

I don't blame you for being surprised. (And a little pissed off, perhaps.)

Okay, no cute cover tables of contents here, because I want to make sure that everyone sees this information. The quick run-down is: a subscription list on page 2; an Important Editorial beginning on page 4; a very good article by Michael Burstein on page 7; a letter column which has lost six months's worth of context but which I hope you nevertheless still find entertaining on page 10; the United League on page 24; and lots of white space scattered about. Good layout is, plain and simple, too time-consuming right now.

Very Important Information:

WHY THIS ZINE IS LATE is covered in the page 4 editorial, if you're interested. It's mainly a somewhat tedious exposition of what I've been doing for the last six months that has kept me from working on IT.

TWO FREE ISSUES FOR EVERYONE. This issue and the next issue are gratis. If you wish, think of it as interest paid on your subscription balance. (It can't actually begin to make up for the delay, but you'll at least let me try to salve my conscience a little, yes?)

IF YOU'D RATHER CANCEL YOUR SUB NOW THAT YOU HAVE MY ATTENTION, I will not take it personally and will not bear a grudge. There are some content/intent changes detailed in the editorial (no more Diplomacy games in the foreseeable future, e.g.), which may make the zine less interesting for many of you, so if you'd rather use your sub balance to receive some other zine more in line with your interests, I invite you to write me for your refund. You will still receive the two free issues.

IF I WAS TRADING WITH YOU, you have certainly severed the trade by now, unless you possess extraordinary patience. If you wish to pick up the trade again, I welcome that. If you do not wish to begin trading again, I will not take it personally. You will still receive the two free issues mentioned above. If you are wondering whether or not to resume a trade and would like to wait and see if this comeback is real before sending me any zines, please do so. (Hell, I owe you anyway for the zines I've received since the last issue of IT came out.)

PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AT THE SUBSCRIPTION LIST on page 2. I am woefully out of touch, and although I've tried to keep up with any COAs I received, I doubtless have more than a few out-of-date addresses. If you notice any (either your own or someone else's) which are incorrect, please let me know. 25c sub credit per correction.

Cross your fingers. With luck, this may actually be the resurrection of

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IT'S A TRAP!

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SUBSCRIPTION LIST

As mentioned on the cover, this is the current ITI subscription list. ("Current" may be, of course, a bit of a misnomer, since some of these addresses may be as much as six months out of date.) I would greatly appreciate your bringing to my attention any corrections of which you are aware. Also as mentioned on the cover, I'll add 25c to your sub credit for each correction (not necessarily for your own address...). Many thanks, in advance, for your help.

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EDITORIAL

Or, Yes, That Boy Has Enough to Do, Already

Oh, God. Has it really been that long? Yes, you bet.

Making excuses would be inappropriate at best and lying at worst. The fact of the matter is that I got consumed by that tiger known as job/work/real life, just when I thought things were slowing down. In fact, it was largely because I did think things were slowing down that I got myself in this situation. Remember way back in January, when I announced a couple game openings? Well, when I get to a point where my schedule looks like it will allow for some free time, I tend to fill it up with way too many things, partly because I know that when I'm at my peak I can accomplish a hell of a lot, but mostly due to lack of both judgement and foresight. It's a lot like novice Diplomacy players who go overboard and sign up for too many games because they look at the potential ("Gee, these games are only taking a couple hours a week right now...") rather than the reality that will result.

In my case, this meant, among other things, that I took on a fairly important project at work. This was a mistake, but in order for you to understand why, I'll have to explain what I do and what the project was about. In case you're new to the zine and haven't heard, I work for Cray Research, a company notorious for designing and manufacturing the fastest (super)computers in the world. I work in the software division in the group that produces software for the Cray-2, the company's latest and greatest design. The work I do comes under the catch-all title of "system administration." Although I do a little software development myself for the Cray-2, when I can make time, this description means, practically, that I administer a number machines in support of the programmers doing full-time software development: a Cray-2 (with another on the way soon), a VAX-11/750 minicomputer, and three Sun file servers with 30 attached workstations, which are part of a larger network of 16 file servers and roughly 200 workstations, for which I do some assisting administration. Whenever someone needs something on these systems, I do it--reading and writing tapes, fixing problems with the system's software, acquiring and installing new software packages, making sure the new person hired has a terminal or workstation. When my group expands and needs a new machine, I have to decide on and recommend what to purchase. During a normal workday, I'm interrupted more or less constantly, answering questions, fixing problems, monitoring the systems's performances, debugging network routing...

Against this background of fairly constant demand on my workday time, I took on a project (re-)write the system administrator's manual for the next release of the Cray-2 operating system. (The actual finished manual is written by a separate group of technical writers, but they need someone from the group producing the software in question to provide them with a draft of the necessary information.) Now, as anyone with a personal computer can tell you, good documentation is, in many ways, every bit as important as the computer system itself. Without instructions on how to use the thing, after all, the niftiest machine in the world won't do its owner much good. Despite this importance, most average software developers view documentation as an annoyance (which may be just as well, considering how illiterate some programmers are). Me, on the other hand, well, I'm virtually the only programmer I know who enjoys writing documentation, and I take as much pride in and care with the documentation I write as I do in the articles I write for this zine, which is to say a lot of revision goes into the product. (In some ways, the same perfectionism which keeps me revising something like the manual kept this zine from you longer than it

otherwise might have been. If it isn't up to my own impossibly high standards, I shudder to let others see it.)

Now I'm physically restless while writing. I'll sit in front of the terminal for awhile, then get up to go get a drink, pace a bit, think of where I want the flow of the paragraph to go or how to phrase the next idea so that it won't be misunderstood, then sit back down and type a fragment of a sentence to get up and stalk the room again for the best way to say what's on my mind. And even though I don't sit down and bang out words second after second, I need stretches of uninterrupted time to concentrate on the task of writing. Given the way I am usually interrupted at work, though, it is virtually impossible for me to get such uninterrupted time during the normal 9-to-5 workday. And given that I had my regular administrative duties to take care of during the day anyway, the only solution I saw was to work on the manual after hours, when the offices were quiet and I could wander the halls without interruption.

NOW, add to this workload one very significant time consumer outside of work. In the last issue, I mentioned that I was starting an introductory Super-8 filmmaking class at Film in the Cities, a local arts institute. That first class finished in March and went very well, thank you. Well enough, in fact, that I signed up for two classes the following quarter, a 16mm filmmaking class and a sound recording class. Actual classroom time took up four hours two evenings each week. The other evenings, though, were generally filled with homework, going in to the Film in the Cities facilities to use the editing tables or the sound studio.

An example will best illustrate this. During the worst stretch of this, a typical day ran like this: stay at work throughout the day until 5:30 p.m., when I'd leave and drive to Film in the Cities to attend a class or edit some film or record a sound project; leave at 10:00 p.m. when the place closed; stop at home to find out that I hadn't paid this bill or was behind on that bit of paperwork; pick up some clothes and drive back in to work to work on the system administration manual as long as I could (usual three or four hours); then sleep on the office floor to wake up, shower (available at work) and start the cycle again. Now, not every day ran like this, of course, but there actually was one entire week in late May, when the end of the quarter was drawing near and projects were looming on all sides, when I did not sleep in my own bed once.

Now the insidious thing about this kind of schedule is that, yes, there are always bits of time that could still be set aside for, say, producing a zine. What happened with my bits of time is that using them to socialize--going to Strikers or Monarchs games, visiting family or friends--became very important for maintaining my sanity. After working on everything else, the thought of coming home and going to work on the zine, or anything related to the hobby, simply became too much of a burden. My hobby-related mail was lucky if I opened it and scanned it quickly before putting it in the growing file. I can't remember when I've last given a zine more than a quick glance, if that. I also could not begin to tell you which zines I'm still receiving.

When it got to the point where the Diplomacy games were two months behind, I knew that I had to transfer them to avoid being unfair to the players. The problem then became trying to find time to actually find GMs and administer the transfer. When it finally occurred to me that no one would think ill of me if I didn't take care of every little detail by myself, I received help from Scott Hanson and got those transferred.

This left the larger problem, though, of what exactly to do with the zine itself. Although my intention all along has been to try to salvage something of the zine, folding was a definite option, and I thought more

/* Editorial, continued */

than once that the best thing to do, if for nothing other than your peace of mind, would be to return everyone's sub balance and just be done with it. This would doubtless have been more honorable than letting you linger on like this, month after month, with no word on whether IT! was alive or not. There were two things, however, which prevented me from throwing in and sparing myself the future expense and work of publishing a zine.

First, I value (more than I let you know) the friendships which I have gained from this hobby in general, and through IT!'s rather eclectic Letter Column in particular. I love reading what you all have to say about [[!]], and I hated to think that this forum would die permanently simply because I let the zine in which it is housed wither. (If it ever dies because no one's sending in letters anymore, that I can live with.)

Second, there's the ITFL. My god, but I think United is a wonderful game. And unless things have changed radically in the hobby since I last poked my head outside my hole, United leagues are scarce enough without my having to hasten the process by folding this one before it really begins to hit its stride. Of course, I've likely as not scared off many managers by the prolonged absence, but I hope that enough are still around and agree that it's worth continuing to keep it running.

So the solution, as I saw it, was to try to keep the sinking ship afloat by throwing all the excess baggage overboard--make IT! a zine for United and letters (as well as any articles people care to write), in the hope that those are manageable enough to survive my erratic schedule. (Thus, for another example, the Twixt games are all forfeit, and I have added the promised five issues to those people's subscriptions.)

In preparation for this attempted resurrection, I've done a number of things which will, I hope, make the whole process go more smoothly than before. I should, however, preface this with a small confession. Remember how I wrote an article for Bruce Linsey's publisher's handbook about zine administration, and how organization is the key to surviving all the details of which publishers must keep track? (You don't?) Well, that was all very much a case of someone who can't do, teaching. I've never been particularly well organized in administering IT!, and that definitely contributed to the prolonged lapse. For example, would you believe that although I've kept the records on my computer, I'd never actually computerized the process of keeping them? I'd go through the files more-or-less by hand each issue, subtracting the appropriate amount...

So I've now made a number of checklists and flowcharts which I plan to follow religiously when administering the zine. Although I have a good head for remembering a lot of irrelevant facts and details, I don't seem to be very good at handling rote administrative tasks (business paperwork baffles me, for example) without a precise set of instructions to follow. I have revamped my subscription record system (one benefit of which is my ability to easily generate the subscription list on page 2), which will save me a great deal of time and effort each issue. I have also begun backup up the contents of my system on one of my systems at work, which will, I hope, enable me to weather the inevitable problems with my own system.

The upshot is that, although there aren't any guarantees that my schedule won't get overloaded from time to time, I think I'm much better set up, both physically and mentally, to deal with and keep going a zine consisting, in the main, of reader contributions and a United league. I may be optimistic, but I hope to stay around for some time to come.

EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT WORKING ON A MOVIE
(BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK)

by Michael A. Burstein

Have you ever fantasized about being in the movies, seeing your face up on the silver screen and having people ooh and aah over you? Of course you have; I have also. But I've discovered the reality behind the film and the boredom that exists when being on the set, and since Steve is a great movie buff, I thought I'd share these experiences with you.

I've worked on three movies in my life. Having been born in 1970, some may consider that a great accomplishment. But to be honest, the first two times were due to the fact that my uncle is a first assistant director and was filming in New York at a time when the scenes he was working on needed little kids. (Yes, I hear you all cry, "Nepotism!") I don't remember much of those first two times, except that for The Front I sat in a big auditorium with other kids and had to applaud for about two hours (the scene was us applauding). As for The Goodbye Girl, I had to wear a heavy coat in the middle of summer, because the scene took place during the winter. It was a scene of kids leaving school, and unfortunately, it was cut. I never thought I would work on a movie again, and frankly, I didn't mind, as I have no aspirations to be an actor, but rather, a Nobel prize-winning physicist.

