



De DisClave Dragon Is Reminding
You To Attend DISCLAVE

May 23-26

Alternate
Disclaves

LunaCon Not the
Only Lunatic
Goings-On
or
What REALLY
Happened Here
While You Were
Off Having Fun

LUNACON
REPORT

“An Interesting
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Hostages

THE TWO FACES
OF LUNACON

Alternate Disclaves Review by Keith Lynch

At Balticon last weekend, I found to my surprise that there's a "sequel" to Resnick's *Alternate Worldcons*. It's called *Alternate Disclaves*.

Disclave is an SF convention held every spring in the Washington DC area.

I'm only halfway through the book so far. But the stories I've read are uniformly excellent.

One year, when Disclave was in the "Hostility House" hotel, the Democrat National Committee was elsewhere in the same hotel. Some Disclave members were carrying fake guns. The con was raided by a SWAT team. The SWAT team was mistaken for fellow gamers by some of the armed fans. Miraculously, no shots were fired. The first story supposes that shots were fired, and hundreds of people were instantly killed, including women and children. The strong anti-government sentiment that in our world came in the wake of the Waco massacre happens years earlier. The government and the news media universally portray fans as dangerous and crazy. Everyone else regards the government as out of control.



Two years later, an obscure government building is blown up with a massive truck bomb. A fan is arrested and put on trial for the bombing. Fans unite, and prove to everyone's satisfaction that the bombing was done by the government itself to further its own agenda. The Republicans and Democrats all resign in disgrace, and are replaced by a government of fans. Ten years later, the world is united, and the world president is selected every three years at the Worldcon, based on his or her responses to various hypothetical scenarios which are written by Hugo-winning SF authors.

The second story also involves a shooting. But this is a shooting which actually occurred. One year, Disclave was held in the hotel where Hinckley shot Reagan. This story presupposes that Disclave was being held there at the time of the shooting -- at which time the con had no weapons policy. Hinckley takes refuge in the convention, where he is mistaken for a fan. The Secret Service agents are also mistaken for fans. You see, there is a "the president has been shot" LARP game taking place at the con! Classic slapstick.

A guest was electrocuted at a hotel in New Carrollton at which Disclaves were held for several years (and will be held again next month!). This didn't happen during a Disclave. The third story suggests that it happened during the con, to the con's guest of honor. And that it was falsely blamed on "Coherent Central", a group which used to set up laser shows at Disclave.

The fourth story, the last one I've read so far, involves Disclave going bankrupt and being bought out by Bruce Evry, and merged with his Evecon. It shows that fans' reaction to panels on space exploration being replaced with panels on Attention Deficit Disorder. Panels on new frontiers in physics are replaced with panels on surviving child abuse. Bheer is abolished from the con suite, and junk food is carefully rationed. Bios of guests of honor vanish from the souvenir books, to be replaced with exhortations to remember to drink enough liquids and get sufficient sleep. Discussions of how to keep the con accessible to public transit in future years are replaced with discussions of how to keep the riff-raff out by selecting hotels that are very difficult to get to.

I look forward to reading the remaining stories. And to reading the promised companion volumes, Alternate Boskones, Alternate Balticons, and Alternate Philcons. All three are expected to be available by one year from today.

--Keith Lynch, kfl@clark.net, April 1, 1997

LunaCon Not the Only Lunatic Goings-On of What REALLY Happened Here While You Were Off Having Fun

Editor's note: Because I was at LunaCon, I didn't get around to typing these notes until the first of April-

Each year a large fraction of the WSFA membership goes off to LunaCon, and when that coincides with the WSFA meeting, substitutes for the regular members must be found. So the March 7th WSFA meeting began at exactly 9 PM with a struggle for power. Fluke Groundrunner claimed the gavel first because of his status as a Red-Eye Knight but was stopped by a coalition of Captains Kurt and Peculiar who said some captain of the **Second Prize** should be in command. But this was objected to by a noisy crowd from Babel-On Jive led by someone offering to Share A Din. Finally, all contestants were out-manuevered by a crazy historian Hairy Seldom who seemed to be able to predict their every move.

