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"One is the loneliest number...."*

THIRTY-SEVEN years ago I produced my last fanzine. It was an issue of *SaFari* for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. Since then, numbers of misguided people have tried to get me involved in producing another one, all to no avail. So, what the hell am I doing here and now?

Going even further out of my mind, no doubt, as numbers would testify. Yet here it is, whatever it is, my ezine...a run-away compulsion having taken over and making it happen again.

When I knew it was going to happen, the first thing I asked myself was "what's it called?" but I didn't know. And, always in the past such a significant thing as the masthead required lots of thought to make sure it was right in the first place.

Everything I write, lately, has one purpose only, hastening my memoirs. The single word that I overuse the most, the single letter, is "I" therefore it's only appropriate that I name my ezine *I*. Of course I gave serious consideration to naming it *eGO*, but *I* was much simpler and more to the point.

Me, me, me. Mine!

The only subject of my memoirs is me, and I'm really trying to get me right. I need all the help I can get from anyone with corrections, additions, changes, photos, or anything else. That's the main reason I'm putting portions of my rough-draft, in-progress memoirs out for grabs in the first place...to get help in making them better. That help comes from you and you can send it to me at earlkemp@citlink.net whenever you're ready.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch...thank you very much for clicking by and checking out my ezine. *I* is determined to be the best me we ever possibly could...just for you.

#

FOR ISSUE 1 I have chosen an article by my good friend and Advent partner, George W. Price to be the kick-off piece. The article is a forerunner to Advent's upcoming fiftieth anniversary, an occasion of considerable significance.

Following George's article are two pieces from my memoirs, "Berlin 1929" and "The Ballad of Killer Kemp."

Closing out this first issue of my ezine is a reprint ad from 1962 that I think of rather fondly. I hope you have found something of value or at least amusement in this issue, and that you will take the time to email me your thoughts and suggestions for future improvement.

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THIS ISSUE would not be possible without the encouragement and assistance of my partner in crime, Bill Burns. He produced and distributed this ezine through <http://efanzines.com> and it is not designed to be a print zine.

SPECIAL THANKS: To Bob Tucker for leading the way with *eZombie*. To Martha Beck for always insisting, "If you write it, they will come." To Edith Gilley for designing the logo. To Howard DeVore who made this whole undertaking right in the first place. To Joyce Worley Katz for her continuing help and assistance. To Marty Cantor and Dwain Kaiser for their inspiration. And most of all to you....

--Earl Kemp, January 2002

*This is dedicated to my dear old big-hearted friend Howard DeVore; thanks for making I possible. Copyright 2002 by Earl Kemp. All rights reserved. Dated January 2002.

...the book has begun to grow inside me. I am carrying it around with me everywhere. I walk through the streets big with child and the cops escort me across the street. Women get up to offer me their seats. Nobody pushes me rudely any more. I am pregnant. I waddle awkwardly, my big stomach pressed against the weight of the world....

--Henry Miller, *Tropic of Cancer*, 1934

1955 Advent:uring Through the Years 2005

By George W. Price

Robert Briney
Sidney Coleman (Retired 2001)
Earl Kemp
James O'Meara
George Price
Jon Stopa
Ed Wood (Deceased 1995)

SHORTLY AFTER I finished my military service and returned home to Chicago in the fall of 1953, I joined the University of Chicago Science Fiction Club. There I met Earl Kemp. He was the guiding genius of the club although he was not a student at the U. of C. (neither was I). We became friends and, when I got married in 1960, he was my best man.

In 1955, Earl and several other UofCSF Club members started Advent:Publishers with the novel idea of bringing out critical works about science fiction. Mainstream publishing houses had only started doing science fiction books a few years earlier, and were completely ignoring science fiction criticism. Damon Knight had written a goodly number of critical essays for science fiction magazines by then, and it was Earl's idea to assemble them into a book. And so it was done: *In Search of Wonder* came out in 1956, and Advent was on its way.

From the start Advent was amateur in the sense that all of the partners made their livings in other ways. Some were students; Earl worked in a job printing shop (where he had learned typesetting and book composition techniques for offset printing); I was a chemist. However, we always strove to maintain professional standards of book production. And because we did not depend on Advent for our livings, we did not have to make the compromises on subject matter and quality that commercial publishers necessarily make. We could and did publish exactly what we liked.