However, Fate took a hand. In the winter of 1985 (that is, October), I was working in the school cafeteria when a woman asks me if she can take my picture and get my phone number. She also asked my friend Charles Ardai the same thing. I later discovered that many casting companies, looking for unknowns of high school age, send people to high schools to find students who fit the proper descriptions. Apparently, Charles and I fit the description this lady was looking for.

A few days later we each got phone calls asking if we wanted to meet Woody Allen. Naturally, we declined the offer and... what! WOODY ALLEN! Yes, yes! Where, when? So Charles and I left school one afternoon and headed towards midtown Manhattan.

We were led into an outer office and then into an inner office, where Allen himself greeted us and told us that he just wanted to look at us. After five seconds, he said we could leave. Charles and I were very excited afterwards, and Charles, who is a great fan of Allen, exclaimed, "My God! We were in the same room as Woody Allen! If I had had a gun, I could've shot him!"

The next day, we were called again. Allen wanted us as extras for the "Playland" scene, and because the movie takes place in the 1940's, we would have to go to a costuming place located downtown I went one afternoon after school, and discovered that Allen is a very, very careful director, because they fit us in period costumes down to the socks! In fact, since they didn't have a pair of shoes my size, they bought a pair over the weekend! And this for a lowly extra. I started to realize where the money to make a movie goes, and why it costs so much.

So on Monday, I would finally get to be filmed. Or would I? After waking up at 4 AM to commute from Queens to a rented bus in Manhattan in which they drove us right back to Queens again, and after being given food (a

/* Everything ... Movie, continued */

non-deductible breakfast, or an ND breakfast), and after getting a haircut and my costume put on and makeup (oy vey!), we sat down in the holding area to wait. "We" was a bunch of little kids, Charles and I being the oldest. I sat around for an hour missing school, and then it was announced that the weather wasn't correct and the scene couldn't be filmed. So they drove us back to Manhattan, but I got off in Queens to get a bus home.

Tuesday Charles and I agreed to miss another day of school to go filming again, and again the weather wasn't right. They wanted us to come again on Wednesday, but Charles and I both declined, as we didn't want to miss too much school, and I had a test.

Wednesday they filmed the scene.

All was not lost, however. Extras can be used in other scenes, so why bother fitting more people for costumes if you've already fit some others? So once again, Charles and I found ourselves in the same "Hurry up and wait" situation. We were bussed out to Rockaway at 6 AM, ready to film at 8 AM, and actually found ourselves in front of the camera at 3 PM.

Charles and I were supposed to be two boys gawking at a maniac in his underwear terrorizing ordinary citizens with a meat cleaver. If you've seen the film, you probably recall the scene. But you won't see me in it. The maniac is supposed to run onto another street, where I was, but that street had the infamous "Bagel Shop" on it. After all the scenes with that street were filmed, a production assistant recalled that there were no Bagel Shops in the 1940's. And with Woody Allen being a stickler for detail, the scene was eventually destined for the cutting room floor.

But once more, all was not lost (or you wouldn't be reading this article). There was one more scene that we heard rumours about, called the salt shop scene. It was hinted that we might be wanted for it. Furthermore, one of our classmates who is a professional actress was fitted for that scene, so we felt that they would want us also.

Sure enough, they called Charles and I back in for another costume fitting. By now, they had already fitted Charles with three costumes (none of which appeared on film) and me with one. But we went again. Charles would often complain about the costumes, the boredom, the ND breakfasts, the seeming hopelessness of our ever appearing in the film, but as I pointed out to him, "Nobody's forcing you to work on the movie, Charles. If you want to, you can just tell them that you don't want to appear in a Woody Allen movie." But, of course, Charles decided to stay with it.

Our last day of filming took place in New Jersey. Again a bus left from midtown, but this time there were teenagers on the bus. People our ages. With one important difference: they were almost all professional actors, who were done with high school or who had tutors, and who had no plans to go on to college. Charles and I felt a little out of place.

After the usual rushing and then waiting, we got to be a little sociable with the others. In fact, I became good friends with one of the others, a girl named Joy Newman, who plays Cousin Ruthie. This movie is important to her, as she is a professional actress (though not yet 19) and goes around trying to get acting jobs. I find it inconceivable that one would have to look for work at such a young age, but I guess that's because people's goals are different. Just like getting to be in Radio Days was a big break

for Joy, getting into Harvard was a big Break for me. (No, I'm still not sure where I'm going yet.)

When the scene was finally filmed in late afternoon, it was filmed in a real malt shop that the owner rents out for people filming period movies. I had to wait outside in freezing cold weather because they filmed two scenes inside without using the boys. Still, once they were ready to film the scenes, they moved the whole cast from the nice warm holding area and bus to the freezing temperatures of the sidewalk right outside.

When we finally got inside and they got us costume accessories, such as period glasses and watches, Woody Allen himself directed us. He positioned us in our seats, and personally instructed me to sit in the front! (See my letter in this issue for a description of where I am sitting.)

The stage directions were simple. While the girls swayed back and forth to a sappy song, we were supposed to stare at them disgustedly. Which is all we did. Then Allen told us that he wanted more movement, so for the second take we shrugged and talked to each other in whispers (about how bored we were) and even drank some of the malteds they had given us, which tasted like chocolate water. The second take was all that was needed, and it is what eventually appeared on screen.

We got out of our costumes, etc., got back on the bus and got back to the city late (so we were paid overtime). Joy was glad to have kids her own age around, and as she told me later, it was lonely filming every day and having no peers around. In fact, we malt shop extras got so friendly that we gave our characters names (I was Gilbert; my friend Charles was instantly proclaimed Woody--guess who he looks like) and we promised to see the movie together on the day it came out. But the only ones of us who did go see it on opening day were Charles, Joy and me.

[By the way, Joy is the one who does the Carmen Miranda bit in the movie. When you see it, write a letter to Orion telling how much you enjoyed Joy Newman. I'm trying to help her along.]

And so ended my career; or at least so far. The casting company, Todd Thayer, has my name, and the next time Woody needs me, they'll let me know. But it won't be too soon; Woody is so tired of having used so many extras that his next film is rumoured to have only four people in it. And I'm not one of them.

It's a Letter Column!

/* Hello again. In case you've forgotten, IT1's letter column was in the midst of an interesting, intense discussion concerning... concerning... well... concerning a lot of stuff. I don't suppose I can provide all the necessary context, so best just to throw you in the deep end right away with a letter...

*/

From Rich Reilly (10 February 1987):

To Steve Langley: Steve, right now I don't want to argue about which of the rights recognized by our founding fathers is most important, although I do think--intending no disrespect to them--we should keep in mind that the founding fathers could have been wrong. That is, just because they said we have certain rights, and wrote them into the Bill of Rights, doesn't mean that those are the rights we should have. However, I will grant that all three of these rights are of great importance, and will even allow that liberty may be more important than happiness. But even if this is the case, we should remember that happiness is important also, and that in many cases it may be more important to worry about happiness than liberty. I have been suggesting some of the cases where we should do so. As I will attempt to show more thoroughly later, my views are actually more conducive to happiness and liberty than the views of those who oppose ratings and censorship.

To Jack McHugh: It was interesting to see what you read my position as advocating. First of all, I must simply deny that I am a utilitarian, although I admit utilitarianism has greatly influenced my thoughts. Along with Bentham and Mill, I would like to acknowledge Aristotle, the American Pragmatists William James and John Dewey, John Rawls, B. F. Skinner, and Aldous Huxley as having an important influence. In any case, although I stress the importance of happiness, it is not the only thing I value; hence, I am not claiming that "the greatest happiness principle" is the sole principle of society. Your worry about minorities is, of course, a standard complaint against utilitarianism: but I am not utilitarian, and I don't see that my views have this problem.

I also must object to your statement that "there are some ideas that are harmful (but) that's not the point." For that, precisely, is the point. I have not advocated restrictions on any ideas or media where "no one can agree" whether they are right or wrong, good or bad. In fact, I believe it important that such ideas do remain unrestricted. But where they can be seen to be harmful, and there exists scientific/logical/pragmatic/empirical/objective evidence for this harm, we should restrict those ideas or media, just as we restrict drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes.

As for the claim that "the arts don't influence us, (but) we influence the arts:" the view is far too simple. Any view which sees the influence as a one-way relationship is too simple: we should perhaps think of it as a dialogue, a constant interchange between people and media. Media and art are forms of communication; to deny that they influence us is practically to deny that a spoken word can have influence.

Indeed, it is perhaps much more than that. If art and media have no effect on us, it would simply be impossible for ideas to have ever progressed or changed. There would be no history, no science, no society, in fact no civilization. To say that art and media don't influence us is to say that we are no more than animals. It is to deny that we have a capacity to learn or evolve, or think.

If art had no effect on us, there would be no art.

The simple fact is that art and media are part of the world we experience and interact with. The question is not whether art influences us, or whether we influence art, but how much and in what ways the interaction takes place.

I also deny that American television is "the ultimate personification" of my philosophy. It's a rather lowly view of humanity that believes happiness is nothing more than watching T.V., and it certainly is not my view. I intend to suggest later why, if anything, television is in opposition to my philosophy. For now let me just suggest that if people were really happy, they would probably spend very little time watching T.V.

The point of your next paragraph is, I admit, unclear to me. It sounds as if you mean to deny the possibility of improving our society. You might in fact be correct about this, but I certainly hope not, and will continue to argue as if we can improve.

Next you attribute another view to me which I do not believe I've advocated: that "only the rich and educated (should) raise children." I don't necessarily believe a whole lot of education is needed to raise children, and certainly not that parents must be rich. I know Steve is anxious to press me on these questions, but for now I hope you'll allow me to bypass them, with the promise that I'll deal with them later, so we can focus on the discussion of ratings and censorship.

The rest of your letter I must pass by as well, including your main objection. I must simply say that I hardly would wish to defend the Rumanian government, and that I share your fears that "the cure may be worse than the disease," I hope, however, we can discover a cure which is, genuinely, a cure. First, however, we need to get clearer what the disease is.

To Linda Courtemanche: I agree: it is terrifying to think of someone having "the power and authority to stifle someone else's right to think as they will." This is the sort of thing George Orwell feared and warned us of in 1984, and I suspect many western societies breathed a collective sigh of relief when that date came around, and the full Orwellian nightmare had not come true.

But what terrifies me more is a more subtle danger. "The biggest danger we all face," you claim, "is for any one part of society to set itself up as a self-appointed tribunal, judging everybody, having all the answers." This is a danger, but not necessarily the biggest. Indeed, although many groups in our country would doubtless love to make this danger come true, I'm not sure we're in any immediate danger of it happening. What I fear, however, is that no one will need to use force to get us to think as they will, but that we may freely give up our ability to think for ourselves. I fear the possibility that "people will come to love their oppression, to adore the technologies that undo their capacities to think." (Neil Postman: Amusing Ourselves to Death) This was Aldous Huxley's nightmare, its consequences depicted in Brave New World--a somewhat different sort of nightmare than 1984--and it may be the one our society is moving toward. Perhaps my fear is ungrounded--I sincerely hope so--but I cannot ignore it, and I don't think anyone should.

Back to Steve Knight: Steve, you missed the point of my second letter (Vol. 2, No. 4). I was not arguing that since Hefner and Guccione and

/* Rich Reilly, continued */

major corporations want to defend our liberty, and since their motives are suspicious, then their position must be wrong. Rather: if someone with suspicious motives tells you the sun is shining, surely it's reasonable to ask yourself whether or not it really is shining. That is all I wished to suggest, that maybe the sun isn't shining as bright as we're being told.

/* It seems to me that in discussions of this nature, you owe it to your position to ask yourself whether the sun really is shining no matter what the other person's motive may be. To say that a person's motive has any relevance to whether or not that person's argument is right, let alone how much attention you should devote to disproving it, is simply irrelevant at best and ad hominem at worst.

*/

From Michael Burstein (11 February 1987):

If you remember, a while back you promised five free issues to anyone who had appeared in a movie. When I found out about this, I told you of my appearance in Woody Allen's The Front. Sure enough, you sent me the issues.

