

There is a common thread that links these episodes and the pre-war science fiction experience more generally. Science fiction, once discovered, was abundant and readily accessible. As Pohl has pointed out: 'Magazines were a Depression business. If you couldn't afford fifty cents to take the family to the movies, you could probably scrape up a dime or twenty cents to buy a magazine, and then pass the magazine back and forth to multiply the investment.' For Amis, in Britain, the price would have been even lower. The 'Yank Magazines' from his Woolworth's bin would almost certainly have been unsold copies returned to the publishers from newsstands across America. 'Returns' were shipped out of the country by weight to England and Australia, and resold by department stores at a price marginally higher than their value as scrap paper.

A further common thread exists in the relative ease with which pre-war science fiction readers were able to make contact with one another. Pohl belonged in
quick succession to the Brooklyn Science Fiction League, the East New York Science Fiction League, the Independent League, the International Cosmos Fiction Club and the Futurians. To quote him for the last time: 'We changed clubs the way Detroit changes tail fins, every year had a new one and last year's was junk.' In the unlikely event that Kingsley Amis had wanted to join a fan club, the choice open to him in pre-war Britain would have included various chapters of Hugo Gernsback's Science Fiction Association and the British Interplanetary Society. Pre-war Australian readers had a Futurian Society of Melbourne and a Futurian Society of Sydney.

The situation in immediately postwar Melbourne was different. There is a passage in Arthur Clarke's short story 'The Sentinel' which, even today, those of us who were growing up at the time cannot read without emotion. Clarke wrote:

Nearly a hundred thousand million stars are turning in the circle of the Milky Way, and long ago races in the worlds of other suns must have scaled and passed the heights that we have reached. Think of such civilisations, far back in time against the fading afterglow of Creation, masters of a universe so young that life as yet had come to only a handful of worlds. Theirs must have been a loneliness we cannot imagine, the loneliness of gods looking out across infinity and finding none to share their thoughts.

Science fiction seemed to us in Melbourne in the late nineteen-forties and early nineteen-fifties to be truly 'a universe so young that life as yet had come to only a few worlds'. Being a science fiction fan at the time was still mostly a solitary pursuit, involving something akin truly to 'the loneliness of gods looking out across infinity and finding none to share their thoughts'. Books and magazines were few and far between. Those which turned up through painstaking searching and scrounging had to be savoured, eked out and repeatedly re-read. Often a point was reached where a favourite story was known virtually by heart. We had reason to understand better than most the much-quoted paraphrase of a famous 1949 *Astounding Science Fiction* punchline: 'It is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan'.

Proto-fan

It was my good luck to be born into a household where science fiction was accepted and appreciated, at a time when reading was not yet in the process of being supplanted for entertainment purpose by the electronic media. My father before me had been an avid reader of H.G. Wells, Jules Verne, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Sir Henry Rider Haggard, and a keen collector of the early American science fiction magazine *Amazing Stories*. The sale of his collection to meet mid-Depression household expenses around the time of my birth was in a sense a metaphor for a life which was largely given over to sacrifice of his and my mother's interests to those of their children.

As a small child, I was walked up and down in my father's arms while he recited over and over again from memory poems such as 'Horatius' and 'The Battle of Lake Regulus' from Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*; Tennyson's 'Ulysses'; Blake's 'The Tiger'; Byron's 'The Destruction of Sennacherib'; Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan' and 'The Ancient Mariner'; Cowper's 'Boadicea'; and 'The Ballad of East and West' and 'Gunga Din' from Kipling's *Barrack Room Ballads*. In time, the recitations became participative. He might select for example a passage from Macaulay reading:

But when the face of Sextus was seen among the foe
A yell that rent the firmament from all the town arose.
On the housetops were no woman but spat towards him and hissed,
No child but screamed out curses and . . .

At that point there would be a pause, and I would be expected to complete the line with the missing words 'shook his little fist'. A passage from Tennyson might read:
That which we are, we are -
One equal temper of heroic hearts
Made weak by time and fate
But strong in will to strive, to seek, to find and . . .

I would supply the missing words 'not to yield' with - as my father later reported it - the lisping approximation "oo mustn't 'ield'.

My father also took turns with my mother at satisfying my insistent demand to have books and stories read to me. The books mostly were borrowed from the children's shelves of the Melbourne Public Lending Library in Latrobe Street, now long since closed. At the age of five or six I began reading for myself, but the reading aloud by my parents continued. It was their habit to periodically take a break for a cup of tea or - in my father's case - a smoke. I very much resented the interruptions, and responded by hiding - and on notable occasions destroying - the cigarettes. In the longer term, my frustration immunised me permanently against ever becoming either a tea-drinker or a smoker. It is open to conjecture what consequences might have followed if the breaks had been - and I had known them to be - for sex.

The books I most liked to have read to me - and ultimately re-read for myself - included H.C.F. Morant's neglected classic Australian fantasy Whirlaway; Hugh Lofting's Dr Doolittle stories; The Midnight Folk and The Box of Delights by the poet laureate, John Masefield; Kathleen Tozer's Mumfie stories; An Experiment with St George by the mathematician J.W. Dunne, who also wrote the much better known An Experiment With Time; and the geneticist J.B.S. Haldane's My Friend Mr Leakey. Other favourites were T.H. White's The Sword in the Stone; Walter De La Mare's The Three Mulla-Mulgas; A.E. Coppard's Pink Furniture; Norman Hunter's The Incredible Adventures of Professor Branestawm with the inspired illustrations by Heath Robinson; and C.S. Forester's Poo-Poo and the Dragons.

Whirlaway featured an eleven-year-old heroine, Helen, who set out on her adventures in the company of her pet koala, Tirri, and Whirlaway himself, who was a friendly sunbeam. A hidden lift in the cellar of her newly occupied family home carried them downwards through successive geological strata and backwards in time, to the dawn of life in the Archaeozoic Era or 'Age of Oldest Things'. The return journey took place by a series of doors, each opening into a new geological epoch, which the party was able to explore. At each stage, new inventories of exotic creatures - trilobites and sea-lillies in the Cambrian sea, dinosaurs in the Jurassic and Cretaceous swamps and forests and dawn-horses and sabre-toothed tigers on the grassy plains of the Pliocene - unfolded for them. Like Helen and her companions, I was captivated. Dinosaurs preoccupied me, to the exclusion virtually of all else. Helen's home - 'Lyell Lodge' - was described as having been named after the great geologist, Sir Charles Lyell. Lyell instantly became my hero. A geologist was what I wanted to be. My tongue began finding its way around perplexingly polysyllabic words such as 'archeopteryx' and 'paleozoic'. When I was six, and the birth of my first brother was imminent, my parents consulted widely about a suitable name. My contribution was 'Lyell'. Other claims had to be accommodated, but William Alwyn Lyell Mathews he duly became. All this was to go for nothing. My enthusiasm for rocks turned out to have been premature. A year or so later, I discovered my father's copy of Leonard C. Woolley's Ur of the Chaldees. It was plain immediately that geology was a second-best. What I really wanted was to be an archaeologist.

Whirlaway was a World War II casualty. Its appearance from the English publisher Hutchinson in the late 1930s coincided with the lead-up to hostilities. Under wartime conditions, few copies ever reached Australia, and the London stocks were destroyed in the Blitz. All but a tiny minority of Australian children - in which by good luck I was included - missed out on what otherwise would undoubtedly have become an enduring favourite to rival Snugglepot and Cuddlepie, The Adventures of Blinky Bill and The Magic Pudding. In the absence of a proven market for Morant's unique way of introducing children to science, his sequel - The Ether Chariot, which was to have done for astronomy what Whirlaway was intended to do for geology and palaeontology - was never completed. An exhibition of Jean Elder's superb illustrations at the Gould Gallery in 1987 prompted hopes that a
new edition of *Whirlaway* might be produced, but no action was taken. A further opportunity was lost in 1993, when a re-release could have been coincided with the marketing of Steven Spielberg's *Jurassic Park*. It remains for some enlightened publisher to give back to Australian children the classic which they have so long and needlessly been denied.

Upwey - where we went to live in 1941 - had a small library attached to its post office, where I learned for the first time to choose books for myself and how they were borrowed. It was there that I came across the Budge and Betty books, with their stories about elves and fairies, and toy ships and cars which could be increased to life size at the touch of a magic ring and travelled in to remote and exotic places. The syllabus at the Upwey Higher Elementary School included a smattering of myths and legends of Greece, Rome and Scandinavia, which whetted my appetite for adventures involving gods and heroes. J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* was brought home for me by my father one night from the Public Lending Library in Melbourne. I and later my brothers asked to have it back so repeatedly that it must have seemed to other would-be borrowers to have been permanently unavailable. At some stage we sent a letter to Tolkien, asking him the sort of questions about Moria, Gondolin and the Necromancer which are now known to have reached him in all but overwhelming numbers. There was no reply, but the effort was not wasted. Our names must have been filed for future reference by the publishers, Allen & Unwin. In 1953, when I was eighteen, they sent me the prospectus for a further story about hobbits, which was to be issued in three volumes as *The Lord of the Rings*. As a result, I was able to savour the exquisite suspense of waiting months after *The Fellowship of the Ring* reached me for *The Two Towers* to be published, and months again for *The Return of the King*.