One by one all the other partners except me moved away from Chicago to pursue their varying professions, and as they did so, I took over more and more of the company's functions. Earl was the last to withdraw from active participation when he moved to California, in 1965, and I found myself doing everything. The others maintained their financial interest in the partnership, but I did all the work of editing and preparing books for the printers, as well as filling the orders. Later on, Ed and Jo Ann Wood took care of filling orders, from 1973 until 1995, shortly before Ed's death.

Advent not only filled some personal needs (I had always wanted to have children, but never did; no doubt the books that I was producing satisfied part of that), but also seriously affected my professional life. I was working in chemistry and chemical engineering at the Institute of Gas Technology. My boss knew of my amateur publishing activities, so when a job as technical writer and editor opened up, he thought of me. This was at a time when I had realized that, as a scientist or engineer, I would never be any more than mediocre. The proposed job was much more in line with my real talents, so I jumped at it. And that's what I did for the next three decades until my retirement a few years ago. Without Advent, I might have been stuck in unfulfilling lab work for who knows how long.



Advent: Publishers

J.L. Patterson (Mrs. P. Howard Lyons) designed the original graphics set-up package for Advent in 1956, including the colophon and script logo above, as well as the letterhead, envelopes, mailing labels, invoices, inc. In addition, she did a series of illustrations for Advent's premiere volume, Damon Knight's *In Search of Wonder*.

My professional and Advent activities were also intertwined in another way. Earl had taught me how to prepare books for publication by using an IBM Executive office typewriter with proportional spacing to compose justified type that looked (more or less) like regular hot-metal printing. That's how we did the first few books. In 1966 IBM introduced the Selectric Composer, a \$4,400 machine that used interchangeable "golf ball" type fonts to set justified type in three sizes and many different faces. I bought one of the first ones sold in Chicago, and used it to set all Advent books produced between 1968 and 1976, starting with *Heinlein in Dimension*. A little later my employer also got a Composer for in-house publications, and since I was already expert on it, I became the person consulted for advice on using it.

In a few more years, the Institute decided to go to more versatile-and more expensive-phototypesetting equipment. Because of my experience, I was selected to scout out what was available and make recommendations. They accepted my judgment and bought the equipment without further checking. This was not only a source of pride to me, but also in turn affected Advent. With my boss's knowledge, I often stayed late and used the Institute's phototypesetting equipment to compose Advent's books. I retired the IBM Composer (it is still in my attic) and, from then until my own retirement, did all Advent's typesetting on my employer's equipment.

Eventually phototypesetting was made obsolete by computer-driven laser printers and I switched to them. Since I retired, I have done Advent's work on my own PC and printer. The first book prepared on a PC was the greatly expanded third edition of *In Search of Wonder*, in 1996. A comparison with the earlier editions will show how greatly the typography improved.

In nearly half a century, many things have changed at Advent besides the typesetting equipment and the resulting typography, but we have always stuck to doing books of science fictional interest. We were the first to publish science fiction criticism, but the mainstream publishers and academic presses eventually followed, particularly after science fiction studies started booming in the 1970s. We never had any interest in doing textbooks, but our books have been used as supplementary reading in a number of college courses.

While Earl Kemp started Advent because he perceived a lack of critical books about science fiction, we never limited ourselves to criticism. So in addition to the masterful criticism of Damon Knight, James Blish, and Alexei Panshin, our works include a small art book of Kelly Freas drawings; two histories of science fiction magazines (*A Requiem for Astounding* and *Galaxy Magazine: The Light and the Dark Years*); a history and listing of *The Hugo, Nebula and World Fantasy Awards*; a compilation of university lectures (*The Science Fiction Novel: Imagination and Social Criticism*); Don Tuck's massive bibliographic *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction and Fantasy to 1968*; a

fan history (Harry Warner's *All Our Yesterdays*); Robert Bloch's *The Eighth Stage of Fandom*; a collection of short pieces by L. Sprague de Camp and Catherine Crook de Camp (*Footprints on Sand*); two re-issues of out-of-print classics about science fiction (Eshbach's *Of Worlds Beyond* and Bretnor's *Modern Science Fiction*); and the unclassifiable *PITFCS: Proceedings of the Institute for Twenty-First Century Studies*.

The very first Advent book that I set in type was the Ellick and Evans concordance *The Universes of E. E. Smith*. By coincidence, the newest Advent book is *Have Trenchcoat-Will Travel*, a collection of all of the late, great Doc Smith's stories that are not science fiction. What all these books have in common is that we did not expect them to be commercially viable, but we thought they deserved to see print anyway.