At the same time, I warned you that I was working as an extra in Woody Allen's "Fall Project '85". Well, that movie has now been released as Radio Days, and sure enough, I am in it!

The scene I am in is the malt shop scene. When Woody Allen talks about how his cousin Ruthie and her friends would sit in the malt shop and swoon to the boy crooners singing on the radio, he then shows a scene of boys and says that he and his friends would look on disgustedly. I am the boy wearing glasses, sitting at the table right in front. The camera also makes me look fat, whereas in real life, I am only a few pounds overweight.

That makes another five free issues. (Perhaps I ought to have you return all my money in the balance and just keep writing articles.)

/* That would, of course, be just fine with me--and, I daresay, anyone else who has the good sense (and fortune) to read Michael's excellent article in this issue.

*/

From Don Williams (15 February 1987):

Art and the media. Censorship. Liberty, brainwashing, parental testing, happiness, Penthouse, and the Marxist "proletariat." Egad, and this in a little ol' zine? Excuse me while I get a cognac and stoke my pipe.

/* Don't forget the elbow patches on the cardigan, chap.

*/

What most of this ongoing discussion is about, fundamentally, is philosophy. Everybody seems to be making sense, everyone is being civil, and everyone is throwing words like "liberty" around as if everybody else knew and understood what they mean--or rather--as if everybody had the same assumption about their basic, innate meaning. (Even assuming there is such a thing, which I strongly think is a quite mistaken assumption.)

It is one of the great unfortunates of life and intellect that we sentient are slaves to the chains of mere language. It is confusing, obfuscating, unwieldy, and all too often, inaccurate. It is also immensely powerful. And yet we use it without a thought, vaguely aware of connotation and

denotation, of the emotion-evoking process of words while speaking to logic and reason. As I said, unfortunate, but we have no other option. (At least not until telepathing of images, emotion, and knowledge become commonplace.)

Give that caveat, then, let's take the plunge, and maybe try to define some terms along the way.

Art. Neat stuff. What is it? (And good luck, friends, at trying to find any working definition that can't be shot to hell by any half-baked semanticist.) Much as I dislike it, art is anything that anybody--anybody--says is art. Art is not good, bad, or indifferent. Good? Define that in terms that hold up to all attacks. Better yet, save yourself the mental hernia. Art is art is... you get the idea. So why all the discussion about whether art affects life or vice-versa? Who can separate the two? Begging the question? You bet; it deserves to be begged. Just as all the other issues raised over the past two or three months deserve to be begged. Define censorship or liberty in universal terms. Define "human rights." Happiness.

Granted, there's no sense in even discussing any issue if we look for universal meaning. No sense in even trying to do it, unless we all make a contract. A social contract. (Eyes raising across the country as if readers begin to wonder, "What the hell is this Bozo mumbling about?" and begin to thumb through the zine for more wholesome--or intelligible--fare.)

So let's digress for a bit and discuss this strange concept, social contract.

Somewhere in the 1600's, a man named Thomas Hobbes (an Englishman) wrote a book, Leviathan. In it, he deduced a never-existing place called "the State of Nature." Hobbes was primarily a political philosopher, and as such his primary concern was political power, its nature and source. He posited that life in the State of nature was "...naasty, short, and brutish." In this place, all sentient beings--by which he meant humans--were masters of themselves, and answerable to no other higher authority. Each person was his/her political power, each with inalienable rights, the foremost being self-preservation. Anything which an individual decided was in the interest of self-preservation was not only permissible, but obligatory. If one construed a smile of a passing fellow human as a hostile act, bashing said individual's head in with the nearest convenient rock at the earliest opportune moment was a perfectly honest and reasonable way of resolving the situation.

Hobbes, though, was more interested in explaining politics than he was in explaining the physics of what happens when a hard object is bashed by a still harder object. His basic premise is this: liberty of the individual --in its purest form--is unrestricted. Granted, Hobbes' State of nature has never existed; man is a social creature and in need of some form of herd, clan or tribe to survive infancy, but the analogy can be drawn along the lines of clan or tribe, that is, each herd, clan, or tribe at one time probably did have a contract, and was answerable to no other higher authority than itself.

Hobbes goes on to say that (Western) civilization is based upon the loss of individual freedom for the greater self-preservation of all; the common wealth. This common wealth is based upon a social contract, whereby each member agrees to give up certain personal freedoms in exchange for protection from the manifestation of the more lethal forms of expression of the individual freedom each person possessed. Hobbes, being who he was and where he was, drew this social contract theory to support the monarchy form

/* Don Williams, continued */

of government existing in his native England. (I often suspect that he was exercising prudence over sheer philosophic thought at that point but, well, one didn't get to be an old citizen in those days by questioning the rights of the monarchy to rule.) It wasn't until Hume and Locke got into the picture some years later that the ideas of "rights" and self-autonomy came into vogue. Locke, especially, had a profound effect upon a group of individuals who, hanging around the Philadelphia Courthouse one humid summer, had nothing better to do than form a new country. (In fact, one of the lines in our Constitution comes from Locke, in a slightly modified version; "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of property..." Jefferson, for the sake of semantics, changed the last word.)

What does any of this have to do with what has been discussed in these pages the last few months? Indirectly, everything. By tacit social contract every person reading this acknowledges that I am writing words, and that these words make some sort of sense. Everyone here (I presume at this point) agrees that human life has value and meaning, though the specifics of both are hard to define or realize. This idea of social contract, though, seldom enters our conscious thought. We tend to want to give each thing its own intrinsic value--its universal value--when in reality no such thing exists. Things are valued, or not, by contract. Money, ideas, possessions, happiness, liberty... even belief systems--i.e., religion, and all the moral implications and ramifications therefrom--derive their importance by social contract.

Nor do most of us have a choice in the contracting. We are born into a given contract and socialized according to its tenets. We believe that the killing of individuals as an expression of individual freedom is wrong, that beating a child with a tire-iron is wrong, that showing sexually explicit material to three-year olds is wrong, and that having the choice of picking between belief systems is okay, up to a point. (The chosen belief system must be one of those deemed acceptable within the terms of the tacit contract, Christianity being one of those more readily agreed to than, say, hallucinogen-induced worship of panda bears on every other Thursday.)

It is my opinion, then, that problems arise when not everybody is agreeable to the unwritten tenets of the social contract... or when some agreements conflict with others. Religious belief versus freedom of thought; censorship versus free expression. But, see, we've just taken a huge leap into the realm of connotation... who could possibly be for censorship except for some zealot of the left, right, or other-directionally oriented thought? (We're back to the handicap of language--words carry the burden of emotional baggage.)

I guess I should come down from the stratosphere at this point to gain some oxygen--some things aren't formed by contract, one of those being that brains too long deprived of gaseous nutrition tend to deteriorate rapidly.

Getting back to all the good stuff being talked about recently, let's give a shot at defending Rich Reilly's letter. What is the problem here? Pre-supposing that we've all given up immense amounts of personal freedom already, why the outcry over giving up more? I can easily envision a time when parenting would be conducted, not by an infant's natural parents, but by a communally-agreeable set of standards. (And, if you'll notice, I did not say government; if you though community sounded more acceptable than government you are not alone, and maybe you should think about connotation some more.) We have all already agreed to all sorts of things like this. Orphanages, in the basic scheme of things, are looked upon as contractually acceptable--the best answer to a bad situation. They are not generally

/* Don Williams, continued */

That "art" is so difficult to define in a universally acceptable way should tell us all something about the state of that contract--the state of the art. (Ouch, I couldn't resist.) As for whether art is morally trivial, and as for whether art is influenced by us, or the reverse. In both cases it seems to me that it's a two-way street. I'm not much into cinematography or the visual mediums, but it makes sense to me that art affects me and millions like me--or hundreds, tens--unlike me. My film is probably Apocalypse Now. A good part of that is knowing the novel upon which it was premised, and knowing something of the war which was its subject matter. That film affected me, and millions of others like me, but was the influence positive or negative? I didn't see Rambo, but that film, or what I heard about it, also had some affect.

I, uh, I'm losing it here... I'm not used to dissertations anymore.

One more thing I would reiterate, though, is the power of language. We mostly concern ourselves with the meaning of a given word--its denotation. We think--mostly without thinking, I suppose--that we are talking about a concept as defined by a word, which in turn is defined by still other words, that we're all basically talking about the same thing. This is pretty much the case, it has to be, or we'd never be able to communicate much beyond, "Pass the salt." BUT, we should beware that we aren't always all using the same word to define the same concept. We should also be aware that words, beyond their denotation--and sometimes in spite of it--also carry connotation; feelings and meanings beyond the actual definition. Many words carry a lot of positive or negative emotional baggage. Freedom and liberty are pretty much the same thing and both have strong positive connotations to Americans. Pornography and censorship are usually negatives. But there are a lot of words that can cut either or both ways, and we don't always know which version--emotionally speaking--another person is carrying around.

I'm losing it. Ciao.

/* Whew! If we continue in this vein, does anyone else foresee the day when Collected Letters to It's a Trap! Vol. 1 becomes a required college freshman philosophy text?

*/

From Pete Gaughan ():

I don't pay much attention to hockey because fighting goes unpunished, but I have the honesty to admit that hockey players are good athletes who have developed skills I'll never have. Indoor soccer players are the same.

On colorizing--I'm tired of comparisons between films and the "Mona Lisa." Da Vinci did not work for huge-budget studios, did not paint on a bigger canvas to draw audiences, did not repaint somebody else's "Mona Lisa" just to make a buck.

Directors and producers are businessmen first. "Regard" for their "artist's creative rights" is something they themselves don't have.

No, I don't like colorized films. I don't much like remakes, or Sensurround, or R-rated violence, either. But the movies gave us all this and more without an outcry, or calls of "immoral" antiartistic behavior.

/* I don't see that the amount of money made by a director has any bearing on the question of colorization. If so, does this mean that,

say, Norman Mailer's works can be altered by others, simply because he's of a stature where he earns big bucks?

True, there are a number of directors and producers in Hollywood who are fundamentally mercenary. I don't see that this means those who are concerned with the artistry of what they're producing shouldn't have their products protected from presentation in ways they don't intend. Otherwise, it's like saying that one could go ahead and rework the works of John Fowles simply because Danielle Steele is a hack. (Note to any Steele fans: I haven't read any of her stuff and so don't really know how it is; I picked her name as a generic popular author.)

One last angle on the question, which just occurred to me. I'm not a legal authority on copyrights, but I believe that, unless a contract states differently, the producer/funder (generally the studio) legally owns the film. Completely. The director and actors and cinematographer are, legally, mere hired help working on (and contributing their vision to) a specific project for someone else. One of the rights guaranteed by the standard Writer's/Director's/Actor's guild contracts to such individuals is the right to attach their names to the work that they do, in whatever form they desire--or to not do so. (Thus, Walter Matthau used his real name--something akin to Walter Mattheschusky, or some such--in the credits for Earthquake, and Marian Ellison routinely attaches the name "Cordwainer Bird" to work he disavows because of outside interference.) Now I, as a director, say, working on a film for a hefty salary, attach my name to a work with which I'm pleased. Afterwards, the studio (being the owner of the copyright and therefore able to legally produce "derivative works" such as a colorized version) produces a colorized version of a black and white film. This decision has been made without regard for whether or not I choose to dissociate my name from this derivative work of which I disapprove. Interesting question, no?

Again, I'm no legal scholar, so please correct me if I'm mistaken on any of these points.

*/

From Linda Courtemanche (23 February 1987):

Glad to hear you finally took the plunge and started film school! I took a couple of related courses in college (Film As Literature, Video Production) and a Community Producer course with my home town's cable company; they weren't enough experience to really give me much independent working knowledge, but they were enough to fascinate me and, as you said, give me an intense appreciation for the work of skilled filmmakers. I remember having a conference once with my professor and excitedly discussing all the possible ways of shooting one particular scene. He just grinned and declared, "You've got the bug!" I can see that you do too, and I hope you keep us posted in IT on your adventures.

