

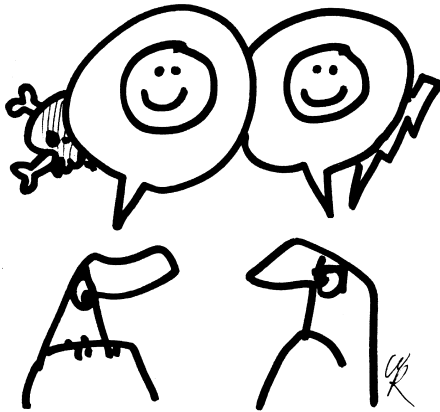
# A Propos de Rien

For the February 2005 mailing of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association by Jim Caughran, 43 Dingwall Ave, Toronto Ontario M4J 1C4, Canada; caughran@rogers.com. Dingbats are [DF Calligraphic Ornaments LET](#) from Letraset (see p. 3). Cartoon by Rotsler.

If I could drop dead right now, I would be the happiest man alive.

Samuel Goldwyn (1879-1974)

## Comments on Comments on Comments on Comments on Com...



August Mailing

### FISH-WRAPPED BALLOT RESULTS—Cantor

I voted for the amendment, though I have some reservations. Will those who have only electronic experience with fandom adapt to paper? But fandom is changing, and we need to recognize the changes and adapt to them.

### OPUNTIAS—Speirs

55.1 A lot of good stuff in here, including your glimpse of voice-controlled locks from 1909 and your discussion of Roche's limit and planetary rings. Odd though, that a moonlet broke apart *unobserved* on 1955-12-18. ☞ The dog quoted as saying "Woof, eh?" brings up the story of why Canada is so named. It seems three explor-

ers were trekking about, and one of them said, "Hey, we should name this place we're hiking through, eh?" The next said, "OK, but what will we name it?" And the last said, "Let's each pick a letter, and make a name out of that, eh?" They agreed, and the first said, "C, eh?", the second "N, eh?" and the third, "D, eh?". And so it was. ☞ I don't remember the Heisenberg compensator in Star Trek beaming, but yes, it's necessary. Some fan recounted seeing Nemo in a restaurant in Los Angeles. Nemo's cell phone rang, and... Some of the Startrek technology wasn't that farfetched. ☞ You say "punched tape" but "punchcards". ☞ While there might be valley channelling, putting wind farms below the skyline seems to lose some of the potential. Someone did a calculation and found that supplying all our power needs with wind power would alter the climate. As, of course, do our present power supplies.

no, this is 55.1 Your numbers confuse. ☞ Your disadvantages of electronic zines—that the boss or a litigious fuckhead taking insult may overhear—are not unknown to paper fanzines. The cost of paper fanzines continues to rise... Fapa is a good way to avoid most of the postage cost, but we are now only 49 fans. ☞ Sounds like the Mail Art zines have some of the attributes of an apa. ☞ I think small things in history would have immense effects. We have recently seen two US elections which were won by very little. Had Gore or Kerry been slightly more charismatic, or any one of many other things happened, Bush would not have taken the hard right turn, and history would have been different. Had Hitler not gained

power, would another have arisen? Maybe, but Hitler's own hang-ups had a lot to do with his policies. Your citations show other instances of great divergence. 🌀 You are charitable toward David Frum.

55.3 Computer clocks depend on vibrating crystals, which may not be entirely accurate. You can download a program (Time-Sync) from <http://www.karenware.com/> which will adjust your time as often as you wish from the National Research Council's atomic clock or other time servers, including University of Calgary and the US Naval Observatory. Karen has a lot of other good stuff there as well, all free. 📄 \$5 for a telephone muffler was probably a lot of money at the time. New technology is expensive. 🌸 "50,000 years ago ... correlated with spread of humans into" Americas and Australia. I don't think there's much evidence of humans in the Americas prior to about 20,000 years ago. 🐦 Your picture does look a bit like Terry Carr when I last saw him, c.1970.

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## BEN'S BEAT—Indick

You must be enjoying the theatre more—you didn't walk out on *all* of them! 🐦 Bloch: \$40! And US\$ at that! It wouldn't be as bad, if Bloch got a bit of it. Book publishers may soon start hitting the barrier that fanzine publishers have hit.