The war reduced the availability of new books for children to a trickle. In as much as I acquired books as opposed to borrowing them, it was mostly at impatiently waited-for birthdays and Christmases. These were usually secondhand copies - or 'wartime austerity editions' - of books my parents had read in their childhoods. Long before I heard of Edith Nesbit as a founder member of the Fabian Society - a body to which I later belonged - her name was familiar to me as the author of *The Magic World* and *The Railway Children* which were presents given to me at Upwey, as well as *The Would-Be-Goods*, *Five Children and It*, *The Phoenix and the Carpet* and *The Story of the Amulet* which came my way later.

Somebody's chance recommendation of Richmal Crompton's William books to a generous grandmother caused all the titles then in print to be included in the pillow case which served as my Christmas stocking in 1943. My parents regarded Crompton's work as trash, but I doted on it. Reading and thinking about William and his friends Ginger, Douglas and Henry - known collectively as 'the Outlaws' - preoccupied me for months. At night, I dreamed about them. The humour of the stories was largely lost on me. What mattered was that, whatever William's faults may have been, he thought big. His flights of imagination and freedom from inhibition might repeatedly land him in trouble, but they were very much what I wanted for myself.

Christmas 1943 also brought me the first of a number of volumes of the boys' weekly *Chums* which for years figured among my most highly valued possessions, and prompted me to interest myself increasingly in history. *Chums* - dedicated on its title page 'To the Boys of the Empire on which the Sun Never Sets' - had had a lifespan from 1892 to 1941, which coincided roughly with the high tide of the British Empire. The contents reflected the full range of topics in which the Empire's future citizens were expected to interest themselves. School stories by masters of the genre such as P.G. Wodehouse, L.C. Douthwaite and Gunby Hadath alternated with adventure stories from the pens of Frank H. Shaw, Charles Gilson and John Hunter.

Most of all there were serials on historical themes by S. Walkey. Walkey - by trade a staff controller in a bank - was introduced to *Chums* in 1895 by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, and was writing for it as late as 1940. He was a master of suspense and colour, who specialised in settings such as the Crusades, the Spanish Armada, the English Civil War, the Monmouth Rebellion and the French Revolution. His plots were carried forward at breakneck speed, and lifted by a flair for dialogue. Typical titles were 'Rogues of the Fiery Cross', 'Hurrah for Merry Sherwood', 'Under Nelson's Flag' and 'The Sword of Tallifer Trueblade'. Illustrations were by Paul Hardy. Hardy - a frequent exhibitor of watercolours at the Royal Academy.
- used live models, period costumes and authentic artifacts such as muskets and cutlasses to achieve the meticulous and etching-like precision of the work in *Chums* for which he was so much more widely known. It was years before I was finally able to see past his snarling sans-culottes and brutal Roundheads to the realities of history which he and Walkey largely disregarded.

The war also drastically reduced the availability of comics. What comics meant to me initially was mostly *Chicks’ Own*, *Rainbow* and other picture papers from Britain. There were also intermittently - courtesy of the department store trade in ‘returns’ - comics from the American ‘Famous Funnies’ stable such as *Oakey-Doakes*, *Alley-Oop*, *Buck Rogers* and - a special favourite of mine - *The Search for the Long Lost Swink Treasure*. I graduated in time to *Knockout*, *Radio Fun*, *Film Fun* and *Beano*. Later again, there were *Champion*, *Wizard*, *Rover*, *Hotspur*.
and *Adventure*. The paper shortage meant that the size of comics was drastically reduced. Supplies had to run the gauntlet of submarines and other wartime hazards before appearing for sale on Wednesdays at the local newsagency. Keeping up with the serials which their contents largely comprised acquired a special quality of heightened expectancy. It was never certain, from one Wednesday to the next, whether the latest installments about my favourite characters - the Iron Teacher, Wilson the superhuman athlete, Rockfist Rogan RAF and the Lost Commandos - might not already be lying somewhere on the bottom of the sea.

The gaps were filled for me in part by a store of annuals and boys' weeklies from the 1920s which had belonged to my father and uncles. These had survived in the garden shed of my grandparents' home at 120 Brighton Road, Elsternwick, where we moved from Upwey in 1943, so that I could enter the Melbourne Grammar preparatory school at Grimwade House in Caulfield the following year. Further fragments of *Chums* apart, the item which initially most attracted me was a battered copy of the *Greyfriars Holiday Annual* for 1929. The contents - school stories over the names of Frank Richards, Martin Clifford and Owen Conquest - were in reality all written by the master school storywriter Charles Hamilton. Hamilton's major creations and the weekly papers in which they featured - Harry Wharton and Co. and Billy Bunter of Greyfriars in the *Magnet*, Tom Merry and Co. and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of St Jim's in the *Gem* and Jimmy Silver and Co. in the *Popular* - were household words throughout most of the British Empire for the first half of the twentieth century. The subject of Hamilton's lead story for my 1929 Holiday Annual - 'When Billy Bunter Forgot' - was Bunter losing his memory and becoming a reformed character after diving headfirst into an empty swimming pool. Hamilton's second contribution - 'Tom Merry's Minor' - was about mishaps and misunderstandings at St Jim's following the rescue of a monkey from a cruel owner who turned out to have taught it to steal for him. A third Hamilton story - 'A Rift at Rookwood' - described a falling-out and reconciliation within the 'Fiscal Four' as Jimmy Silver and his three closest friends were known to their schoolmates. 'The mental world of the *Gem* and the *Magnet* - as some have seen it - was attacked later on grounds ranging from snobbery and cheap patriotism to having shied off references to sex, by critics as far removed ideologically from one another as George Orwell and Noel Coward. For me at the time, Hamilton's work was unalloyed delight. Unhappily my exposure to it was short-lived. The *Holiday Annual*, as I to my abiding disappointment now learned, had been discontinued in 1940, along with the *Magnet* and the *Gem*. Secondhand copies had for practical purposes similarly vanished from sale. It was not until well into the postwar era that facsimile editions of the 'companion papers' as I had by then learned to call them were re-issued, to widespread acclaim, by the Howard Baker Press.

None of this meant that, as a nine or ten year old, my appetite for school stories was frustrated. Denied *Magnets* and *Gems*, I revisited in the shed at Elsternwick copies of another boys' weekly - the *Nelson Lee Library* - whose crudely illustrated covers and small print had previously been off-putting. The stock consisted of about 200 or so issues, dated roughly between 1924, when my father was fourteen years old, and his nineteenth birthday in 1929. The author, Edwy Searles Brooks, was less talented as a writer than Hamilton, but had a much more colourful imagination. Originally a straightforward detective in the mould of Sexton Blake, Nelson Lee had been taken over by Brooks from his originator, Maxwell Scott, and re-invented as the schoolmaster detective for whom Brooks is now best remembered. Lee and his boy assistant, Nipper, were originally required to take up residence at St Frank's school on a temporary basis, in the course of an investigation. The consequent combination of the two most popular genres of the day - school stories and detective stories - was retained by popular demand. While pure detective stories still on occasion made their appearance in the *Nelson Lee Library*, the emphasis was on adventure, both in and around the school and in often-exotic locations overseas.

Touring parties of St Frank's students encountered descendants of cut-off Roman legions in the Sahara desert, forgotten settlers from Elizabethan England in the Antarctic, and the lost city of Eldorado - complete with a lake of molten gold - in a region of South America populated in part by dinosaurs. A typical holiday series had the students searching for pearls on Paradise Island in the Pacific, where their luxury yacht, the *Wanderer*, was seized by hijackers. The island was devastated by a hurricane, which carried out to sea one of the students on the broken-off top of a palm tree. Native pearl divers landed by the hijackers went berserk and attacked the St Frank's party in their camp. Attempts to explore a sunken galleon were interrupted by an undersea earthquake.
Giant seaweed brought up from the depths by the upheaval immobilised the *Wanderer*, and sea-serpents and giant squids similarly displaced from their normal habitats menaced the passengers and crew. The chief hijacker was dragged under the weed to his death by an unseen monster while attempting to make off with the pearls. Installing a giant blade on the bow of the *Wanderer* finally enabled the party to cut its way through the weed to freedom, and return in triumph for the new term at St Frank's. Domestically, there was a great fire of St Frank's, several great floods and periodic destructions of the school by earthquakes and explosions. Disruptive newcomers had to be discouraged from conducting gambling dens in disused classrooms and engaging in séances and black magic. Headmasters were driven mad by scheming rivals or had attractive young wives who turned out to be drug addicts. Tyranny - on the part either of the school authorities or outsiders such as the renegade German-American millionaire William K. Smith - provoked mutinies and barring-outs. Christmases were spent at country mansions which could be counted on to be haunted. My *Nelson Lees* were also borrowed eagerly by a number of my contemporaries. Sam Wisel - my closest boyhood friend, whose family lived around the corner from us in Elsternwick - used to savour them in breaks between his afterschool Hebrew classes, and perhaps remembers them kindly in the kibbutz in Israel where the greater part of his adult life has been spent.