Kevin Tighe's comment about my movie list surprised me, and I've been thinking about it. He says I lean "toward anti-hero films." I'm trying to figure out exactly what he means by that, and I'd be interested in hearing his interpretation. (Hello, Kevin?) "Anti-hero," to my mind, can mean one of several things: (1) The protagonist is unconventional but acts nobly in some way. (2) The protagonist is a deeply flawed person who in no way can be called a hero, or a person who would even want to be one! (3) A group-centered film where no on character can be deemed a hero. In my view, most of my best-film and favorite-film list features unconventional, even

/* Linda Courtemanche, continued */
eccentric people who, through circumstance, find themselves demonstrating their best side--and people like that seem like heroes to me! (Rose and Charlie in The African Queen, Will and Amy Cain in High Noon, Johnny Case and Linda Seton in Holiday, Marian in Sound of Music, It's a Wonderful Life's George Bailey and Mr. Smith Goes To Washington's title character!) In Kevin's "anti-hero" category as I think he means it, the only character I can see as really applying is Charles Foster Kane. I'm looking forward to reading what Kevin thinks of this, and what you think, Steve. (P.S. on anti-heroes: Would Rhett Butler apply?)

Good news on the silent-film scene: A friend of ours locally has found out his hometown movie-theatre features something special once every six weeks. We missed the first show, but we intend to get to the next--the theatre just showed Chaplin's The Rink, and also threw in some organ music and a sing-along for good measure! And, best news of all to me, the theatre was packed for the show! I'll write more when Steve and I get to see one of these presentations.

Incidentally, count me in on that FilmCon you and Kevin are dreaming about! Also, I sympathize with your longing to see GWTW clear through. After seeing it at least six times on the small screen (sometimes even in black and white!), I went to a theatre to see it as it was meant to be seen, and it was magnificent. (Naturally, there was a built-in intermission halfway through!)

Still yet another word about colorization: I have now heard many arguments pro and con (in fact, I had one with someone yesterday!). I am not at all crazy about colorization personally, partly because of its potential to damage the filmmaker's artistic vision, and partly because I have never felt that everything needs to be in color! However, I see that both sides in this have valid points, to which I would like to add one that our friend made yesterday: The colorization of films is giving many of them new exposure to audiences. The publicity blares about this film to be seen-as-you've-never-seen-it-before, and for many people, it will actually be their first viewing of a film that has been lying on a shelf somewhere for years, gathering dust. Even for those of us who wish that colorization weren't the rage, it seems to me that we can take advantage of the chance to discover classics in this way--we can use colorization as the means to an end, rather than as an end in itself.

(A quick question: What part of the spectacular failure of Prince's Under the Cherry Moon do you think was caused by the decision to shoot in B&W?)

/* Could be, I suppose, although from what I heard it suffered more from other failings. I'm glad to hear that you may have been getting the chance to see some of the classic silents. Sometimes I find it hard to disagree with Agee that the movies started going downhill with the arrival of sound. There are too many filmed plays out there masquerading as films.

*/

From Pete Fuchs (12 February 1987):

Congratulations on starting film school. Always good to see people pursuing their hobbies with gusto. I'm enjoying the comments on films and thought I'd add mine although I know nothing about film or filmmaking. So I can't call these the best best films but they are among my favorites:

Favorite French film: Lacombe, Lucien. I never met anyone who has even heard of this one but it's great. Story of a boy of 16 or so who tries to

join the French Resistance in the 1940's, is rejected due to his age, so joins the collaborators instead.

Favorite Swedish film: Scenes from a Marriage. A long film, intense, but Bergman's best.

Favorite Canadian film: In Praise of Older Women. Probably not great filmmaking, but I sure enjoyed it.

Favorite British film: Sleuth. Not nearly as good the second time you see it, but the first time was great. One of the few plays that succeeds as a movie.

Favorite Australian film: They're a Weird Mob. Not great filmmaking, but hilarious if you've experienced the Aussies.

Favorite U.S. films: Dr. Zhivago, Clockwork Orange, For Whom the Bell Tolls, Cabaret. All these enjoyable but don't stand out in my mind nearly as much as the foreign films I mentioned.

Favorite soft porn film: The Best of the Third Annual New York Erotic Festival. Hey, don't laugh. These are reasonable quality short films, frequently funny, and always more erotic than the usual collection of X, XX, XXX rated trash.

/* I caught one erotic film festival collection at our local repertory theater, and was agreeably surprised. A few too many relied on embarrassed-nervous humor for their laughs, and I don't think enough share my own view that completely unclothed bodies aren't half as erotic as [[[the viewer's mind with some imaginative filmmaking, but there was definitely some good stuff. Favorite films of different nationalities? (Wow--new category!) Japan: The Makioka Sisters. No doubt about it. Soviet Union: Either October or Battleship Potemkin. (Hey, I'm a sucker for Eisenstein--what can I say?) Sweden: I'm a sucker for The Seventh Seal, which besides being a nice safe choice is one of about three Swedish films I've seen. Britain: Gregory's Girl or The Ruling Class, perhaps. France: Either The Return of Martin Guerre or Danton, if you wish to count the latter (a joint Franco-Polish production).

Hey, as long as we're on France, is anyone else out there mystified by the attraction of the French New Wave films of the 60's?

*/

From Kevin Brown ():

This is a valiant effort to be the first to reach you with talk about the Oscar nominations. It looks like the Oscar nominations sum up what a really poor year this was for dramatic films, especially ones with major stars. Anyway, here's what I think about each of the major categories.

BEST PICTURE: To me, a choice of three; Children of a Lesser God, Room With a View, and Platoon. I really dislike The Mission and I was not greatly impressed with Hannah and Her Sisters. I suspect many people will disagree with me on the latter, but Woody Allen has done much better. The three I do like are difficult to choose from, but having to make a choice, I'll take Children of a Less God, mostly because of the extraordinary performance of Marlee Matlin.

BEST ACTOR: James Woods is out. His performance in Salvador is quite good, but the film itself is mediocre (at best), and I find myself unable

/* Kevin Brown, continued */

to vote for him. Of course, were it up to me, Charlie Sheen would have been nominated for Platoon instead. The other four are all in good films, making the choice more difficult. It's hard to see William Hurt winning two in a row, even though he's the only previous winner here. Besides, his performance is overshadowed by his co-star, which isn't always good. Paul Newman was good in The Color of Money, but not as good as the other remaining nominees. Aside from that, Newman never wins the Oscar. That leaves two performances that I really love, Bob Hoskins in Mona Lisa and Dexter Gordon in 'Round Midnight. I lean towards Hoskins mainly because Gordon wasn't really projecting himself as someone else, which is what acting is all about. I won't be disappointed if he wins, but he's living while Bob Hoskins is acting.

BEST ACTRESS: I am in awe of Marlee Matlin's performance in Children of a Lesser God. Any other choice would be a travesty of all that is good and right in Hollywood (if there is any such thing anymore). Before you start to say that I shouldn't pick her for the same reason I didn't pick Dexter Gordon for best actor, let me tell you that the situation is not the same. That's not Marlee Matlin on the screen at all. She's created a character so strongly that it's hard to imagine her being any different in anything else. But it's not biographical like 'Round Midnight, she's deaf but she's not the same deaf person you see on the screen. Anyway, the other four are not in the same league although two of them are very good. Jane Fonda shows that she remembers how to act in The Morning After, and would be a serious contender in any other year. Sissy Spacek is also quite good in Crimes of the Heart. It's something of a change of pace for her, but it's not good enough to win this year. Kathleen Turner might be worth considering, but Peggy Sue Got Married is so pointless as to render her performance forgettable. Sigourney Weaver might be the next best bet, as anyone with serious acting in mind will certainly vote for Marlee Matlin. That Weaver got nominated at all is an indication of how few good dramatic films there were in 1986.

BEST DIRECTOR: I loved Blue Velvet. I wish Blue Velvet had been nominated for best picture instead of the The Mission. I would like nothing better than to see David Lynch, one of my favorite directors, win the Oscar for it. Smart money, however, will bet on Woody Allen, as he's on everyone's mind with a new film.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR AND ACTRESS: The actors all very good, but Dennis Hopper is just a bit better in Hoosiers than the rest. Besides, Hoosiers is a great film and they overlooked it everywhere else. As far as the actresses go, Piper Laurie has long been one of my favorites, and her performance in Children of a Lesser God benefits from not sharing much screen time with Marlee Matlin, thus not being overpowered.

That's what I think about this year's nominees. I figure you'll probably get lots of letters about the Oscars, so I tried to be one of the first.

/* All right, time for my post-post-post mortem. Given my esoteric interests, the two awards about which I was most concerned were Animated Short and Best Song. I think "Somewhere Out There" should have gotten the latter over whatever drek it was that actually won (from Top Gun, I believe?), and the animation in A Greek Tragedy is nowhere near as fine as that in Luxo Jr. Among the major awards, I was most concerned about Best Director, where I, like Kevin, wanted to see Lynch win. On the others:

Best Picture: I agree with you, Kevin, about Hannah. I enjoyed it, but I wondered what all the fuss was about (and really wondered about

the claims of it being Woody's "best since Annie Hall, when a film like Manhattan lies between them). I finally saw Platoon about several months ago and was not completely taken with it, for reasons I may go into elsewhere.

Best Actor: I only saw Platoon among the pictures covered here. People whose opinions I respect gave Hoskins the nod here, though.

Best Actress: I saw Children of a Lesser God about a week after the awards, and I wish I had been able to see it unencumbered by inflated expectations. I didn't much care for the film itself, and Matlin's performance suffered compared to my expectation of a truly revelatory one. It came across to me as a very skillful portrayal of emotional pain and rage, but [[not one which showed me that the character had grown or changed much by the fade out]]. (I think Matlin was hampered in this by a weak story, but also believe that she could have stretched the character's limits more in this direction.) Personal peeve: does anyone else out there think that Jane Fonda is tremendously overrated? I have not seen a performance of hers yet that doesn't reek to me of ACTING.

Supporting Actor: Did I miss something? Was there anything outstanding in Michael Kane's performance in Hannah? I didn't see Hoosiers, but was, like everyone else (well, okay, not exactly everyone), pulling for Hopper based on his amazing-how-in-the-world-did-it-not-get-nominated performance in Blue Velvet.

Supporting Actress: I like Piper Laurie a lot too. I didn't have much quarrel with Wiest as the winner, though.

And we might as well end as we begin, so back...
*/

From Rich Reilly ():

I guess it's about time I made the following admission: I don't really believe sex and violence on television, or in the media in general, cause much violence in the world. To be sure, there are probably some cases where the media is a contributing factor, but probably few cases, if any, where it is the most important cause of violence. Anyway, the average person is not a killer, and that perhaps is proof enough that television doesn't cause violence. (Besides, don't the bad guys on television usually "get it" in the end? That would seem to discourage violence, rather than encourage it.)

I also must admit to regretting somewhat my use of the term "happiness" in recent letters, for it is misleading in a variety of ways. For one thing, it makes me sound rather like a utilitarian, which I am not. Also, since different people have different notions of what happiness is, the use of the term apart from an explanation of what I meant by it was bound to be confusing. Finally, my use of "happiness" made it sound as if it were the only thing of importance, whereas in fact I also believe in freedom, love, knowledge, truth, beauty, and all sorts of other fine ideas, which are probably related to happiness, but not necessarily reducible to factors leading to happiness.

If you'll allow me to digress a bit, I'd like to talk about a hypothetical situation, due to Robert Nozick, which brings out some other things we should be thinking about in this discussion. Imagine that in the future technology develops an "Experience Machine." This machine is most amazing

/* Rich Reilly, continued */

and wonderful: a person can be hooked up to it and have any experiences he or she wishes. This is done by direct stimulation of the brain, and is performed in such a manner that while having the experiences, one is totally unaware that one is hooked to the machine. Let us suppose also that the experiences are not simple, but just as real and complex as real life, and better. One can experience writing a novel, making friends, starring in movies, climbing mountains, frolicking with "Playboy" playmates, creating works of art, or perhaps even more bizarre events such as astral travel, or meetings with extraterrestrials; all complete with inner and outer sensations, thoughts, and emotions. Programmers might make available an immense variety of such experiences, and a person might be hooked to the machine for, say, two years at a time. The person would of course be fed and cared for, but would have no idea during the two years that he or she was "on the machine." After two years the person could come back to reality for a few hours, select another two years worth of experiences, then be plugged back into the machine.