Treasurer Rod McBank (who wrested control of the treasury from Scrooge when the latter was scared off by a piece of Kaspar the not so friendly toast) reported the treasury as 25 gallons of stroon. When pressed, he translated it as \$25,000 Old North Australian

dollars. That being resolved, the club moved on to old business.

Unfortunately old business became rather tangled since the audience included the man who murdered Mohammed, a civil war vet armed with an AK-45, a man who lives in a high castle, and several alternate Kennedys. The club finally agreed that the East India Company was definitely old business and that no one was much interested in it anymore. (A few IBM diehards suggested that we wait a few weeks for when Apple would become old business but a guy named Newton said that he'd buy it if it landed on his head, even if the impact made him toss his cookies.)

New business was even more contentious. Harryman tried to convince the club to build a spaceship with the things they could find at home but, when voted down, recited a Requiem and left. Freddie 0 and his buddy Sam suggested we make making one ring a habit but was outvoted. No one suggested making Ringworlds, River worlds, or even Norway but the club was interested in combining natter-technology with cloning. "Imagine! Multiple talking sheep with strong wool-power".

With a new business decided upon, the meeting proceeded to announcements. Announcements were made including the identity of all the 1997, 1998, 1999 Hugo and Nebula winners; the complete plots of upcoming *Star Trek*, *Babylon 5*, and *Star Wars* movies; and the secret code word to get free books from all Borders Bookstores. Unfortunately, none of these announcements were submitted in writing so, following Journal policy, we won't print them. The meeting was finally unanimously adjured at 3 PM on Sunday, just in time for all the attendees to go home and await calls from their friends who attended LunaCon so they could say how sorry they are that they missed it and that nothing very excited happened at the last WSFA meeting.



LUNACON REPORT

by Joe Mayhew

The 1997 Lunacon exceeded all my expectations -- for a Lunacon. I traveled there with fellow WSFA member, Sam Pierce. As it was his first Lunacon, I warned him that internecine warfare within the committee was part of the show. Thus, when we arrived around 4:PM and the Green Room was closed but the scene of a Wagnerian slanging fest between 3-4 Lunarians with committee ribbons, it was merely a sign we had arrived.

I also told him that the convention hadn't notified me of my program obligations, however Michael J. Walsh (the only Fan mad enough to run both a WorldCon and a World Fantasy Con), their Fan GOH, was able to tell me which items I was on. Someone had sent him the program via E-Mail, and he kindly checked my name against the scheduled program events. As it turned out, I had a Friday 10:PM woodcarving **demo**, for which I would need to bring my canes and tools (I

hadn't otherwise planned on doing so), and two panels on Saturday at 11 :AM and Noon (naturally these were on different floors).

They didn't have the souvenir booklet or the pocket program schedule. It was "still in Brooklyn" and would not be available until around 9:PM. Programming began at 6:PM. I doubt it was well attended as there were only about 3 copies anywhere on site. I offered to hand-copy the Green Room's schedule onto large paper so the panelists could be allowed in on the joke, but Saul Jaffe, head of the Green Room, in which participant registration took place, explained, "We only have one copy." That it could have **been consulted** even as I copied it, wasn't considered.

I asked if there might be anything else I could do to help out while I waited and so they gave me a box of printed transparent adhesive labels and blank con-badges. They were for the participants.

Apparently no one had been able to put them on before the con. So I set to work and by and by others volunteered to help me and, by Huck, we got the job done - as well as it could be, given that the labels were offset so that part of the names were actually printed on the surrounding frames, rather than on the actual label. If one was careful, one could patch the names together - more or less.

Around 6:PM, while I was heading back to the Green Room to see if the program books had arrived, I saw Tom Doherty, who asked where registration was. I told him I was on my way there and asked whether he had gotten his panel assignments from the committee, as I had not. He hadn't.

For those unfamiliar with the Rye Lunacon's Town hotel, it earned its nickname, "Escher Hilton," with its convoluted, eccentric building design in which one needs a native guide to get from one point to another. Finding anything there for the first time is a sort of built-in adventure game.