**The Old Boys’ Book Club**

**(Australasian Branch)**

My taste for the story papers of my father’s generation had the side effect of involving me for the first time when I was sixteen in the establishment of a new organisation - the Old Boys’ Book Club (Australasian Branch). E.S. Turner's *Boys Will Be Boys* - published in 1948 and widely reviewed - was the first comprehensive account of how story-paper collecting was becoming a widespread hobby, with its own clubs and journals. Thanks to Turner, I was able to subscribe to Herbert Leckenby's *Collector's Digest* from York in England, Bill Gander's *Story Paper Collector* from Manitoba in Canada and the distinctively American *Reckless Ralph's Dime Novel Roundup*. Leckenby put me in touch with Bill Martin, a London milkman with a profitable sideline in supplying story papers to a worldwide clientele, and also with the secretaries of the London, Midlands and Northern branches of the British Old Boys’ Book Club. Meanwhile, my local search for further copies of *Chums* and the *Nelson Lee Library* - and for the *Magnets* and *Gems* I had never actually seen - led me to the Reference Room at the Melbourne Public Library. The librarian to whom my inquiries were directed - Gordon Kirby - turned out to have a story-paper collection of his own, focused largely on weeklies for girls such as those featuring Billy Bunter's sister Bessie and the Cliff House school. Gordon was also an aspiring playwright, who later had an adaptation of Zola's *Nana* produced commercially by the Melbourne Theatre Company. Other local collectors I met included Sheila Stevens and Tom Dobson - respectively a PMG telephonist and a local postmaster - Howard Sharpe who worked for the Wright Stephenson pastoral agency and Don Wicks who was self-employed, perhaps as an accountant. A classmate of mine at Melbourne Grammar - Jim Merralls, now a QC - turned out unexpectedly to be a collector of the *Union Jack* and the *Sexton Blake Library*, which featured Blake and his boy assistant, Tinker. The upshot of all this was a meeting at my home on 24 August 1951, where the Old Boy's Book Club (Australasian Branch) was formed. Don Wicks became the president, and I was the secretary. A regular meeting venue at the Victorian Railways Institute was acquired, four issues of the *Old Boys’ Book Club (Australasian Branch) Newsletter* were produced and corresponding members from as far away as New Zealand and South Africa were recruited. The *Newsletter* lapsed when I stepped down as secretary in 1952, but the meetings continued. The episode foreshadowed in the diversity of the ages and occupations of those involved and the manner of their coming together the establishment of the Melbourne Science Fiction Group with which it briefly overlapped.

Earlier on, in the middle 1940s, I had been introduced through the library at Grimwade House to Erich Kastner's *Emil and the Detectives*, *Van Loon's Lives* by Hendrik Van Loon, Arkadi Gaidar's *Timur and His Team* - an exotic Soviet import - and the Biggles and Gimlet books by Captain W.E. Johns. John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Dickens' *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby* were other favourites, which I read repeatedly. A tobaccoist in the main street of Middle Brighton operated a commercial lending library, where I borrowed thrillers by Leslie Charteris, John Creasey, Manning Coles and Denis Wheatley, and the Tarzan and John Carter novels by Edgar Rice Burroughs. My father had given me Rider Haggard's *The Ivory Child and Alan Quatermain*, and there was a circuit of secondhand bookshops - Bird's, Hanley's, Franklin's and Hall's in the city, Quaine's in Commercial Road and Hall's in Chapel Street - which I visited regularly in search of such harder-to-get Rider Haggard titles as *Nada the Lily* and *Maiwa's Revenge*. At the same time, I was on the watch increasingly for the American comic books whose colour print so largely set them aside from their drab
wartime British counterparts. Comics such as Captain Marvel, Superman, Batman, Torch and Torro and Green Lantern were highly prized at school, and jealously guarded by the relatively few students who had access to them through links with American servicemen or fathers whose businesses took them overseas. Such copies as found their way into the secondhand shops were usually priced at 2/6, which was my entire week’s pocket money.

First contact with science fiction

It was in the course of window-shopping for American comics that I came in touch for the first time with science fiction. The circumstances of the encounter were much the same as for Amis or Pohl. The year was 1944. I, too, was nine years old. Travelling to school involved a change of trams at the junction of Balaclava Road and High Street in St Kilda. Close by the tram stop, second-hand comics and magazines were sold by a down-at-heel shop with a verandah which carried in faded letters the word ‘Saddler’, alongside a lifesize wooden horsehead. ‘Saddler’ in due course became my name for the equally down-at-heel proprietor. At first the daily wait for my change of trams was passed simply staring at such publications as found their way into Saddler’s window. American comics - when available - were given pride of place, on a special display stand. One Thursday, room had had to be made for a thicker magazine, with untrimmed edges. The cover featured a couple of bulbous red bipeds, directing something like an old-fashioned movie camera at a man and woman dressed for tropical exploration and confined in a cage. It was the tenth anniversary issue of Thrilling Wonder Stories, published five years earlier, in 1939. As in the case of the American comics, the price was 2/6.
The effect on me was instantaneous. No glittering prize in later life has ever beckoned me quite so alluringly. I lived on tenterhooks for the next two days, hoping against hope that no other buyer would appear before my pocket money came due on Saturday morning. In the event, no such disaster eventuated. The precious 2/6 passed across the counter to Saddler, and I walked back up High Street to the tram stop, engrossed in John Taine's 'The Ultimate Catalyst'. The issue also contained 'Dawn of Flame' by Stanley Weinbaum, 'The Man Without a World' by two sons of Edgar Rice Burroughs, and one of the 'Via' series by Gordon A. Giles, which for years afterwards exercised a special grip on my imagination. As the weeks went by, further pre-war issues of Thrilling Wonder Stories made their appearance in Saddler's window, along with occasional copies of Amazing, Startling Stories, Astounding and Famous Fantastic Mysteries. I bought all that I could afford, and, where all else failed, endured the exquisite agony of swapping from among the least favoured items already in my possession.

The great McComas/Healy anthology Adventures in Time and Space and Groff Conklin's The Best of Science Fiction were among my 1947 Christmas presents. Newsagents, I discovered. stocked the pitifully thin British reprint editions of Astounding and Unknown Worlds from which, unbeknown to Australian readers, the great serials of the 1940s - novels such as Slan, The Weapon Makers, The Children of the Lens and a dozen or so more of comparable quality - were consistently omitted. What remained was magical. For thirty and more years the memory has remained with me of savouring for the first time stories such as Clifford Simak's 'City' series; 'Vintage Season', 'Mimsy Were the Borogroves' and the 'Baldy' series by Henry Kuttner; 'Rescue Party' by Arthur C. Clarke; 'Child's Play' by William Tenn; 'Tomorrow's Children' by Poul Anderson; 'Hobbyist' by Eric Frank Russell; 'He Walked Around the Horses' by H. Beam Piper; 'In Hiding' by Wilmar H. Shiras; and Murray Leinster's 'The Strange Case of John Kingman'. It became my strong conviction that the test of a good piece of science fiction was whether the editor of Astounding, John W. Campbell Jr had a place for it in his magazine.

By 1950, I was buying my science fiction by mail from Britain. My suppliers were the Science Fantasy Service (SFS) - later Milcross Book Service - in Liverpool, and G. Ken Chapman of 23 Farnley Road, South Norwood, in London. SFS did business on a strictly impersonal basis, through addressograph plates and invoices on coloured duplicating paper. Ken by contrast was a bookseller of the old school, who corresponded voluminously in the style subsequently immortalised by Helene Hanff in her 84 Charing Cross Road. As with Frank Doel of Hanff's Marks & Co, nothing was too much trouble for Ken, and I looked forward almost as much to his letters as to his parcels. Thirty years after our dealings lapsed in the early 1960s, I wrote to him again for some item which I was finding hard to get, and received an immediate response which took up where we had left off. We remained in touch until his death a year or so later.

Our favourite Race Mathews story. Well, two stories...

There had been an attempted robbery in the lane behind our place. The policeman was visiting, trying to get any details we might have noticed about the robbery. Race was at our place, delivering some stuff. The policeman swung around and said, 'Hello, Mr Mathews, sir!'; great big smile. Race had been (improbably) both Arts and Police Minister at the same time in the Victorian Cain Labor Government until the early 1990s. Still very well remembered among members of the police force, it seems. (This happened during the last year of the later Kennett Government, which got very much up the noses of members of the police force.)

Since Race's main interest was the arts rather than the police force, it's ironic that somebody, still unknown, took a strong personal dislike to him while he was in office. He/she/they took Picasso's The Weeping Woman from the main Victorian art gallery, the National Gallery of Victoria. It was recovered in a luggage locker some weeks later, accompanied by a note being rather rude about Race, indicating that the whole stunt was designed to embarrass him. Garry Disher wrote a story based on the incident, implying that he knew who had dunnit; and Lucy Sussex says she has met people who claim to know who stole the painting. Nobody has ever confessed, and Race still has no idea why anybody should have taken this set against him. Since Race is probably the nicest man any of us has ever met, we can understand his puzzlement.