Granted, this may be currently impossible /* may be? */, but I'm not sure it's so far-fetched. Now, please ask yourself the following question: "If I had the money, would I hook myself up?" Why, or why not? Should such machines be legal? Suppose they could be mass produced: people might buy themselves an experience machine, go to the experience rental shop to get some programs, and hook themselves up for indefinite periods of time (while other advanced technology took care of them). Should people be allowed to do this? Should corporations be allowed to market it? Isn't there something rather repugnant about the whole idea? Might you not want to avoid these machines, thinking that they're really a form of mental suicide? Aren't there other things more important than having lots of pleasant experiences: like doing things yourself, exploring new places or ideas, creating your own realities, actively participating in the world, and being a real person, rather than just a collection of experiences someone has programmed into your passive brain? Indeed, could we even say of someone hooked to the machine that he or she is a person?

Did you know the average person in our society watches 16,000 hours of television before getting out of high school? Think about that number a moment: sixteen-thousand hours. (For those of you interested in numerology, that adds up to 666 days.) Do you know how many books the average person could read in that time? If we take the average book to be around 320 pages in length, and the average reading rate around 20 pages per hour, we find that 1,000 books could have been read. How many books are read? By the average person, only one per year. (I have perhaps slightly overestimated the average reading rate: I believe statistics show it to be somewhere in the range I've given.) It might, of course, be pointed out that much of those 16,000 hours were watched before the youngster could read well. This is true, but I think it also likely that if people watched less television while young, they might learn to read faster, with more comprehension and enjoyment. In any case, those 16,000 hours of television must take a lot of time away from reading, not to mention other activities which (I believe) are more worthwhile. Indeed, watching television hardly deserves to be called an "activity," rather, it's a "passivity" in which the person, and the mind, do nothing.

Even if those 16,000 hours do not have any effect on people beyond the "hit of pure emotion" Steve has mentioned, I wonder if that effect, powerful enough to get people to keep on coming back for more, isn't enough in itself for us to conclude that television has a bad effect on young people.

But somehow, the idea that all those thousands of hours have no effect on a person seems somewhat unlikely to be true. The mere fact that the average

person watches 16,000 hours before finishing high school is proof of television's tremendous effect on our lives and culture. I believe most of us underestimate the effect television has, for we are unaware of the deep influence it has actually had on ourselves. I have already suggested a similarity between television and hypnotism. The idea may seem extravagant, but I suspect it is accurate to a frightening degree. We, the public, are of course not aware of what's going on: after all, we're the ones who've been hypnotized.

We may not be aware, but corporations and advertisers certainly are. They have become expert at the task of getting us to buy a lot of junk we neither need nor desire. They have learned to create in us a desire for their products. John Kenneth Galbraith, in The Affluent Society, calls these "synthesized wants." When a new product is manufactured, a new want must be manufactured also. In 1974, 25 billion dollars were spent on advertising, and the amount was then increasing about a billion dollars a year. No doubt the science and technology of want-creation has also been improving rapidly.

And here we sit, wide-eyed, passive, unthinking, staring at the T.V. screen, unaware of what's happening to us. How many commercials do you suppose one sees in 16,000 hours? Even if one isn't convinced to buy every product, even if one is offended at some of the commercials seen, I wonder if perhaps all those images shown of happy consumers happily consuming, of new and wonderful products to make our lives even happier, don't have some effect on the way we look at the world, on the way we see our lives, and on the way we live them.

Happiness is a shopping mall, and a pocket full of money.

/* I may be dense (may be?), but I'm not quite clear what it is about television that you're objecting to. I'd be hard pressed, despite the overwhelming amount of mindless drek on it, to agree that it's inherently bad and corrupts everything it touches. The same medium that gives us endless hours of Wheel of Fortune and Dallas has also given us things as fine as The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman. I'd also hate to lose PBS because of the excesses of commercial television (although if you're railing against the advertisements themselves, I'd possibly be inclined to agree). It also seems to me that a simple condemnation of television itself as being naturally harmful is akin (but not identical) to the sort of one-way relationship you decry in responding to Jack McHugh in your earlier letter.

I sense in all of this from you, though, Rich, an implicit feeling that if it weren't for television we'd be a society full of people reading Homer and Melville and Steinbeck, all elegantly discussing literature and being better for it. Not so. Prior to the arrival of television (and radio), most people were reading pulps, dime novels full of the sort of escapist adventure fiction we now get on television. You may want to argue that it'd be better because at least people would be reading instead of watching, but then you're saying that the content is less important than the form, something with which Marshall McLuhan would agree (from what little I know of him), but something I'd have a very tough time believing myself. There are "good" and "bad" sorts of written fiction, just as there are "good" and "bad" sorts of television. I'd take the fact that there seems to be so much more of the latter than the former as an argument for improving, not eliminating, television. How? Good question. I wish I knew.

*/

UNITED

RULES CHANGE

Each club may now carry up to twenty players on its roster.

TOURNAMENT SEEDINGS

Based on the excellent suggestion of Tom Hise, the Cup Tournament this year (and in all succeeding years) will be seeded--in other words, rather than first round draws being random, there will be a strict ranking to reduce the chances of two clubs who might otherwise be title-contenders knocking each other out in the early rounds. Seedings of clubs will not be in straight divisional order (e.g., clubs in Division I will not necessarily occupy seeds 1-10, D-II will not occupy 11-20, etc.). Rather, clubs in Division I will have 20 points added to their league points at the time the Cup schedule is seeded; similarly, Division II clubs will have 10 points added. The seedings will then be determined from these point totals, with the result that there will be some Division II clubs seeded above some Division I clubs, and some III above II. In the first round, top seed plays the bottom seed, second seed plays second from bottom, and so on, with the first-round matches being distributed amongst the brackets to prevent an early encounter between two giants. (I'm sure you know what I'm trying to describe, but let me know if I've only succeeded in confusing the issue and you'd like an explicit chart to straighten things out.) Our thirty clubs will be rounded out by two non-League (imaginary) sides seeded #31 and #32, with skill level totals to match, and whose lineups will be decided upon and sealed prior to my receipt of any tournament lineups. If two or more clubs have the same number of "seeding points," I will try to arrange the seeding so that each club gets to play a club from a different division in the first round; otherwise random draw prevails.

If you detect any problems with this proposed scheme, please let me know immediately.

NEXT YEAR CHANGES...?

As far as I'm concerned, it's never too early to start talking about changes for next year.

Four divisions. One possibility that I'm warming to was suggested by a manager perceiving that the 27-game schedule leads to the inequity of some clubs playing 14 home matches and 13 away, while others struggle with 14 road games and 13 at home. I don't think this is, by itself, a great problem, and, as near as I can tell from a quick glance, it's never been the deciding factor in two clubs's places in the standings come the end of the season. Nevertheless, the suggested solution, which is to rearrange the league into four eight-club divisions next year, has some attractive possibilities. This would allow for a 28-game schedule consisting of each club playing every other club in its division twice each on the road and at home. Allowing for greater spread between the top and bottom divisions should give clubs a few more niches to develop in while waiting for a shot at the top. With two fewer clubs in each division, the competition should be a little more intense as you each have fewer clubs to focus on and come to know each club's style a little more. Additionally, adding two more clubs to the league would be just plain nice, and a 32-club league makes

the Cup tournament schedule come out even without first-round byes or fictional clubs.

If this were to work, however, the promotion/relegation rates would need to be changed, since one-up-two-and-two-up-one would only leave two clubs remaining in their same divisions, which doesn't really provide continuity. One-up-one-and-one-up-two looks like it might work rather well, though. A slightly stickier problem would be how to make the transition from the current arrangement to a four-division league next season; the following is my stab at a compensating promotion/relegation scheme:

	<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>III</u>
1	I	I	I
2	I	I	II
3	I	II	II
4	I	II	III
5	I	II	III
6	II	III	III
7	II	III	IV
8	II	III	IV
9	III	IV	IV
10	III	IV	IV

After allowing some time for discussion, I will likely put this up to an actual vote amongst all managers (much as professional leagues do amongst club owners when they're considering expanding the league). Now that we're rolling, I think you all should have some measure of control over things like this which affect league organization.

Skill levels above 10. On the other hand, I have no desire to turn this into a total democracy concerning the rules themselves, but this doesn't mean I don't want your input, of course. One of the more audacious ideas I've seen lately, and which I think shows some promise, is (get this) abolishing the SL10 maximum, the catch being that coaching above SL10 would cost twice what it normally does (2 VPs per SL, 4 VPs for GK & SW). Above SL10 the goal formulas would be that a random number between 1 and the GK's SL plus 4 must beat the GK's SL (e.g., for an SL13 GK, 1-17 must be 14-17 for a successful shot); similarly, the random number would be between 1 and the SW's SL plus 5 for shots getting around the SW. This keeps the formula the same as it is now below SL10 but still lets those who want to be fanatic about great goaltending push the chance of their opponents' scoring slightly closer to 0. The biggest thing I think I like about this is the coaching flexibility it adds; the focus no longer has to be on simply getting your players to 10, so you decide how skilled you really want your players. The length of the season works nicely to keep this from getting out of hand, though, since a 10 or 11 session season means that the practical maximum will be SL14 or SL15 (apprentice becomes SL2 in session 2, +1 SL per session means SL10 or SL11 by season's end, next season's three coachings mean SL13 or SL14, lose two at end of age I but three age II coachings mean SL14 or SL15). For a little while I was thinking that the ability to pump virtually unlimited points into one's apprentices would mean that the top clubs would become virtually unstoppable as they spend all their VPs developing for future seasons, but I think the high number of VPs required to get players up that high will mean that we'll never see entire rosters consisting of SL14 players.

One guaranteed shot per game. With the tougher, traditional goal-scoring formula, we're beginning to see more games where one side shuts the other out of shots. No matter how unequal the sides, I believe it's virtually unheard of for one team in a real game to not get a single shot on goal. One solution to this would be to modify the rules so that any side with no earned shots on goal gets one for free. This would allow for the very

unlikely, but nevertheless possible, event of a completely outgunned club getting very, very, very lucky and snatching a 1-0 upset. Disadvantage to this scheme: a club which would normally outshoot its opponents 1-0 would suddenly find the odds evened, yielding them no advantage (or even a disadvantage, if they've been shutting down the opponents's shots at the expense of good goalkeeping). One possible solution to this disadvantage: set a threshold for shots earned by the other side before a club gets this shot--e.g., a 4-0 shot total remains so, but a 5-0 becomes 5-1. Another, possibly better, solution: Both sides get a free shot, so a match with an "earned" shot count of 14-0 becomes 15-1; similarly, 5-7 would become 6-8.

With all that out of the way, comments?

Questions, Clarifications, etc.

- Pay attention to the order of adjudication. In particular, you can not sell players to the non-League based on the results of the auction (e.g., you can't say, "Sell Smith if I get Jones at the auction").
- Don't forget, players are auctioned in the order listed. You can't submit bids which are conditional upon the results of a later bid.
- Yes, friendly matches may be played by clubs within the same division. The rule seems to imply that only clubs in different divisions may play friendlies, which is not the case.

STATISTICS

First, courtesy of Kevin Brown, with my addition of a column for the teams's divisions so you don't have to go hunting them yourself. From the looks of things, last season's promotions/relegations were fairly successful in moving the stronger clubs up to Division I. (And no, I don't really know how Kevin arrives at these.)