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## ALPHABET SOUP—Stevens

"The only way to escape Bongo was to introduce him to someone else." Similarly, the only way to get rid of a tailgater on the highway is to give the problem to another driver. 📄 The last couple of times I had to change planes in the U.S. (Houston and Minneapolis), I did not have to go through security again. So it's not necessarily frivolous to check people getting off planes. But how did they decide that some passenger had not been through security without knowing which?

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## NICE DISTINCTIONS—Hlavaty

"Besides, how creative is most fiction? Much of what is published is recycling of common tropes with little or no originality, and even the good stuff has sources, some

obvious." A criterion for fiction might be the extent to which it hides the formulas it's based on. 🐦 "I certainly cringed at some of the movie [Fahrenheit 911] (the crude economic determinism of the pipeline explanation and some evil-Arab symbolism), but it doesn't actually lie, as so much right-wing agit-prop does." I heard a conservative columnist on the CBC, talking about how he was attacked for telling the truth. "How can you say there were no weapons of MD? People might vote for Kerry! In other words, lie for our guy." He thought this was bad for democracy. He is "on vacation" from some of the places he used to appear, because his articles were critical of Bush. Wish I had caught his name. 🌸 "Cell phones don't stink, but farts don't play silly little tunes." There was a Frenchman, c.1900, who had such control over his bowel muscles that he could play tunes. He gave concerts, probably received as a big joke.

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## PENDRAGON—Wesson

What was the incident that led to cancelling Eisenhower's trip to Japan?

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## VOICE OF THE HABU—Wells

Movie shootings are frequent in Toronto, and my reaction is your Angelino "damn studios have the streets blocked again."

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## SYNAPSE—Speer

"The existence of God is or is not a fact." Depends on how abstract your god is; "god" is subject to interpretation. 🌀 Your "FRANKLY" section would have improved with more structure. It's not always clear who might have said what. "AIDS is a self-inflicted disease." Someone should ask an African about that one. 📄 Looking forward to your completion of the last sentence on page 18.

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## PANDA—Morningstar

With the electoral college, Bush and What-sisname concentrated on Ohio, Pennsylvania and Florida at the end of the campaign. Without the EC, a vote anywhere would have been as valuable, the opposite of what you state.

### TARGET FAPA—Eney

Chirping pedestrian lights: When I first heard one in Toronto, I envisioned a bird flying north in springtime, checking out the city, and falling in love with a traffic signal.

### IT'S A...FISH WRAP—Cantor

"Web site" is rapidly evolving to the (better) "website". Insisting on "web site" is as pedantic as "the music up with which I grew."

### AFTER THE CRASH—Vick

I'm damned glad you survived! 🌿 The electrical stimulator for retraining muscles after a stroke is a great idea; surprising no one has used it until recently.

### FANTASY COMMENTATOR—Searles

This is fantastic, but it will take a while to find the time to read. I think I only met Leiber once, in his house in Los Angeles, but I remember the occasion well.

### MOJAVE MOJO—J Katz

Your account of your travails is good; thanks. Glad you've recovered enough to resume fanac. 🐾 When I broke my ankle, I found the two guys in the plaster cast department of Toronto East General and

Orthopaedic Hospital to be gentle and caring; I guess your cruel cast fitters are not representative.

### NO EXIT—Green

You must be younger than the Fapans I know; I had trouble reading this. A point or two larger?

### A DIFFERENT DRUMMER—Davin

Enjoyed your Twilight Zone.

### KING BISCUIT TIME—Lichtman

Paypal can be used to send small amounts of money at no cost. Twenty-five or fifty cents seems like a fair payment for a loc. 🌿 And since the next electronic copy costs you exactly \$0.00, why not allow someone to see it? Maybe they will loc it.

### PLACEHOLDER—Burnett

PLACEHOLDER is a lovely name for a Fapazine.

### VISIONS OF PARADISE—SABELLA

Your reaction to *Cryptonomicon* was similar to mine—except that I didn't think there was a "lot" of mathematics in the cryptography. Maybe I should pay more attention to your reviews.

Some of the dingbats got chopped; here they are in full.