--Bruce R. Gillespie
An advertisement in one of my purchases introduced me to Ken Slater's 'Operation Fantast' network. Slater was a captain with the British Army on the Rhine. His purpose in life was putting science fiction readers in touch with one another. He also supplied American magazines and paperbacks to countries where the postwar dollar shortage meant they were otherwise unavailable. Operation Fantast linked me with Roger Dard in Perth, who was Slater's Australian representative. Roger turned out to be a fellow admirer of the Nelson Lee Library and also of the Aldine Press Dick Turpin Library, which had been a favourite of my grandfather's generation. I loaned him my Lees and was loaned in return prewar issues of Astounding and Thrilling Wonder Stories. Roger was also my introduction to fanzines - magazines produced on an amateur basis by science fiction enthusiasts, and devoted to reviews, gossip and creative writing - through his sporadically published Star Rover. His interests as a collector included the American Weird Tales, which for some inscrutable reason the Customs authorities had classified as a prohibited import. Roger's efforts to reverse or circumvent the ban earned him a blacklisting on the part of officialdom, with the effect that his overseas parcels were routinely searched and items from them wherever possible confiscated. The persecution extended to the raiding of Roger's home and seizure of parts of his collection. The aim plainly was to cower him into submission. Observing his difficulties and frustrations was a significant contribution to my education in the need for constant vigilance against censorship and petty bureaucracy in all their forms.

Roger in his turn gave me the address of Don Tuck, a 29-year-old Tasmanian fan who was boarding in Footscray. Don, Roger told me, had a collection of more than 1200 magazines, which was one of the biggest outside Britain and America. The first letter I received from him was written on the letterhead of the American National Fantasy Fan Federation. It described such meagre contact with other Melbourne fans as he had been able to establish:

I get a lot of interest out of just meeting one at a time and yarning with them. I met Gordon McDonald about six months ago and have a pow-wow with him every month or so now . . . I know of two others of the older mould - prewar but neither is active these days. Hockley in South Yarra I lend my books, and he is now quite keen on getting a few Astoundings. The other chap is McLennan, East Brunswick, who has every mag bar 2 up to the ban in 1940 but hasn't much since; he's a peculiar chap, very henpecked, and it is no pleasure seeing him so I haven't dropped over for a couple of years.

Don, Gordon McDonald and I had a happy evening together in Gordon's home at 40 Lees Street, Mackinnon, browsing over a collection of Astoundings which was nearly complete. Less happily, Don was shortly posted back to Tasmania, where his energies were devoted subsequently to the preparation of the mammoth Handbook of Science-Fiction - the precursor of Peter Nicholls' Encyclopedia of Science Fiction - for which his place in fan history is forever assured. Gordon continued to collect magazines, but refused resolutely to involve himself in fandom. My appetite for contact having once been whetted, I hungered for more.

It was by Roger again that I was put in touch with Graham Stone, who was running the Australian Science Fiction Society (ASFS) from Box 61 in the Student Union House at Sydney University. Graham was the most diligent Australian fan organiser of the day. His ASFS was formed in 1951, as 'a loose affair, without
constitution, rules or planned activities beyond locating fans introducing them to each other and issuing a more or less regular news sheet to keep them posted. A typical monthly mailing to members might include a copy of Graham's fanzine *Stopgap*, publicity material about forthcoming books from science fiction publishers such as Gnome Press and Fantasy Press and other Australian fanzines such as *Science Fiction Review* and *Vertical Horizons*. The annual subscription was initially 2/6 and later 5/-. I was enrolled as member number 47, and attended the first postwar Australian science fiction convention, which the ASFS organised in Sydney on 22 March 1952.

In due course - on 28 August 1952 - I became the ASFS Local Secretary for Melbourne. Graham's duty statement for the position read in part:

To enroll new members of ASFS. Please forward addresses promptly to me, when serial numbers will be allotted and membership cards issued.
To collect all new and renewed subscriptions of 5/- per year from members in the Melbourne metropolitan area; to retain these moneys as a fund to defray expenses of office; to recommend cancellation of expired memberships.
To distribute to members in the metropolitan area all ASFS publications.
To make the benefits of the Society known to readers of science fiction in general.
To represent science fiction fandom in Melbourne externally: that is, to keep me advised of its activities, to act as a spokesman and contact bureau operative in connection with external correspondence, and in general to assume responsibility for its public relations as required.

By December 1952, membership Australiawide stood at 132. Graham commented that that was 'not bad going': 'On a straight population basis a national organisation in the US would have 2600 at least; in the UK, over 900'. My personal experiences with the ASFS were less than uniformly satisfactory, through nobody's fault but my own. My attendance at the 1952 convention had to be cut short when I left my wallet in a taxi and had only my small change to tide me over until I could scramble on to the earliest possible return flight for Melbourne. My appointment as Local Secretary for Melbourne was resigned on 19 September 1953, following sustained - and justified - complaints from Graham that my studies and other activities were causing me to devote insufficient time to the job.

Meanwhile, in August 1951, a middle-aged schoolteacher named Bob McCubbin struck up a conversation with me while we were browsing side by side over the Franklin Lending Library's stock of pre-war science fiction magazines in the Eastern Market, now long since replaced by the Southern Cross Hotel. As recalled by Lee Harding, an aspiring professional photographer at the time, who has since become a notable science fiction writer:

Old Man Franklin kept a booming paperback and marriage-manual business. At the rear of his shop, he also ran the largest lending library in the city. Some time prior to 1952 he bought up a lot of pre-war pulps from somewhere and had them individually bound, and opened a special SF section of the said library. The joining fee was a whopper, and indicated the importance placed upon 'American Magazines' in those days: £2/10/0 as against 10/6 for regular library membership. In those dry days before the 1959 deluge (when most publishers must have dumped in Australia the accumulated backlog of five years publishing), dozens and dozens of eager fans must have found their way to Franklin's and cavorted happily amongst the hundreds of volumes to be had . . . I can remember weekends - and WHAT weekends! - struggling home on a tram loaded up with five or six hardcover *Startlings* or *Thrilling Wonders*.

My monthly copies of *Astounding* were passed to me across the counter at the McGill's newsagency in Elizabeth Street by a shop assistant who ultimately introduced himself as Mervyn Binns. Through Graham Stone, I renewed acquaintances with Dick Jenssen, a student at the school I had just left, who subsequently credited me with

Bertram Chandler and Lee Harding in the early 1960s. This is a composite photo clobbered together by Lee Harding who thinks that both photos were probably taken by Merv Barrett.
having introduced him to the Nelson Lee Library, American comics and science fiction. Dick's given name was more formally 'Ditmar', and it was as 'Ditmars' that Australia's annual science fiction awards - counterparts of the American 'Hugo' and 'Nebula' awards - were ultimately introduced. A memoir of the times to which he has contributed reads in part:

It was the ubiquitous Race Thorson Mathews who first seduced me into the delights of the never-never world of science fiction, just as earlier, much earlier, he had corrupted my mind with the garish, and much-sought after publications known as (hush) American comics. Race, I recall, had a large collection of English penny dreadfuls - the Nelson Lee Library - and I had a father in Shanghai, and then in Hong Kong, who supplied me with American comics. We arranged a swap, and matters progressed satisfactorily until the Customs began to clamp down on the dreadful influx of corrupting literature threatening to engulf our youth in a decadent tide of Nyokas and Captain Marvels, and Batmen, and Sheenas, and Heaps, and Airboys, and Stu Taylors, and Dr Sivanas, and Mr Mxyzptlk's, and etc. Nelson Lees dwindled as did the heady wonders of Buck Rogers in full colour.

Trust Race, though. Before you could say SHAZAM! twice he had discovered a tiny place, quite near school and the St Kilda Junction, which had a supply, small it is true, but a supply nonetheless, of the forbidden fruits. Life was again livable. Well, Race was in the class below me at school, and I soon had to leave Grimwade House to enter the 'Big School'. St Kilda Junction was out of bounds for a boarder, and I no longer had the pocket money I had been accustomed to, so I stopped frequenting the shop. But not Race.

About 18 months later, I was taken away from school on a whim of my father's and whirled around the world to the East and England for a year, to absorb God knows what, and when I returned Race and I were in the same classes together. He reintroduced me to the little shop, this time not for comics, but for a far more insidious poison, one which still courses through my veins - science fiction. Astounding, Planet, Super Science... ah! even the British titles were hued with wonder, drenched in the promise of interplanetary orgies. Life was again worth living. I remember distinctly the first true SF magazine I ever read - a present from Race - Galaxy for May 1951, with 'The Wind Between the Worlds' by Lester Del Rey, 'Tyrann' by Asimov, 'Goodnight Mr James' by Simak, plus many others. I have never been the same since. It would also have been Race who introduced me to Franklin's library - I doubt if I would have found it myself - and I know he put me on to Slater, Chapman, and the other big sellers of the stuff.

Graham Stone also passed on my name to Lee - or, as he was then known, Leo - Harding. Lee's letter introducing himself to me in April 1952 read in part:

I'm fifteen years of old age, a stf fan for five and an intelligent one for two. Get what I mean? I know the difference between a Bradbury and a Kuttner. I know my pen names too... At the moment I'm just a newcomer to Fandom, but in three months I've (1) joined Ken Slater's 'Operation Fantast', (2) subscribed to Stone's Stopgap, etc., (3) become a member of the Australian Science Fiction Society, (4) subscribed to Woomera, (5) have made arrangements to get good US magazines regularly, and all the British dittoes, except of course the four Spencer mags (ugh!), (7) (Am I boring you?) Stopped getting Thrills Inc. (again, ugh!), made contact with book-sellers Carnell and
Chapman, (9) (Phew!) Begun my career of collecting rejection slips from stf magazines, under the guidance of Roger Dard.