RNK	TOT	TEAM	DIV	(OFF-DEF)	RNK	TOT	TEAM	DIV	(OFF-D
1.	90	FIRE	I	(47-43)	16.	81	SOCKHEADS	II	(40-41)
2.	89	H.M.S.S.	I	(46-43)	17.	81	GEMS	II	(40-41)
3.	88	TYRANTS	I	(47-41)	18.	81	CHIPPEWAS	II	(40-41)
4.	87	20° C	I	(45-42)	19.	81	GIANTS	II	(40-41)
5.	87	RELIEF	I	(44-43)	20.	80	THUNDER	III	(40-40)
6.	87	HEROES	I	(43-44)	21.	80	LEGENDS	III	(39-41)
7.	86	SCIENTISTS	II	(44-42)	22.	80	VALHALLA	III	(40-40)
8.	86	DOERS	I	(40-46)	23.	80	GORMENGHAST	III	(39-41)
9.	84	JUVENTUS	I	(42-42)	24.	79	COMPOSERS	II	(40-39)
0.	84	BUDS	II	(42-42)	25.	78	PSYCHOTICS	III	(40-38)
1.	84	ENZYMATIX	II	(43-41)	26.	78	HELIX	III	(39-39)
2.	83	CHESSMEN	I	(40-43)	27.	78	EAGLES	III	(38-40)
3.	83	BREAKFAST	II	(41-42)	28.	77	CARIOCA	III	(42-35)
4.	82	KINGSMEN	I	(41-41)	29.	75	ACADEMY	III	(38-37)
5.	82	CHANGERS	II	(40-42)	30.	70	VOLKSWIRT	III	(39-31)

Secondly, I've automated the process of generating some meaningful statistics (although I still tally the shots and scores and saves by hand), so, if there's demand, this could be the first in a regular reporting of op GKs, SWs (both by percentage), and shot-takers. Suggestions? Would you like to see this every session, perhaps?

TOP GOALKEEPERS
percentage (shots stopped/shots faced)

<u>I</u>		<u>II</u>		<u>III</u>	
.900 (18/20)	Smothers Relief	.833 (5/ 6)	Brooks Chippewas	.750 (9/12)	Thomas Thunder
.857 (6/ 7)	Blob Doers	.705 (12/17)	Newton Scientists	.666 (6/ 9)	Odin Valhalla
.500 (16/32)	Marcos Tyrants	.520 (13/25)	Raleigh Changers	.448 (13/29)	Kennedy Eagles
.500 (11/22)	Morphy Chessme	.428 (3/ 7)	Space Buds	.400 (4/10)	Tino F.C.V.
.473 (10/38)	Kertesz 20* C	.363 (4/11)	Jungle Enzymatix	.357 (5/14)	Socrates Academy
				.357 (5/14)	Swelter Gormenghast

TOP SWEEPERS
percentage (shots stopped/shots faced)

<u>I</u>		<u>II</u>		<u>III</u>	
.800 (20/25)	Q H.M.S.S.	.684 (13/19)	Powers Chippewas	.571 (16/28)	Vladimir Helix
.606 (20/33)	Bertagnin Juventus	.473 (9/19)	Lucky Breakfast	.333 (7/21)	James Academy
.586 (17/29)	Annihilator Doers	.434 (10/23)	Bach Composers	.222 (4/18)	Sepulchrave Gormenghast
.444 (4/ 9)	Petrosian Chessmen	.416 (5/12)	Bannon Buds	.195 (8/41)	Daimler-Ben F.C.V.
.333 (11/33)	Gowin 20* C	.352 (6/17)	Aparicio Gems	.083 (1/12)	Ehud Thunder

TOP SHOT-TAKERS

<u>I</u>		<u>II</u>		<u>III</u>	
21 McCulloch	Fire	18 Dibble	Enzymatix	28 Bowie	Psychoti
18 Groucho	Relief	15 Einstein	Scientists	23 Harrison	Psychoti
18 Riepenhoff	Fire	15 Tribble	Enzymatix	18 Duke	Legende
17 I Fleming	H.M.S.S.	14 B Rubble	Buds	17 Clarence	Helix
14 Castro	Tyrants	14 Snap	Breakfast	16 Paul	Thunder
14 R Frank	20* C	14 Spanky	Enzymatix	15 Philip	Thunder
13 Harpo	Relief	13 Crackle	Breakfast	13 Birkenstock	F.C.V.
12 Chico	Relief	13 Fermi	Scientists	13 Fenris	Valhalla
12 Goldfinger	H.M.S.S.	12 Astro	Buds	13 Rottcodd	Gormengh
12 Jaruzelski	Tyrants	12 P Frees	Buds	13 Steerpike	Gormengh
				13 Uller	Valhalla

ITFL ADMINISTRATION

NMRS: Ron Spitzer of CALIFORNIA TYRANTS, and Bruce McIntyre of DECOMPOSING COMPOSERS.

TRANSACTIONS:

F.C. VOLKSWIRTSCHAFT sold Birkenstock (OK) to the non-League for \$240K.

CENTRAL CHIPPEWAS sold Emmons (MF) to the non-League for \$80K.

DIAMOND GEMS sold Cobb (MF) to the non-League for \$120K.

APPRENTICE SIGNINGS:

F.C. VOLKSWIRTSCHAFT signs three apprentices, Kennedy (GK), Collins (MF), and Lodeweges (DF).

DIAMOND GEMS signed three apprentices, Bench (GK), Horneby (MF), and Allen (MF).

SUSPENSIONS:

Trenton and Skeleton of KINGSMEN are both out for match 7 against H.M.S.S.

Zukertort of CHESSMEN is out for match 7 against Doers.

Gorbachev of TYRANTS is out for match 7 against Heroes.

Moe of RELIEF is out for match 7 against Juventus.

Campion of CHANGERS is out for match 7 against Buds.

Harrison of PSYCHOTICS is out for match 7 against Gormenghast.

Daimler-Benz of F.C.V. is out for match 7 against Carioca.

Mostagen of CARIOCA is out for match 7 against F.C.V.

Andrew of THUNDER is out for match 7 against Valhalla.

Magni and Fenris of VALHALLA are out for match 7 against Thunder.

INJURIES:

Harpo of RELIEF is out for match 7 (against Juventus) with a severe sprain.

AUCTION RESULTS:

#7 DF III 5 to THE ACADEMY for \$629K (Descartes).

#8 MF II 5 to CENTRAL CHIPPEWAS for \$301K (Bovee).

#9 DF IV 6 to HUMBOLDT BUDS for \$445K (Daws Butler).

#10 SW III 6 to CHESSMEN OF HASTINGS for \$752K (Ben Larsen).

#11 MF VI 7 to CENTRAL CHIPPEWAS for \$827K (North).

#12 FW I 4 to THE ACADEMY for \$615K (Epicurus).

#13 MF III 3 -- NO BIDS, returned to VALHALLA ARMAGGEDON (Waldo of Valhalla Armaggedon).

#14 MF II 4 to NORTHSIDE EAGLES for \$191K (Griddle of Endwell Enzymatix).

#15 MF V 3 -- NO BIDS, returned to KOMIC RELIEF (Froggy of Komic Relief).

AUCTION:

#16 DF II 5

#18 DF III 6

#20 FW I 7

#17 FW V 7

#19 MF IV 6

#21 MF II 5

#22 FW II 2 (Creque of NORTHSIDE EAGLES)

#23 SW I 5 (Christine of KINGSMEN ELITE) (min. bid 600K)

ADDRESS CHANGES:

Manager Dan Stafford has once again moved DUBLIN FIRE, this time to 357 Caruthers Rd., Tallmadge, OH 44278.

Rich Reilly and the management of THE ACADEMY have informed me that the proper street address for their front office is 6500 S Main #133.

The front office for Jim Ferguson's DIAMOND GEMS has resurfaced at 912B Lierman Ave., Urbana, IL 61801.

Mike Barno's ENDWELL ENZYMATIX are back home at 2011 Robins St., Endwell, NY 13760-3314.

DEADLINE for Session 3 lineups is Saturday, 10 October 1987.

DIVISION I

STANDINGS	TEAM	PT	PL	HW	HD	HL	AW	AD	AL	GF	GA	VP	SK	PN	DP	MANAGER
21	Relief	12	6	3	0	0	3	0	0	12-3	4		624	0	20	Becker
12	Heroes	10	6	3	0	0	2	0	1	17-6	3		134	2	8	Fuchs
33	Fire	9	6	2	1	0	2	0	1	20-12	3		748	0	4	Stafford
54	Kingsmen	6	6	2	1	0	0	1	2	9-13	5		278	2	40	McCabe
45	Tyrants	5	6	1	1	1	1	0	2	12-17	4+		731	1	14	Spitzer?
66	H.M.S.S.	5	6	1	0	2	1	1	1	8-4	2+		1128	1	0	Kleiman
77	Doers	4	6	1	0	2	0	2	1	2-3	2+		223	3	30	Hise
88	Juventus	4	6	0	1	2	1	1	1	8-11	3		831	3	18	Williams
t9	Chessmen	4	6	1	0	2	1	0	2	8-14	3		539	1	18	Courtemanche
1t	20° C	1	6	0	1	2	0	0	3	9-22	1+		21	4	8	Luedi

DIVISION II

STANDINGS	TEAM	PT	PL	HW	HD	HL	AW	AD	AL	GF	GA	VP	SK	PN	DP	MANAGER
61	Buds	9	6	2	0	1	2	1	0	14-4	4+		634	0	14	Tighe
12	Scientists	9	6	2	0	1	2	1	0	13-6	3		862	1	24	Kott
23	Enzymatix	8	6	2	0	1	2	0	1	20-8	3		927	0	0	Barno
34	Chippewas	7	6	1	2	0	1	1	1	5-3	9		441	0	0	R Anderson
t5	Sockheads	7	6	2	0	1	1	1	1	6-11	4		651	1	4	D Anderson
76	Breakfast	4	6	1	1	1	0	1	2	8-9	4		1927	1	10	Narciso
47	Giants	4	6	1	0	2	0	2	1	2-6	1		660	1	8	Gaughan
98	Changers	4	6	0	2	1	1	0	2	8-14	3		721	5	18	Jensen
99	Composers	4	6	0	2	1	1	0	2	4-10	4		261	1	8	McIntyre?
5t	Gems	4	6	1	0	2	1	0	2	5-14	2+		1025	5	22	Ferguson

DIVISION III

STANDINGS	TEAM	PT	PL	HW	HD	HL	AW	AD	AL	GF	GA	VP	SK	PN	DP	MANAGER
31	Thunder	11	6	4	0	0	1	1	0	27-2	3+		-119	2	52	Trudeau
42	Legends	10	6	3	0	1	2	0	0	21-3	4		-267	1	8	Dear
23	Valhalla	10	6	2	0	0	3	0	1	18-5	3		156	3	46	Grams
14	Psychotics	8	6	2	0	1	2	0	1	32-23	4		160	5	44	Ellis
65	Gormenghast	6	6	3	0	0	0	0	3	14-10	3+		182	1	0	Hare
56	Academy	6	6	2	0	1	1	0	2	11-10	2		755	3	22	Reilly
87	Helix	4	6	1	0	1	1	0	3	12-12	3		-286	0	4	Clark
78	Eagles	4	6	1	1	1	0	1	2	4-16	2		433	1	0	Brown
t9	Caribca	1	6	0	1	2	0	0	3	12-40	1+		783	1	28	Denceause
9t	F.C.V.	0	6	0	0	3	0	0	3	1-31	2+		406	5	38	Witalka

Guide to abbreviations in the above standings: PT: league points. PL: matches played. HW, HD, HL, AW, AD, AL: home wins, draws, losses; away wins, draws, losses. GF, GA: goals for, goals against. VP: value points; + indicates an extra 1/2 VP. SK: cash on hand (1000s). PN: penalties. DP: Disciplinary points.

In the match descriptions on the following pages, the home team is always on the right. Following each club's name is their score at the end of the first half (in parentheses), followed by their score for the match. Scr: goal scorers; a number after a scorer is the number of goals scored (one if there is no number), a P after a number indicating goal(s) from penalty kick(s). Bkd: players booked. S/O: players sent off. Inj: injured players, extent of injury in parentheses (S = sprain, SS = severe sprain, P = pulled muscle, SP = severe pull, L = torn ligament, B = broken leg). Shots: total number of shots on goal for each team.