When we got there, Saul could not find a badge for Mr. Doherty. He didn't seem able to do anything about it, so I suggested he make one up for Tom, as he had been invited. Obviously there had been many screw-ups this year. Even if he had not been invited, he should have been. If there are three most important people in SF, Tom is at least two of them. Saul said he couldn't do that. He wasn't authorized. I asked him if he could contact someone who was authorized. He said he didn't know where the chairman was. I suggested that most people trusted with his job probably had the authority. Saul said

he couldn't do it; that Tom should go downstairs and buy a membership which they might refund later. Tom was gracious, smiled and left. I didn't see him later that weekend. What makes it worse is that Saul KNEW WHO HE WAS. Furthermore, TOR had donated several hundred dollars worth of books to their fund-raising auction as well as taking ads in their program books, etc.

John Upton was chair. I was told by several committee persons that they all hated him (a tradition at Lunacon). Some, in my opinion, were actively sabotaging the con to get even with him for allowing them to elect him (more tradition). He really didn't need sabotaging.

The Art GOH was David Cherry, whom I have known for years. He is not a complainer. When I ran into him on Friday, however he was a little perplexed by the treatment he was getting from the

committee. I, and apparently others, had smiled to him and explained, "But, it's Lunacon."

His sister Carolyn was GOH. She looked a little frazzled, and as I hardly know her, I didn't walk up and ask how it was going. I found out later from Peggy Rae Pavlat (WorldCon Chair for Bucconeer, '98). C.J.

Cherry had been scheduled for a GOH speech and one panel. That was not due to her instructions, but would have been happy to be on as many as they cared. After her GOH speech, several fans followed her out into the hall, where she sat down to sign autographs. As there were several, she sent out for a cold drink. Before it could arrive, John Upton appeared and insisted she move. Peggy Rae reminded him that



this was his GOH. He responded by INSISTING C.J. move.

The program director was Lucy Schmiedler, who was busy Friday, organizing orthodox Jewish shabbat services and seemed simply unable to focus of the many problems which arose concerning the program. It seems impractical to appoint an observant Jew to manage something as complex as program can get on Friday and Saturday. By the time they are free from their religious commitments, it is too late to do anything to emend two-thirds of the program. While Lucy actually had contacted few participants, she had managed to offend some of those she did by sending annoying, even nasty notes. It was explained to me that she had volunteered to help run programming but had been given the entire job. When is it time to refuse?

To my amazement and surprise, I had a sizable audience for my Friday 10:PM woodcarving demo, particularly as the program book listed it at 9:PM. At one point there were 25 people in the room. Nothing was scheduled after it, so they were actually there to watch me cut my fingers or something.

The 11 AM panel was listed as "ARTISTS WORTH STEALING FROM." I had submitted a topic suggestion: "Who are the Artists worth 'stealing' from?" The subject wasn't actual larceny, but rather from which artists had the panelists learned, etc. Of the 5 panelists, only 2 showed. I was moderator and managed to keep most of the audience by drawing them in on every possible occasion. Odd, how that works.

I cut it off early (for Lunacon) at 11:55 so I could hobble upstairs to my 12:Noon panel "POLITICAL USE OF SCIENCE FICTION" (another of my topics), which the panelists didn't notice wasn't "Science Fiction and Politics," but exactly how SF has been used for political ends. They were all over the map, but it was, at least, lively. Odd, how that works.

They included several of my ideas on the Lunacon program. One, "HOW TO DEAL WITH READER'S BLOCK," ran against my Saturday Noon panel. I'd have liked to have seen what they did with it. Perhaps I will some day. Odd, how that works.

"An Interesting Week at Lake Obi-Wan"

The WSFA Third Friday (3/21) meeting met at the Gillilands' due to the LunaCon time travel switch. John notified the club that the first meeting in May will feature the election of officers. "It will be real nice if the trustee's came up with candidates," he said,

"You mean we have to work?!? I knew there was a catch," said Mike Nelson, Trustee, Disclave '97 Chair, and Bucconeer Pre-Con Publications Head.

John passed out a sign up for the web <http://www.wsfa.org>. He added that one person present, Kory, came because of the web page.

The club worked its way down the "large and motionless officer list." The treasurer reported a balance of \$1670.70. "Let's have a Disclave that makes money!" was heard.