Recalling our first meeting years later, he wrote:

I cleaned myself up one Sunday and went - in suit and collar and tie on an exceedingly warm summer's day - to meet Mr Mathews. Race was sitting on the front lawn when I arrived, engrossed in 'The Onslaught from Rigel' in Wonder Stories Annual, and after a rather uncertain handshake was exchanged, he took off his dark glasses and escorted me inside. He was a remarkably baby-faced youth of eighteen, long and lean and lanky, with legs that sprawled upon carpets like a tarantula. We chatted of things SFictional for a few hours, and I left with a vague promise that I would attend a fannish gathering he had planned at his home in a few weeks time - this was to be the unofficial inaugural meeting of what became known as the Melbourne Science Fiction Group.

Lee and I became good friends. This did not mean that we were uncritical of one another. When I failed to answer his letters regularly enough or at acceptable length, he remonstrated:

I've just about had it. If you don't want your books back, okay. If you don't want to correspond with me, okay again, but I still think it's a dirty show. There's plenty of important fans who don't think it's going out of their way to write to me regularly - Dard, Stone, Haddon, Solnsteff, Slater, Carnell and the rest. Tell me, how important are you?

A week later peace was restored. A further letter from Lee commenced:

I'm a cad! I'm a bounder. I'm ungrateful. I'm a Yank. I'm a no-hoper . . . Please, tear up or atomise that letter I wrote you. I've buried yours!

Lee was not alone in bringing a certain frenzy to everything he did. All our activities were coloured by the frenetic quality which prompted Sam Moskowitz to title his history of early American fandom The Immortal Storm.

The sheer frustration of dealing with fellow fans sometimes drove to distraction those who were at heart serious-minded organisers. In December 1951, Graham Stone poured out his feelings in a letter to me which read in part:

There can be no doubt that many readers of science fiction are inadequate individuals - what used to be called 'escapists', although the term is unsatisfactory. They make up for their defects in ordinary life by building themselves up in their own estimation. And you can't think of yourself as superman very effectively if you admit others as your equals.

Graham continued:

Many fans, while living more or less well-adjusted lives and not tending to paranoid superiority, are extreme intellectual snobs; ever critical of others, finding faults which might well be overlooked and so on . . . such fans are likely to adopt a reserved attitude to other fans, which will be reinforced by inspection of escapists, who are usually painfully obvious second-raters.

It may well be that these attitudes explain why the affairs of Sydney fans were conducted frequently in an atmosphere reminiscent of the Wars of the Roses.

A representative rift in the ranks of Sydney fandom concerned the Futurian Society of Sydney library. Graham supposed the library to be vested in a trust of which he was a member, and resigned on the grounds that the rules had been being broken since its inception, and breaches were continuing to occur. Others no less familiar
with the facts of the matter adopted an opposite interpretation. The merits of the argument were less important than the heat and vituperation which it generated, or the fact that the effectiveness of the library was compromised throughout and beyond the duration of the dispute. Graham's critics - notably Arthur Haddon, David Cohen and Bill Veney - attributed the fracas to an excess of ambition on Graham's part, while the Stone camp - notably Graham and Vol Molesworth - saw similar flaws as characterising the critics. 'Graham', Bill Veney wrote, 'has done a lot to help fandom in Australia and there will always be a big and important place for him but he seems to be obsessed with a queer idea of making out that he is a "big name fan" and other fans just don't exist'. 'It is believed', wrote David Cohen at a later stage in the protracted controversy, 'that Stone-Molesworth would like to get their claws on the Library, but from what my spies tell me, some people would sooner burn it all up first':

Do you know that there is more hate for these two among the Futurians than there is among all the rest put together? They were barred from the Futurian committees in the end and told that if they put up for positions they would be voted out.

Unsurprisingly, the library issue was seen by Graham as involving misconceptions which were in part 'falsehoods deliberately spread'. The situation in reality was that the protagonists were friendly correspondents and associates with fans in other states on an individual basis, but competitive and combative in the extreme with one another in the bearpit of Sydney fan politics. An attempt at conciliation on my part was rejected out of hand by Graham. 'I don't know', he wrote, 'what this reconciliation line is in aid of. Why should I try to cultivate the favour of fandom's disruptive elements?'

The Melbourne Science Fiction Group

In the left photo the original Melbourne Science Fiction Group founders pose for their formal portrait in 1954. Shown (L to R) are (standing) Mervyn Binns and Dick Jenssen, and (seated) Bob McCubbin, A. Bertram Chandler, and Race Mathews. In the right photo, aptly named "Old Farts," they repose (with Bruce Gillespie substituting for Bob McCubbin, and Bill Wright substituting for Bert Chandler for an updated photograph in 2002. Left photo by Lee Harding. Right photo by Elaine Cochrane.

Melbourne tackled matters in a different spirit. The five of us - Bob McCubbin, Mervyn Binns, Dick Jenssen, Lee Harding and myself - made up the core of the Melbourne Science Fiction Group. The inaugural meeting of the MSFG took place in the living room of my home in Hampton on 9 May 1952. Lee records the occasion as having been instigated by 'a sort of collaboration between Bob McCubbin and Race Mathews'. In Dick's characteristically tongue-in-cheek view:

Race, I'm sure, was the guiding light in the foundation of the Melbourne Science Fiction Group, for it was he who brought together those who would constitute its nucleus. (If it seems remarkable that a 16-year-old could accomplish this - that is, the formation of the club, not the seduction to science fiction of a youth of but 15 tender years (me) - it must be remembered that Race was a boy of remarkable precocity. He always seemed old to me - an Olympian of wisdom. Baby-faced he was,
Lee, but rather in the manner I've always imagined Odd John would be).

Turning to the inaugural meeting, Dick continued:

The fen of Melbourne began to meet in each other's houses sometime in 1951, I believe, and the first I attended was at Race's. That bus trip from the station, Middle Brighton, was a focal point of space-time, for on my journey I met Bob McCubbin. We were, as I recall, the only two on the vehicle and somehow as these things happen, began to talk and discuss our common passion. I soon discovered, however, that Bob had many another passion, and by the time we had reached Race's I had learned that Japanese women had beautiful (the word conveys most inadequately Bob's look of remembered joy) purple nipples, firm and delightful to touch, hold and squeeze. My mind had been opened up to whole new worlds, for Bob had been loquacious on subjects whose delicacy forbids my mentioning them here . . .

Bob's tendency to hold forth at length at the drop of the proverbial hat on the sexual attributes of women in Japan - where he had served as an Army Education Officer with the occupying forces - was to assume legendary status in fan circles. Exposed to it - albeit in modified form - on the occasion of his first visit to my home shortly after our initial encounter in Franklin's, my parents concluded that he was a paedophile, with designs on my body, and further meetings with him were for a time forbidden. In fact, Bob's proclivities were in my experience exclusively heterosexual and theoretical. Asked on one occasion how she felt about science fiction, his wife replied that it kept him away from chasing other women. If at that stage of his life he harboured any active aspiration to stray - as opposed to relishing past episodes in retrospect - it remained a well-kept secret.

By Lee's account, the inaugural meeting was 'a great success':

Many of the oldtimers turned up: Bob McCubbin was there, and I'm pretty sure Marshal McLennan and Wog Hockley were, too. From then on the group held monthly meetings at members' houses in rotation - those members who had decent homes and whose wives/parents et al. were tolerant enough to allow the onslaught of eighteen to twenty fans plus supper afterwards.

- attended the fourth Sydney SF Convention.

Lee had missed out on the inaugural meeting as he did on those immediately following it because his work as a photographer was constantly taking him to country areas remote from Melbourne. Vol Molesworth's *A History of Australian Fandom 1935-1963* adds to the list of those present Gordon Kirby from the OBBC. The overlap between story-paper collecting and fandom was illustrated again when Jack Murtagh - an OBBC member from New Zealand, and the owner of one of the largest story-paper collections in the world, the largest collection of cigarette cards outside Britain and New Zealand's largest collection of movie memorabilia Melbourne exemplified the unfractious face of Australian fandom. Meetings revolved around talk, letters, barter and chess. Puritanism too was pervasive. At a relatively early stage - following a night when 19 fans packed into the modest living room of Bob's house in Auburn - proceedings transferred to a Swanston Street cafe called Val's. Shock and horror prevailed when Val's turned out to be a meeting place for some of the more courageous lesbians of the day, whose coming-out from the closet was just getting underway. Dick has recalled being taken aside by his family's landlady and warned in a conspiratorial whisper 'Be careful, Dick, they're a bunch of queens'. His account continued 'I didn't know what a queen was, but if she had said "poofers" I should have caught her meaning instantly'. Bob McCubbin was insistent that
'Extroverts and introverts we may be, but perverts never'. Given that the membership of the MSFG at that stage was exclusively male, its interest for Val's clientele is unlikely to have been other than minuscule. Nevertheless, future meetings were held in the austerely asexual surroundings of the basement room of the Latrobe Street Manchester United Order of Oddfellows (MUOOF) hall, in comforting proximity to the Russell Street police headquarters.