DIVISION I

NOTES: NMR by Tyrants.

MATCH 4

Kingsmen Elite: (1) 2
Scr: Talisman(2)

Dublin Fire: (3) 8
Scr: Morrissey(2), Butler(2),
Hewson, Riepenhoff(3)

Bkd: Trenton

Kingsmen get first blood in minute 18, but the home side dominate the first half, letting Hewson lead off the rout in the second half. Shots: 2-16

Jose's Heroes: (0) 0

Evil Doers: (1) 2
Scr: Prescott, Whirlwind
Bkd: Riptide, Prescott

It's an upset in the making when Whirlwind puts the home side up two in the second half, and the favored visitors struggle for the comeback but can't get past the Blob. Shots: 6-4

Chessmen of Hastings: (0) 2
Scr: Lopez, LaBourdonnais
Bkd: Petrosian
S/O: Zukertort

Redlands Juventus: (0) 1
Scr: Heller(1P)

Hastings control the slow-paced match in the first half, and preparation pays off on Lopez' score, forcing Juve into an unsuccessful catch up effort, despite Zukertort's gift of a P-kick. Shots: 7-4

California Tyrants: (0) 0

Her Majesty's Secret Service: (1) 6
Scr: Goldfinger(3), Fleming(2), No

S/O: Gorbachev

A tightly-controlled match by the home side turns into a rout when the visitors have to play short following a disputed red card. Shots: 6-22

20* C: (0) 0

Komic Relief: (0) 1
Scr: Groucho

The ball's back and forth in the midfield with neither side putting away their chances, until Chico misses a P-kick at minute 83 and Groucho nails the back of the net with just four minutes left. Shots: 9-11

MATCH 5

Evil Doers: (0) 0

Kingsmen Elite: (0) 1
Scr: Shining
Bkd: Thinner
S/O: Skeleton

Bkd: Riptide

Doers have all they can handle trying to stop the Britishers, even when the referee gives them a hand after a flagrant violation. Shots: 0-10

Dublin Fire: (0) 2
Scr: Hewson, Philidor

Chessmen of Hastings: (0) 0
Bkd: Pillsbury

Fire start slowly, getting the feel of the home side's field, then turn up the pressure. Hewson finally scoring at minute 75. Shots: 10-0

Her Majesty's Secret Service: (0) 0 Jose's Heroes: (0) 1
Scr: Page(1P)

Heroes get off only a single shot in a conservative first half, and it could go either way until a long ball catches the visitors unaware, and Odd Job runs into the attacker rather than let him take the shot... Shots: 0-4

Redlands Juventus: (2) 5 20* C: (1) 3
Scr: Voltaire(2), Heller(2P), Conrad Scr: Coburn(1P), Frank(2)
Bkd: Winogrand

A physical match up and down the field, the score tied at 1, 2, and 3 before the visitors take it in hand with a second P-kick and Conrad's finisher. Shots: 11-9

Komic Relief: (2) 2 California Tyrants: (0) 1
Scr: Chico, Zeppo Scr: Jaruzelski
S/O: Moe
Inj: Harpo(SS)

Relief put themselves up two before a red card and a turned ankle leave them weaker than they planned. Jaruzelski gets the visitors sweating a bit, but they hang on to the one-goal lead. Shots: 14-7

MATCH 6

Dublin Fire: (2) 3 Jose's Heroes: (3) 7
Scr: Hewson(1,1P), McCulloch Scr: Sharp, Hitchcock, Crupper(2),
Page(3)
Bkd: da Venta

A capacity crowd is happy when the home side score the first two in a display of precision attacks, Page's performance bringing the hats on the field with ten minutes left. Shots: 8-15

Redlands Juventus: (1) 1 Kingsmen Elite: (0) 1
Scr: Donne Scr: Skeleton
Bkd: Bertagnin

Kingsmen are in control and give Bertagnin some practice, but Donne chips in a breakaway effort and the home side have to catch up. Shots: 2-12

Evil Doers: (0) 0 California Tyrants: (0) 0
Bkd: Constrictor Bkd: Xiaoping

Doers don't do anything more than shut down the home attack, which leads to some grumbling from the fans who paid to see some goals scored. Shots: 0-5

20* C: (1) 3 Chessmen of Hastings: (3) 5
Scr: Winogrand, Callahan(2) Scr: Bourdonnais(2), Steinitz,
Deschappelles(2)

Another fast match for the silver and white as they keep scoring even after Deschappelles has put it out of reach. Shots: 11-17

Komic Relief: (1) 2 Her Majesty's Secret Service: (0) 1
Scr: Alfalfa, Chico Scr: No

Relief get the early opportunities and stay one up when the S.S. can't crack Smothers. No ties it up at minute 64, and the visitors's push forward results in Chico's game winner at #78. Shots: 11-14

DIVISION II

NOTES: NMR by Composers.

MATCH 4

Central Chippewas: (0) 0

Decomposing Composers: (0) 0

Lackadaisical football results in the home side managing the only shot despite an absent manager. Shots: 0-1

St. Langlois Changers: (0) 3

Breakfast Buddies: (1) 2

Scr: Dayton(1P), Psmyth, McGoohan

Scr: Snap, Chocula

S/O: Campion

Snap capitalizes on early opportunities to give the home side the lead but an early second-half penalty sparks a Changers comeback which sees Psmyth put them ahead. Chocula ties it again, but McGoohan scores the winner on a late breakaway. Shots: 5-16

Diamond Gems: (0) 0

Humboldt Buds: (1) 5

Scr: Forey(2P), Duck, Rubble, Astro

Strong counter-attacking by the visitors keeps the home side up only one on a penalty kick, but a Tighe pep talk at half-time sparks the Buds to blast the game open. Shots: 3-11

Sockheads Part II: (0) 1

Scientists: (0) 0

Scr: Blue

A tense back-and-forth battle for midfield control in a shotless first half is broken by a long shot by Blue which finds the net and dampens the home crowd's enthusiasm. Shots: 2-0

Endwell Enzymatix: (2) 3

Literary Giants: (0) 1

Scr: Fiddle, Dibble, Fumble

Scr: Vader

Fiddle and Dibble score two in a promising match as the visitors control the pace. Vaders late goal awakens some home fans's comeback hopes, but it's a bit too late. Shots: 9-3

MATCH 5

Diamond Gems: (1) 1

Breakfast Buddies: (2) 3

Scr: McCovey

Scr: Snap(2), Crackle

Bkd: McCovey

Buddies draw first blood early, then it's back-and-forth as Crackle puts the home side up two before McCovey puts the visitors within one at the half. Snap gets the insurance goal mid-way in the second. Shots: 4-8

Central Chippewas: (0) 0

Scientists: (0) 1

Scr: Einstein

Scientists dominate the early match, but good fortune and scrappy defense sees the Chips hold them scoreless. Einstein finally shows that everything's relative come minute 73... Shots: 0-11

Endwell Enzymatix: (1) 5

Decomposing Composers: (0) 0

Scr: Tribble(4), Fumble

Bkd: Monteverdi

Endwell take 20 minutes to get warmed up, but then Tribble starts his goal-fest as the home side struggle. Shots: 13-0

St. Langlois Changers: (0) 0

Sockheads Part II: (2) 3
Scr: Blue(1P), Aqua(2)
Bkd: Blue

The early match is all Sockheads despite a missed penalty kick. Blue makes the second one, though, and Changers never quite find their center. Shots: 0-5

Humboldt Buds: (1) 2
Scr: Dino, Blanc

Literary Giants: (0) 0

Buds miss two early shots, but those only foreshadow the later two that find the back of the net. Shots: 6-2

MATCH 6

Breakfast Buddies: (0) 0

Central Chippewas: (0) 1
Scr: Washington

Early shots come to naught for Buddies, as Chips emerge from a scoreless first half to hold the visitors to that score and take the game themselves off a corner kick. Shots: 8-3

Decomposing Composers: (1) 2
Scr: Vaughan-Williams(2P)

Diamond Gems: (0) 1
Scr: DiMaggio
Bkd: Musial

The struggling Gems manage to give away a match that they would have otherwise had well in hand--had they only known in advance of the visiting side's own difficulties... Shots: 0-8

Scientists: (2) 4
Scr: Darwin(2), Einstein(2)

St. Langlois Changers: (2) 4
Scr: Psmyth, Dayton, Tombs(2)
Bkd: McGoochan, Death

SLC draw blood off the first attack, but the visitors keep pace. A missed visitors's penalty kick in the second half proves crucial in an exciting match which almost sees the home side pull it out in the closing minutes. Shots: 14-14

Humboldt Buds: (1) 3
Scr: Frees, Astro, Rubble
Bkd: Blanc

Endwell Enzymatix: (1) 1
Scr: Spanky

The gents in the tie-dye complete their session sweep to emerge on top of the division by controlling the match and putting in two in the second half. Shots: 11-10

Literary Giants: (0) 0

Sockheads Part II: (1) 1
Scr: Pink

A slow, careful defensive match ends a disappointing session for the visitors when the home side fall back and defend their goal after Pink's score. Sockheads third win puts them solidly in the middle of the incredibly close Division II standings. Shots: 0-3

DIVISION III

MATCH 4

End of Time Legends: (2) 4
Scr: Pao(2P), Duke(2)

F. C. Volkswirtschaft: (0) 0

Bkd: Tino, Kloppenburg, Lufthansa

Legends dominate the early match but don't find the net until two penalties give them the lead; FCV struggle but never really produce an offensive threat. Shots: 9-0

Gormenghast: (0) 0

Valhalla Armaggedon: (1) 2

Scr: Modi, Fenris

Bkd: Uller

Fenris's goal puts the visitors on the second half defensive just when they need to attack, as the home side simply outlast Gormenghast. Shots: 3-7

Sons of Thunder: (0) 0

Northside Eagles: (0) 0

Bkd: Andrew, Simon

No clean shots in a tight first half, and Eagles slowly emerge in the second half, forcing Thunder to give up a penalty--and Thomas saves the kick and the draw! Give that man a raise. Shots: 0-2

Psychedelic Psychotics: (1) 4

The Academy: (1) 5

Scr: Bowie(2), Dylan(1P), Collins

Scr: Hume(3), Plato, Mill

Bkd: Mill

Bowie scores first for the visitors and Academy come roaring back, Hume tying it up before the half. The second half sees an explosion of goals as the defenses start to tire, Hume's hat trick proving crucial for the home side. Shots: 5-10

Carioca Football Club: (0) 0

Double Helix: (2) 5

Scr: Borgstrom(2), Clarence(2),
Scott

Bkd: Almira

Helix's score in the third minute sets the pace, as CFC aren't able to bring the ball past midfield. Shots: 0-9

MATCH 5

F. C. Volkswirtschaft: (0) 0

Gormenghast: (2) 4

Scr: Rottcodd(3), Muzzlehatch

Rottcodd delivers a fine performance for the home fans as Gormenghast control the match early. Telefunken's second half shot narrowly misses securing a moral victory for the visitors. Shots: 1-11

Northside Eagles: (0) 0

End of Time Legends: (2) 6

Scr: Duke(3), Incarnadine(2), Shark

Bkd: Jagged

Eagles never really stand up to the Legends, even though they prevent the ball from finding the back of their net until the 31st minute. Shots: 0-15

Valhalla Armaggedon: (1) 6

Psychedelic Psychotics: (0) 0

Scr: Fenris, Uller(3), Tanngjost,
Magni

Bkd: Tanngrisner

Bkd: Leary
S/O: Harrison

It's a battle at the top of the division which sees the home side continue their two-game slide when they're outgunned after losing Harrison to a suspect call. Shots: 16-2

Carioca Football Club: (0) 0

Sons of Thunder: (5) 9
Scr: Paul(3), Peter(6)
S/O: Andrew

Thunder waste little time against a struggling CFC club, Peter and Paul taking turns feeding each other assists. Shots: 3-17