The Entertainment Committee reported that its mission to Florida to teach President Clinton how to do pratfalls was a success. Tom Schaad said that Alexis was being too modest and thanked his committee for Hale-Bop comet. The President threatened the Secretary with the gavel for saying the comet should have been called Be Bop. He then decided not to make a motion about forbidding anyone named Bop from discovering another comet. (But since there already is one called Bop, the second would have to be the Re-Bop.)

through the web site, which, in case someone should forget, is at <http://www.wsfa.org>

Disclave soon announced that this was an interesting week at Lake Obi-wan. Mike Nelson assured the meeting that, contrary to rumor, there was space in the Disclave hotel. What really happened was that Laurie Mann got an uniformed hotel clerk who said that the hotel was full. To prevent this from happening, make certain you identify yourself as a member of Disclave and use the local number. Call before April 30th. Remember that it's a Ramada (this week at least.) There will be a Committee meeting April 4th after the regular first Friday meeting. Disclave is looking for ~~victims~~ volunteers to help out. We are hovering at 200 members but pick up. Lance is looking for volunteers for the Discave.

"What's the point of moving out to the burbs if you can't catapult Cadilacs around?" asked one perplexed member.

Joe is looking for volunteers for Disclave Future. He wants ideas and volunteers in writing. He said his email address is jtmayhew@worldnet.att.net

Disclave 99 was not here but then walked in just in time. He had nothing to report.

"Don't wear symbols you don't understand" maintained another member.

There will be a trip to see ***Pirates of Penzance*** (that shameless rip-off of Jon Pomeranz's ***Pirates of Fenzance***) on June 14th to celebrate Peggy Rae's birthday.

The Washington Shakespeare Company is doing Othello with reverse casting. All the characters will be Black except for Othello, who will be played by Captain Jean-Luc Picard. "Are you married to Desdemonia?" "No, engaged."

The meeting was unanimously adjumed at 9:42

An Exchange of Hostages by Susan R. Matthews Book Review by Madeline Yeh

Before anything else I must say this is a very, very good book. There are many reasons to praise it. Its well written, clean and clear. It tells a straight forward, well defined story with a clear beginning and a clear end. The author tells the story from many different viewpoints: the protagonist and no less than five supporting characters. Each of these people are clearly distinct and real individuals, with their own goals, priorities and background. The universe is revealed in bits and pieces, as believable, complex, changeable and diverse.

I spent more time analyzing why I liked this book, then I did in reading several lesser novels. This book is nearly a complete reversal of the "Young Hero" story, where an obscure youth becomes a great champion. King Arthur is one of the classic examples of that Genre. The hero of the story, Andrej

Ulexeievitch Koscuisko, is more like a young Alexander, destined for greatness. He is the eldest son of a Ranking Prince, due to inherit control of a major corporation.

Andrej has already accomplish great things. Despite the handicaps of an autocratic upbringing, he has graduated first from the most prestigious and most rigorous medical university, with honors in two disciplines. At the beginning of the story, he is about to enter the Fleet school for training Surgeons.

This school is also a reversal. It does not create responsible, conscientious, disciplined healers, but callous sociopaths. A Ship's Surgeon's main responsibility is not healing but torturing. The Jurisdiction has refined the process of inquiry so that a medical degree is necessary lest the prisoner be killed too quickly.

Chief torturers are hard to obtain, and the

fleet has resorted to slavery to supply the torturer's flunkies. A bond-involuntary has a brain implant to make it impossible for him to disobey a superior officer.

Andrej finds himself nearly as trapped in the system as a bond-involuntary. His father's authority is nearly absolute, upheld by law and religion alike. His father has decreed that Andrej must serve with the Jurisdiction Fleet, and the Fleet that he must be a Ship's Surgeon.

It is high treason for a Inquisitor to quit before his enlistment has expired, and Andrej is pledged to serve the Fleet for the next 8 years.