A letter of 17 December 1952 over the signature of the Grand Secretary and Past Grand Master of the MUOOF - a Mr G.L. Coulter - confirmed fortnightly bookings throughout 1953, at a nightly cost of 12/6. According to Lee:

We had the basement room and the use of a cupboard for the library in the hall outside. Hardly convivial, but in those days we weren't particularly interested in the comforts of the home. Despite the endeavours of the more voracious fans - myself included - the Group staunchly resisted any attempt to 'organise' itself in any way, and still manages to do so until this day. Bob McCubbin was the self-elected Chairman at all times, but there were no organised evenings and no minutes were kept. We were just a bunch of guys getting together and swapping yarns - and trading a few magazines at the same time.

A further activity was arranging to have magazines bound professionally by Don Latimer, whose family had a binding business. Although Don's bindings in many instances were works of art, the niceties of collecting were neglected sometimes by his workmates. My set of the Arkham Sampler was returned to me resplendent in three full leather volumes, but with the original magazine covers carefully removed. Such were the passions of the day that, prior to Don's arrival on the MSFG scene, I had had magazines such as my set of Famous Fantastic Mysteries and my British Reprint Edition copies of Unknown Worlds bound for me by a fan in Wales. Bob McCubbin as I recall followed a policy of having Don bind everything he owned. Personalised bookplates by professional SF illustrators such as those whose work featured regularly in Astounding were available from overseas suppliers, but MSFG members preferred the local product from Keith Macelland, a fellow fan and talented commercial artist. The content of some collections seemed at times to be secondary in the eyes of their owners to their often opulent appearances.

MSFG members went together at times to such SF films as were screened commercially, but that the MSFG might arrange screenings of its own had as yet not occurred to us. Remo Parlanti and Tony Santos became the first MSFG members who reflected in name at least the changing ethnic composition of Australian society. A less welcome recruit was Gordon Walkenden, who sold me my first LP records - the 'Forest Murmurs' from Siegfried and the Rienzi overture - and shortly moved to Adelaide. A subsequent letter from a leading Adelaide fan of the day - a Mrs Joyce - to Graham Stone read in part:

Gordon Walkenden of Melbourne now lives at 153 South Terrace, Adelaide, and oh! how we all wish he was back in Melbourne! He has a voice like a foghorn and loves to hear it raised in song. In the last three meetings we have had him to the point that, if he keeps it up the others will either gang up on him or stop coming. Never have I seen such a pill! I even told him to shut up, a thing I didn't think I was capable of saying to a guest, and he continued merrily on!

The Val's episode illustrated a further quirk of Australian fandom. Women were not only largely absent from our activities but mostly unsought. When Rosemary Simmons applied for membership of the Futurian Society of Sydney in 1952, her application was rejected on the grounds that, in Vol Molesworth's words: ' . . . the admission of women had caused trouble in the pre-war days of the club'. The poet Lex Banning intervened with
the query 'Are we Futurians or are we Victorians?' but the Society's all-male membership went ahead to vote down Ms Simmons by a two-thirds majority. Extensive organisation was required to reverse the decision at a subsequent meeting and dispel as much as possible the richly merited ignominy. Melbourne's first woman member - Betty Garbutt - was accompanied to her first meeting by her sister, as a chaperon or source of moral support. The sister, to the best of my recollection, did not reappear. Betty remained the sole representative of her sex until I began bringing along Jill McKeown, to whom I shortly became engaged.

Amateur Fantasy Publications of Australia

The creative side of the MSFG was instigated by Lee and Dick. 'We', Lee told Dick in 1952, 'must put out a fanzine.' What resulted after lengthy gestation was not one fanzine but five, titled respectively Perhaps, Bacchanalia, Etherline, Question Mark and Antipodes. The vehicle for all this activity was Amateur Fantasy Publications of Australia (AFPA), which owned the group's stencils, paper and ink, and in due course - after extensive experimentation with less satisfactory devices - had the carriage of its purchase of a Roneo 500 duplicator. The initial membership of AFPA was Lee, Dick and Mervyn Binns. I was a latecomer, and two new arrivals in the MSFG, Ian Crozier and Kevin Whelahan, joined later again. By Dick's account:

Leo not only provided the push, but he did most of the work. He wrote letters, contacted people, suggested story ideas and cover illustrations, solved layout problems, told Mervyn when to turn the duplicator handle, and in short was the driving force (spiritual) behind Perhaps. Mervyn Binns was the driving force (material): he found us a duplicator, fixed it when it went wrong, forced it into action and was, in short, indefatigible on the production side. I obeyed orders, and produced all the little fillers designed to round out those big blank spaces between the highpowered stories and articles. Anyway, most of my stuff was rejected.

It was Lee's dream that Perhaps, the publication for which he was primarily responsible, would live up to its subtitle, as 'The International Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction'. I hoped to make my Bacchanalia an antipodean counterpart for two outstanding American fanzines, Nekromantikon and Fanscient, which I had accepted on loan from Graham Stone, unwarily allowed Kevin Whelahan to borrow from me and - to Graham's rage and my enduring shame - never been able to induce Kevin to return. Inevitably, reality in the case of both Lee's first issue and my own fell short by far of our aspirations. 'At the time' Lee has recorded, 'I was dismally disappointed'. He to his great credit persisted. An incomparably more polished Perhaps 2 - and ultimately a Perhaps 3 - appeared, laying in part the foundations for his success as a professional writer. My enthusiasm waned, and the Bacchanalia 2 which finally came out was the work of a new editor. AFPA's outstanding success story turned out ironically to be the publication in which fewest hopes and least foresight had been invested. Etherline - a newzine produced largely on a collective basis - established what may well have been a record for the fan publishing circles of the day, by appearing regularly at fortnightly intervals for 100 issues, from 1953 until 1958.
Well before the appearance of *Bacchanalia 2* in 1956, my active involvement in fandom had ceased. My courtship of my future wife had been funded largely by the selling-off of the greater part of my science-fiction collection at successive MSFG meetings over the best part of a two-year period. I was reading much more widely. The Melbourne Grammar library and Parliamentary Society had already fanned my long-standing interest in politics, and the lecturers at Toorak Teachers’ College were further developing my liking for music and theatre. My three months national service training in early 1954 and my marriage two years later were circuit-breakers, marking the point where I moved on irrevocably from the world of science fiction to the preoccupations which subsequently shaped my life. The ties which held together our little circle of friends were likewise loosening. Bob McCubbin died before his time, while Dick Jenssen was detached ultimately by the demands of teaching and research in the Science Faculty at Melbourne University. It remained for Lee Harding to become the author of a series of outstanding science fiction novels which includes - to date - *Displaced Person* and *Future Sanctuary*, and for Mervyn Binns to establish - and, sadly, later close down - Melbourne’s Space Age Bookshop. Meanwhile, the MSFG has endured, in forms re-invented by successive generations of fans to serve their changing emphases, and the expanding opportunities held out to them by new technologies. Along with many like us, virtually in every country on earth, we remain endebted deeply to science fiction for the pleasures to which it has introduced us, the enduring friendships it has enabled us to establish and the additional edge which it has imparted to our curiosity, imagination and pursuit of ideas.

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When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

--1 Corinthians 13:11
[The following article was written in Australian (mostly British) English. Every effort has been made to retain this language intact and to not translate it into US English. -Earl Kemp]
What would it have been like if I had been ten years older than I am? What if I had been born in 1937 rather than 1947? What if I had been wandering the streets in 1952, desperate to find science fiction to read? I would have found no science fiction magazines and few books to read, unless I had happened to discover Franklin's Books in Melbourne. Would I have one day recognised fellow starvelings gathered at the counter of Franklin's and joined the small group of teenagers who became the Melbourne Science Fiction Group (later Club)?

I doubt it. If I had joined the new group, I would have met a group of blokes quite unlike those I in fact grew up with. There was Race Mathews, the oldest of the group, who actually went to a private school. Lee Harding and Dick Jenssen were younger than him, but more than a match for anybody in telling jokes, swapping puns, and displaying their knowledge of everything, including much I would never have heard of. I would have been uncomfortable with that subversive, even terrifying sense of humour. In Melbourne of the 1950s and 1960s, it was rare to find people who used humour as a normal part of daily speech.

I suspect that Merv Binns would have been a more serious lad than the others. He had just joined McGill's Newsagency, where within a few years he was to hold sway as Melbourne's importer and purveyor of science fiction.

If I had been a member of the group, I would have either been savaged by their humour, welcomed as a fellow science fiction nut, or both. I would have started publishing fanzines, as Race, Lee and others did, or I would have written articles or stories for their fanzines, as Dick did. It would have been an exciting part of my life, especially during Olympicon in 1956, the first SF convention held in Melbourne. Perhaps Mundane Existence would have taken me away from the excitement, as it did Race in 1958. (He sold up his SF collection to get married, became a politician, and did not again become a regular part of fandom until the early 1990s.)

What I don't know about Martin James Ditmar Jenssen, usually known as Dick Jenssen or 'Ditmar', is whether he remained a regular part of Melbourne fandom throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. He certainly became a figure of legend.