Double Helix: (1) 1
Scr: Scott
Bkd: Adenine

The Academy: (0) 0

Bkd: Spinoza

Helix demonstrate that they may be just a bit underrated, as they control the match on Academy's turf and come away with a careful win. Shots: 12-3

MATCH 6

Valhalla Armaggedon: (0) 0

End of Time Legends: (2) 3
Scr: Gaf, Pao(1P), Duke
Bkd: Jagged

Bkd: Magni, Modi
S/O: Fenris

The visitors's bid for top of the standings is thwarted by a capable Legends club with the help of some astute refereeing in the face of some vicious Valhalla play. Shots: 2-9

F. C. Volkswirtschaft: (0) 0

Sons of Thunder: (4) 10
Scr: Paul(3,1P), Andrew, Phillip(5)

Bkd: Kennedy
S/O: Daimler-Benz

The visitors face yet another tough road match, and Thunder simply add to FCV's woes. Shots: 1-19

The Academy: (0) 0

Gormenghast: (1) 2
Scr: Muzzlehatch, Crackbell

Academy toughen up and stop the shots after the home side draw blood late in the first half, but Crackbell's second puts it out of reach. Shots: 1-5

Northside Eagles: (0) 1
Scr: Foster(1P)

Carioca Football Club: (1) 1
Scr: Rubenito
S/O: Mostagen

Carioca want the win in front of their fans, but the referee has something to say about that, awarding Eagles the tying penalty kick after Mostagen makes a last-ditch tackle to prevent a shot. Shots: 1-2

Double Helix: (2) 4

Scr: Allfree, Clarence(2), Noffsinger

Psychedelic Psychotics: (2) 5

Scr: Harrison(2), Richards, Collins(2)

Psychos get the first two goals, but Helix stick with them in a clean, exciting match. Helix get the next two as well to go up two, but Psychotics aren't going to let it go easily as Collins and Harrison tie it up--and Collins breaks through for the winner with five left! What a match! Shots: 13-11

UNITED PRESS

SOCKHEADS FRONT OFFICE to KINGSMEN: Although a SL 5 I looks good, I need a SL 7 I or better before I get rid of a rookie GK. So, if anyone out there has a SL 7 or 8 I GK, I'm willing to trade a rookie GK, plus 431K and even a triple qualified player who is age II. I'm DESPARATE!!

EAGLES to LEAGUE: Will trade DF/MF II 4 uncoach-1 for a FW of some sort. Write with details, if you're interest.

CHESSMEN to LEAGUE: Am selling a II-4 to non-League next season. No DP's, not coached. Would be more interested in a trade within the league. Could result in multi-player deals.

LITERARY to LEAGUE: I'm willing to buy or trade big-time for an unsigned apprentice or apprentice SW or GK.

CHESSMEN to KINGSMEN ELITE: Qualified sweeper available after session III. Write if still interested and if you have other needs. Plenty of time to discuss details.

KINGSMEN to ALL: DF or FW qualified apprentice wanted. Will pay 200K for each player. Write to me now.

CHANGERS: Qualified apprentice sweeper and midfielder for sale or trade. Minimum bids sweeper 600K, midfielder 400K. Also willing to trade for age II or III 7+ fielders. Available for session 4 play.

CHESSMEN to GIANTS: Let's discuss some trades.

JUVENTUS to CHESSMEN: As I said in my letter, your offered deal was very sweet, and in different circumstances I'd have gone for it. Bertagnin, however, was elsewhere inclined, and has just signed a multi-year contract with the team. Still... we'll never know the wisdom of the non-trade.

CHESSMEN to JUVENTUS: Would have liked to see our trade consummated. As you said, "It was a good trade," maybe next time.

20° C Front Office announces that two veteran outfielders, both very old but with a lot of good mileage left, will be traded or sold if the right offer comes along. Both are age V, SL5. Free sample of arthritis relief DRUGS if you hurry.

IT to ITFL: Not as much editing/rearranging on these as I'd have liked...

SOCKHEADS to ENDWELL: Hope you had fun beating up on a poor defenseless little team like us! (sic) We will try again to pummel you Session 4.

EAGLES to ENZYMATIX: Does this mean you're the Madison Enzymatix now?

IT to EAGLES: It might have a few months ago...

EAGLES to ENZYMATIX: I don't guess the killer & business works in this league, does it?

EAGLES to PSYCHOTICS: Being in first after one session doesn't mean much. If you don't believe me, ask Gormenghast.

EAGLES to IT: I thought the Changers had a new manager, but you listed the same one in the standings.

IT: Yep--simple mistake, corrected thish.

EAGLES to PSYCHOTICS: Only one team started and finished on top last season, and the Dublin Fire you ain't.

EAGLES to ENZYMATIX: Uh Oh, we'll have to get another team in Warner Robins now, we can't let Madison be our equal. Remember, Madison is the Warner Robins of the Midwest.

0-1-2 JUVENTUS to 0-1-2 DOERS: Defense rests.

REDLANDS JUVENTUS to COLLINGSWOOD COVERT CLOWN: I don't quite understand the 4-sided dice allusion, unless you're talking Magic-Users from old D&D rules. (Lord knows I need a few this season.) Still, whoever took anything said from New Jersey seriously? The fact that you live there at all says more for your intellect (Read: "Lack thereof") than any rejoinder I might compose.

JUVENTUS to ANDERSON (BOTH OF HIM): You're going to need it.

JUVENTUS to TYRANTS: WHAT!? Only 46 shots on goal? Slouching off, are we? And only 2-out-of-26 (the third was a PK)? And you at home, too.

Can't wait until we meet again... on my turf. (Zoff wants to thank y'all for the practice.)

JUVE to DOERS: My earlier comment notwithstanding, nice job on Fire. (Now if you could only bottle that stuff and sell it...)

JUVE to HEROES, RELIEF: Good to see you two on top if I can't be there myself.

JUVENTUS to HMSS: Funny, didn't we start off our head-to-head matches last season with a draw? Only it was 4-4, as I recall. If history repeats itself, I get the next one. Thought you'd want to note that.

BUDS to GEMS: How can I coach when I'm gawking at your players? "Hey Willie, can you sign my playbook?"

BUDS to DIV II: Wow, this is the most defensive league I've ever seen!

TIGHE to GM: I'm playing Match 4 under protest. Mel Blanc should not have been red carded. True, he did continually slap a player while saying, "Awww shaddup!" but it didn't interrupt the flow of play.

EAGLES to TOP 3 in III: The DP's will catch up with you, sooner or later.

BRAND-NEW MADMAN to JAKE "THE SNAKE" -- READ THIS JAKE WALTERS: Howdy. Take a 2-way in Bullwinkle. Good luck.

LYSERGICS to SOCKHEADS: Wanna buy a theory?

GIANTS to JUVENTUS: Ah, more of that self-deprecation, eh? You're very good at that, anyway.

CHESSMEN to JUVENTUS: You've got competition for the doormat prize, bunky. Relief and Heroes did a number on me.

CHESSMEN to HELIX: That's easy for you to say. I drive a '66 Belvedere and it hasn't helped me yet.

CHESSMEN to JUVE: You should have locked the door, Don. Look what just walked in.

CHESSMEN CHEERLEADER /* GUEST PRESS */ to REDLANDS JUVENTUS: Hi there, remember me? I hate to break up your male bonding, but our showers are out of order and our squad has to share yours. C'MON IN GIRLS...! Oh, by the way, Don, your towel is slipping...

ARMAGEDDON to PSYCHOTICS: Hope you enjoyed your game against the Academy.

ARMAGEDDON to LEAGUE: Just for your information, our colors are no longer green and silver. If you must know, they're bloodthirsty red and venomous black.

ARMAGEDDON to DIVISION III: Look for your copy of Armageddon Update in the mail soon. Coming from the people who brought you defeat.

ARMAGEDDON to SONS OF THUNDER: You're next.

EAGLES to IT: I won't inundate you with stats like I did KBill, mostly because I didn't keep that close a track in this league. Besides, stats don't mean much anyway, right?

IT to EAGLES: I think stats are a lot of fun, though.

EAGLES to IT: Why not, I'll throw in one quick stat. Only one of the ten teams in Division I lost their home opener, that being The Evil Doers 9-8 loss to the Fire. Two others drew (Chessmen & Juventus). That's a bad sign for those of us who lost their home openers.

IT: Just to clarify, Kevin means that only Doers out of this year's Division I clubs lost last year's home opener. (For awhile there, I was wondering what results Kevin was reading...)

SOCKHEADS to TEAM: Well, you showed me that you can keep the other teams, well, almost every team and you did it on the road. Now, I want you to go out there and really tear up the Scientists, there undefeated and if you beat them at their stadium, you will prove that the 10th place position was only a fluke and that you deserve to be in DIVISION I!!

CHESSMANAGER to TEAM: I'm disappointed in you guys. Lose our first home match of the season by a score of 1-8. Double sessions to toughen up those legs. They're flabby, you've got no stamina. I want to see a win this session or there'll be some major changes around here.

/* United Press, continued */

TIGHE to BUDS: Well guys, this session we're facing 3 stronger clubs that Knight says we relish upsetting. But I happen to know that the only thing you characters relish are hot dogs. So go out there and eat 'em up. Oh Mel, you'll be doing the sound effects for Match 4.

EAGLES to IT: If one of my players breaks a leg in the first match of a session, will he be replaced by the sub in the other two matches?

IT: No, he plays the other two matches, at normal strength (and could even get injured again). This plays hell with reality, but is the only way to keep things manageable, because otherwise conditionals could get really, really hairy.

(Hmm...with that, I think I'd better open a can of worms by trying to clarify my feelings about conditionals. Conditionals within a match--i.e., conditional substitutions based on who gets injured--are not allowed for being way too much work. Ditto for conditional lineups based on the results of a previous match in the session--e.g., you can't say, "Use lineup A if I beat Hacks in match #7, lineup B otherwise"--except when you don't know in advance who you'll be playing, such as when we play more than one round of the Cup Tournament in a session. HOWEVER, I could not see letting injuries and discipline affect the next match within a session without giving you the ability to submit conditional orders, merely to keep a full lineup in the event Pele got sent off in match #1 and was thus out for match #2. Since I won't take on the extra complexity, injuries, substitutions, and discipline don't take affect until the next session. Clear as mud, right?)

EAGLES to IT: 16 is awfully low for a roster limit, you know. Have you ever thought about changing it?

IT to EAGLES: Yep, a holdover from last season that should have gotten upped. See the writeup.

JUVE to KNIGHT: We're agin' the "RAH-RAH" points. Succinctly, they add another facet of deal-making to the game. Already players make deals with each other over use of hardness points, the "I won't if you won't" type thing. I can see this happening with the extra points as well. I'd be more inclined to go for a controlled system, where maybe three times a season, a manager can call out a "Must Win" game, pay a IVP fee, and get six extra points for one match. That seems to me a better way to handle it. Otherwise the politics are sure to become one of the ruling factors. Comment on the idea I forwarded is welcome.

IT to JUVE: Hmm...I kind of like the idea using VPs for that. It would give me another way to suck levels out of the league... Comments, anyone?

BROWNIE'S PICKS: The Top division looks like a 2-team race between Heroes & Fire to me. Relief and Tyrants don't have what it takes to stay with these two, and H.M.S.S. may well be frustrated into the hard play they used at the end of last season. Hard play is mightily addicting, especially when all you play is tough teams.

Division II shapes up to be quite a race. Look for the Sockheads to move up and Composers to move down. Scientists will burn out in a couple of sessions, leaving Enzymatix & Chippewas to fight for the title. Giants and Buds will challenge, but will be a little short.

In Division III, the new teams look to have the advantage over the old, at least initially. The leaders hard play will allow the teams in the middle to close in and possibly move the front-runners out. This could happen as early as next session. Psychotics score as many in their first session as the Fire did in theirs last season, but allowed less. This division seems the most willing to spend money too as 5 of 6 players in the auction went to Division III.

THE LAST PAGE

0-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-1

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United:

10 OCTOBER 1987

For articles, etc:

7 OCTOBER 1987

0-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-10001-1

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