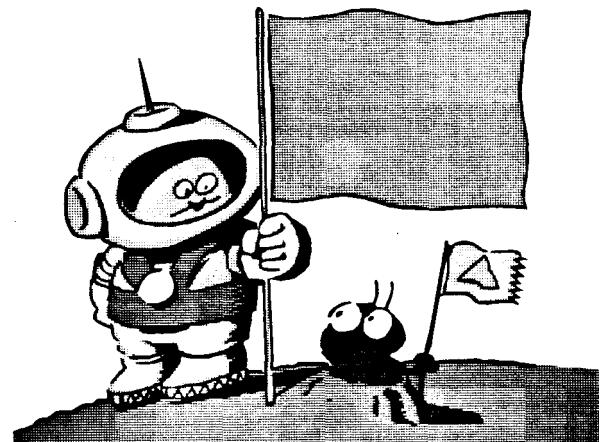
We see Andrej's changes and experiences through not only his eyes, but that of his Tutor, two of the Fleet's slaves, a fellow student, and a doctor. The author also uses these people to show the Jurisdiction, the Fleet, the Inquiry and several of the various societies in the Jurisdiction. The political entity, the Jurisdiction, is a legal system gone amuck. The accused are horribly tortured not to obtain the truth, but to obtain the correct confession. The Jurisdiction is under a great deal of stress. Most torturers have trouble completing their 8

years, suicide and insanity are common. The Fleet and the Judicial Bench are constantly quarreling. Civil unrest is pervasive and persistent. Despite the setting and the premise, the story is fascinating. It's rich in detail and believability. There have been several *other* torturers in Science Fiction books, but this one is the most three dimensional. In some respects he is nearly too perfect a paragon, a great surgeon, a great pharmacist, and a great torturer. He has all the aristocratic virtues; and few of its vices. He is punctiously correct to superiors and subordinates. Andrej is especially careful to respect the dignity and feelings of the bond-involuntaries. This perfection is contrasted with the other Student torturer, who has neither his competencies nor his virtues. She fawns on her superiors and oppresses her subordinates.

This book calls out for a sequel, but I'm afraid of where it will lead. Will our hero continue his fall from the heavens? Or break into gibbering pieces? Or cause the death of millions, and the destruction of order?

WSFA Newsflash

WSFAn Joe Mayhew has been nominated for a 1997 Hugo Award in the Fan Artist category. This is the second year in a row that Joe has been nominated. The Hugos will be announced in San Antonio in September, 1997. All members of the convention can vote.



THE TWO FACES OF LUNAÇON

by Steven desJardins

Lunacon: The Good

Terry Carr once said, "No Committee can ruin a Worldcon, and this one is proving it." Lunacon was a lot like that.

Gather a good enough assortment of fans, authors, editors, and assorted weird others into one hotel and you can't help having a good time.

Not that the entire convention was

you noticed that the Art Show was as well managed as ever, and you heard nothing but good things about the Masquerade, and saw other individuals fans doing their best in a bad situation.

The panels I went to this year were all entertaining, despite the poor job done by con programming. The Swashbuckling Heroines panel Friday was refreshingly silly; they ended up defining their subject as ‘boots, wit, and panache’. They agreed that Klingons could be swashbucklers even though some are a bit short in the wit department. Joe Mayhew moderated an interesting panel called “Artists Worth Stealing From”, which got into detail about what parts of various artists’ work was worth stealing, despite the handicap of having only one other panelist show up. There were no surprises in the panel on Net Etiquette, but Esther Friesner and Seth Breibardt had enough differences in background and attitude to incite a civil and spirited difference of opinion. Michael Walsh’s Fan GoH presentation was unscripted, but he’s a good storyteller and he managed to cover a lot of territory in the hour allotted to him.

The Saturday night book review panel was surprisingly open to the idea of writing for fun rather than money. I do book reviews for a personalzine I publish, and it was nice to hear an articulate discussion from people whose attitude is similar to my own. (They noted that accepting paying assignments often compromised your ability to have fun, in particular the ability to choose which books you read and review. This is exactly why I intend to remain a fan writer.) And Sunday morning Hal Clement gave an interesting slide show presenting some of his ideas about the planet around 51 Pegasi. His biochemistry seemed to be about one part

fact to twenty parts wishful thinking, but the astrophysics was interesting and it was fun to see how he put together a fictional background.