In 1966, Australian Science Fiction Review began. It was the fanzine that put Australia on the map among science fiction fans throughout the world. A new group of Melbourne fans had emerged to run ASFR, including John Bangsund, its editor, At the end of 1966, John forged a path through the undergrowth to a certain door, and stood. Eventually the door slowly opened, and there, blinking in the light, his slender frame draped in a dressing-gown, clung Dr Jenssen. His agile brain alert and active even at so early an hour (9.30 a.m.), he soon recognized me and showed me in. Then he sort of slumped into a chair and appeared to relapse into sleep as I asked his permission to reprint that article from Satura. Anything for a quiet life, anything to hit the cot again: he agreed. (ASFR 6, January 1967)

Here John notes one of Dick's most famous characteristics, his reluctance to arise before two o'clock in the afternoon. Dick's article that John so wanted to reprint was 'Off on a Comet', which Dick had originally posted from America as a letter to John Foyster while Dick was studying at the University of Wisconsin. In the article Dick describes setting eyes for the first time on a copy of the very first science fiction magazine, Amazing Stories, No. 1, April 1926, at the home of Stuart Hoffman, somewhere in mid America. Mr Hoffman owned genuine Finlay illustrations and vast numbers of all the great SF magazines (unobtainable in Australia, except
by indirect means, until 1959). Handling them - caressing them - Dick tells of his revived sense of wonder, and he writes at length about the 'plight of modern SF'. It was not clear which year Dick favoured as the date of the end of true SF and the beginning of 'modern' SF.

There is little other evidence, except for a collection of wonderful photographs, that Dick was part of the 1960s group who produced the mighty Australian SF Review. These photos, showing John Bangsund, Lee Harding, John Foyster and Dick Jenssen making odd gestures at each other, were going to be part of a photographic comic strip to appear in issue 2 of Lee Harding's Canto. The fanzine never appeared, but the photos remain.

The only other evidence of Dick's fannish activity during the late sixties is his name 'Ditmar', which was given to the annual Australian SF Awards. As Dick tells the story, he and the ASFR team (also the 1968 Conference committee) were sitting around for a whole afternoon trying to think of a nickname for the new awards, when he suggested one of his own names: Ditmar. In later years, when people asked what the letters DITMAR stood for, Dick would explain earnestly that 'the votes were to compiled on the specialised computer at Melbourne University known as the Digital Automatic Tabulating Mechanism for the Advancement of Research'. The awards themselves have led to more controversies, conflicts and bad blood among Australian fans than any other cause, but they are still awarded every year, and everybody wants to win one.

Since I was in fact born in 1947, not 1937, I did not meet 'the good doctor', as he was usually known, until 1968. At the Melbourne SF Conference, held at the Melbourne Science Fiction Clubrooms during Easter of that year, Dick Jenssen was the auctioneer. Here he revealed a level of wit, sarcasm and showmanship unknown in my experience. There were few SF books or magazines of quality presented for auction. During the 1970s some major collections came onto the Australian market as their owners died, but in 1968 the bits and pieces people presented for auction would have attracted little interest without Dick's skills. His trick was to make each object sound so dazzlingly awful that somebody (usually Kevin Dillon) felt obliged to buy it. While Dick sold the stuff, Lee Harding and Tony Thomas raised eyebrows in astonishment at the prices achieved and relieved fans of their money.

Since Dr Jenssen was obviously a man of fierce wit, even compared to people such as John Foyster and John Bangsund, it seemed unlikely that shy neofan me would ever speak to him. I didn't, in fact, until the Easter convention in 1970. Somebody had allowed me to run the Ditmar Awards. I made a major mistake, never to be repeated, of running a one-stage ballot instead of the usual two-stage ballot (nominations, followed by a final ballot). By the first day of the convention, few people had bothered to vote. Dick Jenssen saw my plight (egg-on-face syndrome), and offered to help. When a large number of ballots turned up late in the first day of the convention, all marked with the same choices (but not the same handwriting or signature), I felt that not everything was okay. I was so annoyed at the low voter turnout that I allowed the ballots. It turned out that Dick Jenssen had applied more persuasiveness when campaigning for his choices than anybody else had. This resulted in Best International Fiction being awarded to a book called Cosmicomics by Italo Calvino. Only one person at the convention was known to have read this book - Dick Jenssen. Similarly, the fanzine winner, The Journal of Omphalistic Epistemology, edited by John Foyster, was known to have a small readership, also including Dick Jenssen. For a few months John Bangsund was bloody annoyed at the results (because Ursula Le Guin's The Left Hand of Darkness came second). Most Melbourne fans quickly forgot about the controversy. Melbourne later become mildly famous as the first place in the world to give an award to Italo Calvino, who would probably have won the Nobel Prize for Literature if he had lived longer.

Somewhen in the 1960s Dick had finished his PhD, stopped traipsing the world, and had settled down as head of the Meteorology Department of the University of Melbourne. He hosted the New Year's Convention, 1971, in a Nissen hut owned by the Department. Nothing else on campus was open. The only available toilets were nearly 100 yards away, across Swanston Street, behind another building owned by the Department. It rained the whole weekend. Not only were people trapped inside the Nissen hut for three days, but when they wanted...
to take a leak they had to run like hell through the rain. On the last day of the convention, as the Film Panel was beginning, Lee Harding appeared at the door and said, 'There's a gelati man with a bicycle out here . . .' The whole convention left the hut and queued for gelati. The convention has been known as 'Gelaticon' ever since.

What we didn't realise is that Dick had been getting more and more annoyed by the state of science fiction during the 1960s, especially in its manifestation known as 'New Wave'. Towards the end of his masterly speech at Gelicon, after a tirade of witty abuse mainly directed against New Wave writers, Dick settled his gaze upon Frank Herbert's *Dune*, the novel that, every time a poll is held, is voted Best SF Novel Ever by Locus readers:

I believe that *Dune* exemplifies the bad writing, the bad readership and the bad criticism of science fiction. It exemplifies bad writing because it cheats all the time. It presents a hero who is supposed to be a superman and in every page, almost, it tells you: he is a superman. Once and once only in the novel are you shown something which this protagonist does which is superhuman. Only once, when he, by some thought process, gets rid of some poison in his system. Every other event, like taking off his hat or removing his shoes, is presented in italics with 'this is a superman feat' . . .

I must admit that reading *Dune* was a most pleasurable experience. I was caught up by the novel; I read it with great pleasure, with great excitement. But it's rather like going to the lavatory. I enjoy having, if you'll pardon the expression, a shit. The end result is exactly the same - what is produced is one great, big turd. (*Boy's Own Fanzine*, No. 2, December 1973)

Dick then disappeared from my sight and knowledge (except for occasional news of him relayed by Bill Wright) from January 1971 until 1993. I assumed that he had no time for fandom because of the increasing demands of his teaching career at Melbourne University. However, he said later, his absence from conventions had much to do with his disenchantment with latter-day science fiction.

During the next two and a half decades, occasionally I saw Dick buying books at Readings in Carlton. He nodded to me, possibly trying to remember who I was and where he had seen me last. Therefore I was very much surprised to be greeted warmly when in 1993 we found ourselves talking to each other in the living room of the man who had begun the whole great Melbourne SF enterprise: Race Mathews.

Race had become a politician since he left fandom in 1958. In the 1960s became Gough Whitlam's private secretary, then gained the Melbourne outer suburban seat of Casey for Labor (considered an impossibility) during the 1972 federal election, which brought Whitlam to power. Race and lola were married during the election campaign. Race lost his seat in 1975, but a few years later he gained a seat in the Victorian State Parliament. He held the seat of Oakleigh for 17 years, much of that time as a Minister in the Cain Labor Government. When Labor lost most of its seats in 1992, Race found himself involuntarily retired. He and lola moved to a house in South Yarra, and Race made contact with fans he had known from the old days, as well as the people who had published the second incarnation of *Australian Science Fiction Review*.

To our own surprise, we people gathered by Race and lola were linked more by our interest in films than in science fiction. An interest in films had been a bond between science fiction fans during the 1950s. For many years they were persecuted by the Commonwealth Film Censor, who loved to cut out large sections of SF, fantasy and horror films. But we could hardly have expected that our mutual interest in films would have continued in parallel. Race had bought a home theatre system, which featured a large-screen TV and a laser disc player. Every month we gathered (and still gather) to watch films (now DVDs), and Elaine and I made new friendships, especially with Dick Jenssen.

Dick told us that he had suffered some very depressing years in the late eighties, having taken early retirement in 1990 because of difficult administrative changes at Melbourne University. For some years he had been almost a hermit. Race had got in touch with him and encouraged him to meet people at the monthly film nights. In turn, Dick got in touch with Bill Wright, who had also disappeared from sight for some years. In the mid
1990s, Bill again became a major figure in Melbourne fandom. We began to meet with Dick for dinner, but I don't think we would have kept in regular touch if it had not been for a fit of the computer horrors.

Dick has been working with computers, including the first one to be installed in Melbourne, for most of his life. Elaine and I came to use computers only because they were essential for our livelihoods, although I quickly found how useful they are for producing fanzines. When my computer went horribly bung in 1996, Dick was quick to volunteer to help sort out the problems. In this way, we found out that Dick's great talent is for teaching as well as solving problems. He showed us how to get friendly with a computer, or at least refrain from throwing it out the window. Dick is a scientist, an experimenter. He has a great ability to understand machines, whereas I regard machines as natural enemies of humans. Not only was he always willing to help fix our problems, but he showed us how, with a bit of patience and experimentation, we could also avoid Microsoft-caused insanity.

Dick also enjoys sharing his interest in and knowledge of films. He changed my attitude to recent films, which I had tended to dismiss as valueless, based on the small number I had seen during the 1980s and early 1990s. Dick's real breakthrough was a few years ago, when he showed a film I knew I would hate. It had been reviewed as being a film about unremitting violence. Not so, said Dick: watch what is actually happening. The film was *Fight Club*, and I soon saw that much more was happening than might be summarised in a simple plot summary. The last half-hour of the film convinced me that something very subversive and exciting was happening in films at the end of the nineties. *Three Kings* had the same feeling. *The Sixth Sense* had a more meditative feeling, but again it showed that Hollywood film makers were again willing to try anything. Dick introduced me to the films of David Cronenberg, and encouraged me to escape from very narrow ways of thinking about film.

During the same period, entertainment electronics were improving faster every year. DVD took over from laser discs and videotape, and plasma screens took over from CRTs. Dick showed us some fine films and encouraged us to get involved in the DVD revolution by giving us a large monitor that would make it possible for me to buy a DVD player and show DVDs. Dick's generosity can be very helpful.

When Dick took early retirement, he became busier than ever. His retirement coincided with a rapid improvement in home computers. One new program that Dick bought was Bryce. To the user of regular Window programs, its interface is almost incomprehensible. Dick sat down for week after week, learned the program, and began to use it to create a wide variety of science-fictional computer graphics. He gave files of his creations to Bill Wright, me, and other fanzine producers. We have been decorating the covers and pages of our magazines since 1995. Ditmar graphics looks so good that I began to run colour covers to show them at their best. The proliferation of this artwork in fanzines meant that Dick (who signs his works 'Ditmar') finally won a Ditmar Award for Best Fan Artist in 2002. He hasn't scored a Hugo or Faan Award . . . yet.

Dick also wrote a program to generate pictures based on fractals. Elaine put the program on her computer, and immediately began to create pictures that look a lot more interesting (to me) than any abstract expressionist painting that one might find in an art gallery. Elaine kept asking for more features in DJ Fractals, so every few weeks Dick writes new bits for the program. Dick has offered the program to anybody who is interested in learning it, but so far Elaine is his most apt student.

In my case, not all of Dick's attempts at education have paid off. He loves competitive games and tests of intellectual strength. I have few brains, and not a competitive or gaming gene in my body. Dick has a great knowledge of mathematics, and I have no mathematical ability. We only sometimes agree on works of general fiction. But even so, if Dick recommends a work of fiction or a book about science, I will usually find it interesting, and he's pointed towards science fiction authors I hadn't read for many years. And he and Elaine and I have discovered some great restaurants together.
I meet few legends, people who combine lives of artistic creativity and science, but then, few people like to use every waking hour for intellectual excitement. Thanks, Dick.

- - -

Dated August 22, 2004

Any belief system, the traditional religions included, is the product of various cultural forces. People are social animals who look to others for cues about what to think and feel pressure to conform their beliefs to perceived majority opinion.

--Matthew Nisbet

[The following article was written in Australian (mostly British) English. Every effort has been made to retain this language intact and to not translate it into US English. -Earl Kemp]

A Ditmar life

By Martin James Ditmar Jenssen

Some photographs - almost birth to earth - from the event-filled life of Dick Jenssen.

Top Left

Circa early 1936, age 6 months or so.
Photo by Tia Jenssen

Ditmar - er, Dick, that is, as he was then known - is the fat lump of flesh indulging in early oral eroticism, and is being held by a slight fifteen-year old. Who is actually twenty-five, and is the mother of the writhing object of lard.

Gail, the mother, is likely somewhat tired since Tia (Ditmar's dad) would have almost certainly been posing the Mother and Child for at least an hour, which also accounts for the unsmiling attitude. Tia was a keen amateur photographer (winning a few competitions in the local paper, including an "His First Steps" effort with Dick staggering towards the camera). Probably the background was carefully chosen since one of Tia's paintings is on the wall, and on the right a corner of the "trophy chest" is protruding into the frame. Tia was a competent sportsman, and jockey (gentleman, of course). Apart from a minor ability in athletics, Ditmar inherited none of these genes.

The photo is of the house in Bubbling Wells Road in Shanghai - later described by Time magazine (c. 1980) as notorious for the number of brothels it was home to.

Mother, father and child were moved to Sydney in 1941 by Tia's employer - the Shell Oil Company. Gail and Dick left first, and Tia was lucky enough to be on the last ship out of Shanghai before the Japanese moved in. The rest of the family, apart from two of Gail's sisters, were interned during the war. British aunts, uncles, cousins, Russian aunts and cousins, Norwegian grandfather, Polish/Jewish grandmother all sat out the war in camps. All survived, but the family never really got back together - split amongst the US, Canada, England and Singapore...
Dad, in his cool (before such a adjectival characteristic existed), photogenic, slightly dangerous film-star persona.

Some of the founding members of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club.

The boy with the prominent Mickey Mouse ears erect on the right is not Alfred E. Neuman, but Ditmar - er, Dick. Standing on the left is Merv Binns. Seated, left-to-right, are Bob McCubbin, A. Bertram Chandler and Race Mathews.

Race and Dick were schoolmates since about 1946 or '47, and Race apparently stirred Gail's unmotherly libido, for she once confided to Ditmar that Race was the best looking boy she had ever seen. Nothing came of it.
Race was an enormous influence on Dick's life. Ditmar's first science fiction magazine (*Astounding*, October 1950) was given him by Race. Ditmar's favorite fantasy novel (A. Merritt's *The Ship of Ishtar*) was given him by Race. It was Race who told Dick that Conklin's *The Best of Science Fiction* was in the school library, and it was Race who initiated Dick into the penny-dreadful world (*The Nelson Lee Library*) and American comics. And, of course, Race was the driving force behind the formation of the Melbourne SF Group.

What can be said about Merv? Well, if it were not for him, SF might not have been available in Melbourne for many, many years. The MSFG would not have survived. Its library would never have seen the light of day, and...

Dick never got close to Bert Chandler - and found him rather difficult to approach. Bert seemed to have a barrier between him and the rest of the world - or so it appeared to Dick - and Ditmar's shyness precluded penetrating that barrier. Bert also had a gruff, deep, mumbling voice which Dick had trouble understanding...

Bob McCubbin was one of the really nice guys of the early Club. But given to expounding the virtues of certain parts of female Japanese anatomy. Many years later he gave Ditmar an introduction to a Wisconsin fan, at the time when Dick was an Assistant Professor in the Meteorology Department of the University of Wisconsin, and Ditmar indulged a weekend of joy. Not for the reasons which have crossed your mind, dear reader, but because the library was replete with rare, very rare SF magazines. The first issues of *Astounding, Amazing, Air Wonder Stories*. Even the large *Fantasy Book* containing Cordwainer Smith's "Scanners Live in Vain."

**Middle Right**

**Upper**

*July 1958, aged 23.*

*Photo by unknown Sun News Pictorial photographer*

**Lower**

*October, 1999, age 64.*

*Photo by Prof. Peter Thorne*

Compare these two photos, both of which depict Ditmar - er, Dick, that is - at the console of CSIRAC. CSIRAC was Australia's first home-grown electronic digital computer (and the third in the world which had an internal memory storing both program and data), and which was housed for most of its life within the Physics Department of Melbourne University.

The upper photo is of a working machine with Dick at the controls. The lower is of the reconstructed machine shortly before being installed in the Museum of Victoria. The computer CSIRAC is unchanged, but is no longer operative; Ditmar, on the other hand is quite changed, but seemingly still functional. Note the jowls, the wrinkled flesh. Unseen - but very present - is a well-developed spare tire. Note also the spectacles - indicating both ocular deterioration and the rapid onset of senility since Ditmar forgot to remove them before the photograph was taken. The flash has been kind to Ditmar - his grey hair has seemingly vanished and been replaced by what appears to be a short-back-and-sides haircut. For a truer depiction of the grey locks (and a spectacle-less Ditmar) see the lower right photo

**Lower left**

*Circa October 1974, aged 39.*

*Photo by Von Murphy*

Every male member of the Meteorology Department of Melbourne University wore a beard - and Dick was part of the herd.

**Lower Right**

*April 2002, aged 67.*

Unable to hide his smirk, Ditmar - er, Dick - clutches his Ditmar as Best Fan Artist. A proud day, indeed…
Irrelevant information

Dick Jenssen was born on July 6th, 1935, at Shanghai Hospital. That is, he entered this world on the same day, and at much the same latitude, as the present Dalai Lama. It is Ditmar's conceit that when the search for the present incarnation of the Dalai Lama was conducted, the priests did not search far enough Eastward, and so he was denied his true theological place.

When Dick mentioned this theory to John Foyster, John sent Dick a card on his next birthday, with the simple, but appropriately deflating, inscription: "Hello Dalai!".

More and more I think personality and temperament drives scholars and scientists to their conclusions, as much as evidence and logic

-- Michael Shermer, Skeptics Society, 3/19/01

Ditmar Portfolio

The following chart gives the details on each graphic included within the Ditmar Portfolio in the order of its appearance:

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Skeptical scrutiny is the means, in both science and religion, by which deep thoughts can be winnowed from deep nonsense.

--Carl Sagan