I’ve been doing a little work for Buccaneer lately, so I was invited to a Friday night dinner with C.J. Cherryh and Michael Whelan, and spent a couple hours Sunday manning the Buccaneer table. (One woman was offended that we don’t have a hotel booking form yet. She likes to plan ahead.) I don’t want to go to the extremes of some con runners I know, who fly halfway across the country to attend a convention and spend all their time working on the art show, but I’m finding that being part of the community has advantages that outweigh the time involved.

Saturday night I gathered in a room with several friends to eat pizza and make fun of bad TV shows. A few of the people who usually make it to Lunacon weren’t there this year, but we still had an enjoyable time mocking Poltergeist: The Legacy, Viper, and Star Trek: Deep Space Nine. Dan Persons got off the best line of the evening: “Jake, you’re not Wil Wheaton! People like you!”

At the book raffle I skunked Seth 3-0. It turns out I had as many tickets as him, although not as many as another gentleman who won only two lots. I ended up winning four Gor novels and a lifetime supply of L. Ron Hubbard novels. (I actually ended up with fewer good books than you’d expect, but I did get my hundred dollars worth, including two hardcovers I would have paid cover price for, a complete C.J. Cherryh trilogy, and fragments of two others.)

Lunacon: The Bad

It’s traditional for Lunacon to be disorganized and for the committee to be

at odds with each other. This year demonstrated that there is such a thing as an excess of fannish tradition.

The first question at the gripe session dealt with ribbons worn by some of the committee and staff that read Upton-Free Zone. The con chair said that he considered this a personal insult and was particularly incensed that the ribbons had been forged to look like official Lunacon ribbons. He saw nothing wrong with publicly yelling at the head of the Art Show in order to find out who was responsible.

I'm not sure what Upton's full name is, because it doesn't appear in the committee listing in the program book. Upton vowed to find out why this happened. He seemed to already have enough evidence to rule out the possibility of an innocent mistake, but maybe he was relying on intuition.

I'd say this explains a lot about what went wrong at this year's Lunacon. I certainly would never work on a convention run by this man. Most of the problems I observed this weekend were due to inexperienced people in key positions, short-staffedness, and a failure to communicate.

An example: No pocket programs were available at Registration. Upton explained that the people who were supposed to pick up the pocket programs took their time about doing it, so that what should have been a three-hour trip took six hours. He had planned for the programs to be available early and clearly (in his mind) he'd done everything he could to make sure they would be ready.

My comments: It is a responsibility of

the convention chairman to impress upon people the urgency of their assignments. And the programs were more than three hours late. (Six or seven hours, at least.)

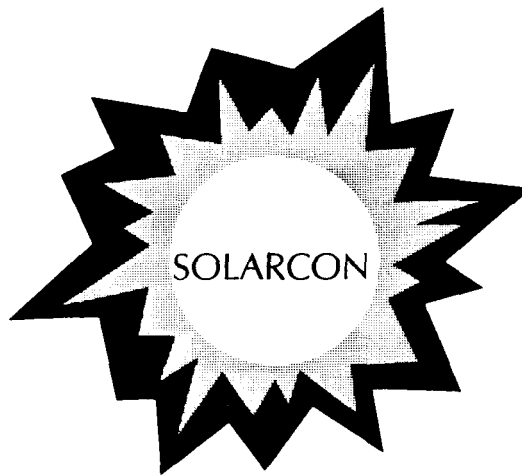
Another example: Upton said that newsletter distribution and announcements were disrupted because their copier broke down, and the responsible staff member had car trouble.

I guess the words "Here, use mine" are not in his vocabulary. Perhaps this attitude could be codified as Upton's Law: It is no longer necessary to get

things done once an excuse has been found. The heroics of individual staff members, like the masquerade tech who made a last-minute trip to New Jersey to replace a fried light board or the gentleman who pulled a ten-hour shift at the book

exhibit because he wasn't given any volunteers, are more greatly appreciated in contrast to this attitude. (Upton also said that everyone who asked for volunteers got them. Upton's Second Law: If you deny that a problem exists, it is no longer necessary to deal with it.)

One last example. The people running the con suite were from New Jersey. They didn't realize when they got here that the A&P would be closed. As a result, they paid too much for supplies, and the con suite was considerably more bare than usual. Further, in response to a complaint last year that there wasn't enough healthy food, this year's con suite contained almost nothing but healthy food. I like carrot sticks, but I also want to be able to grab a handful of potato



chips.

It makes me appreciate how important a good con chair really is. I can't tell to what extent others are to blame for the problems this year, but it is

the privilege of the con chair to get some of the credit when things go well and all of the blame when they don't. My impression is that Mr. Upton earned that privilege.

IN MEMORIAM

SAM MOSKOWITZ

1920- 1997

Fan, co-organizer of the first Worldcon, agent, editor, anthologist, and historian



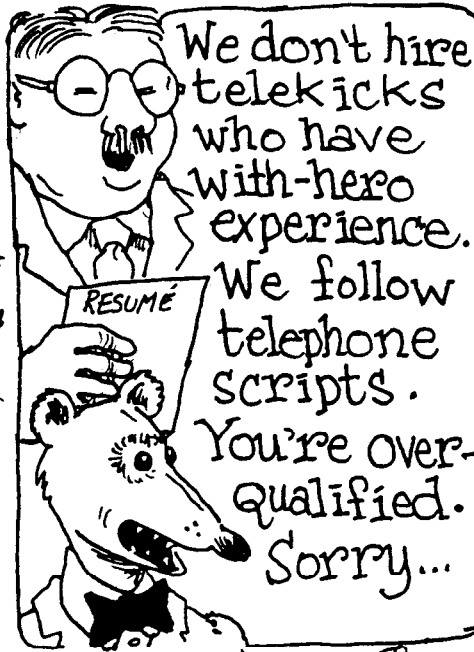
**UNCLE DISCLAVE WANTS YOU
(TO VOLUNTEER)**

WALTER ALONE

After they committed Cosmic Tad, Walter applied at the Sidekick Network.

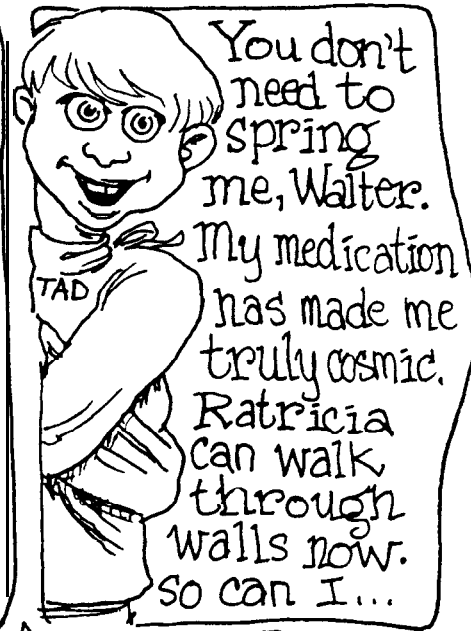


Joe Mainely Doc



We don't hire telekicks who have with-hero experience. We follow telephone scripts. You're over-qualified. Sorry...

RESUME



You don't need to spring me, Walter. My medication has made me truly cosmic. Raticia can walk through walls now. So can I...

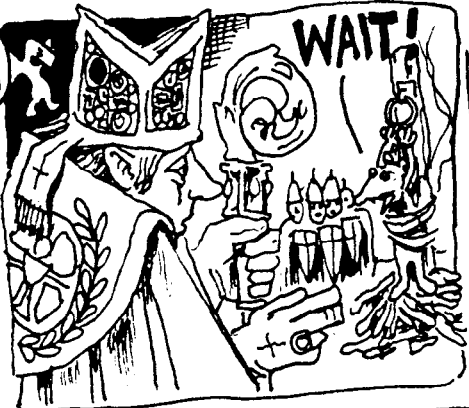
TAD

So, Walter went off in search of

THE HOLY GRAIL



I'm from the future, Sire!



WAIT!



Rescuing angels?



Let's just leave this one out of the official chronicle.

They took the grail!



I'm an outta work sidekick.

Too many lines for a wingnut.



I'd always thought the Holy Grail was a cup.

con badge.



So, whenever I wear it, I'll be as sane as you?

what wingnut said.

I sprung you using my best weasel ethics...