In 1968 Advent changed from a partnership to a corporation, with the former partners as the sole stockholders. We did this because Robert Heinlein had intimated that he might sue us if we published *Heinlein in Dimension* by Alexei Panshin (whom Heinlein detested - see <http://www.panshin.com> for details). Incorporation meant that even if we lost a suit, we would be liable for only the company's assets (which were negligible apart from the inventory), and would not be at risk for our personal assets. Advent:Publishers, Inc. published the book, and Heinlein did not sue.

One thing has not changed: Advent never made any money. In fact, if you count the value of the partners' time and labor, we have lost money hand over fist. But then, we never did it for money. It was a labor of love, and still is.

When Earl Kemp invited me into Advent:Publishers almost fifty years ago, neither he nor I ever anticipated how enormously it would affect my life. But it did, and I wouldn't change it for anything.

Earl, I thank you.

--George W. Price, Manager, Advent:Publishers, Inc. April 2001.

These novels will give way, by and by, to diaries or autobiographies-captivating books, if only a man knew how to choose among what he calls his experiences that which is really is experience, and how to record truth truly.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

Berlin 1929*

I WAS ALWAYS nagged by the suspicion that I was really of German descent, and afraid that I might even be a little Nazi. Only that was just about as valid as coming up with the thought that I might be a little queer. This was mostly because my parents had no idea where their ancestors might have come from, nor anything close to what might be my racial and ancestral birthright. Also I was aware that there were many people in the state of Arkansas with strong German roots and numerous towns actually named for German cities, places like Smackover, Stuttgart, and Hamburg, for instance.



Odd for a person born in 1929, but not odd for a person so divided as I. All during the '30s and up until Germany surrendered in 1945, I was secretly afraid that I was one of them. There was so much about them that I did admire, things I felt for sure we shared in common. *Ich bin ein Berliner!*

There was little awareness of "war" in my consciousness, and what there was was noticeably anti. It was the German ideal I felt I belonged to, and all those beautiful, healthy, dynamic blue-eyed blondes. Those incredible monuments and skyscraper buildings they were erecting all over the place. The class and style of Albert Speer.

I didn't know anything about those awful things they were doing all over Europe, those gas ovens, and things like that. It was *nothing* war-like that I admired or identified with in Germans

I admired them for their exactness and their accomplishments in areas like optics, cameras, lenses, radio and sound transmission, kinky sex, S&M, etc. They were people who knew how to get certain jobs done and moved right in there and took over and put everything in its place where it should have been all along but wasn't. The people with the "know how." The Can Dos.

Exactly what I found when, many years later, I went to Viet Nam. I was so adamantly opposed to the things we were doing there, so anti-war, that the sight of jungle camouflage actually made me nauseous. Quite a feat holding all that intact while touring Viet Nam as the officially accredited foreign correspondent for the *Los Angeles Free Press*, yet everywhere I looked I found within myself nothing but admiration for how we were accomplishing whatever we were accomplishing. That incredible ability to move right in there and take over, recognizing everything that needed to be done and doing it correctly the first time and just plain out moving. The power to accomplish. The people with the "know how." The Can Dos.

#

When I finally broke away from my roots and decided to live in Chicago, I moved right into the middle of the German section and felt very much at home, enjoying all the old treats I missed so much from my unknown past.

Then, years later, when I relocated to Guadalajara, I found myself once again surrounded by blue-eyed, blond-haired German-gene Mexicans, and a number of really good down home German middle-class fat-making beer-guzzling oompaah! restaurants.

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In Germany in 1929 science fiction fan and space nut, Werner Von Braun, joined the German Rocket Society. He was already well underway with his private journey to the stars, and I was only birthing on Sol III; there was no way I could catch up.



Werner Von Braun and some of his fellow Nazis at the launch site of his V-2 "Buzz Bombs," Peenemunde, 1943.

Still and all...I was German secretly somehow inside. And a Berliner at that.

I had lived there many times, in my imagination. Somehow I felt I knew the city quite well...even intimately. I researched it enough, as I did everything I ever fell momentarily in love with, until it was all first-hand old-hat to me. I prowled the flickering, gritty, out-of-focus nighttime black-and-white Berlin streets of Fritz Lang, lurking with Peter Lorre and *Nosferatu*, lusting after sultry young Marlene Dietrich. Shuddering through *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. I searched all kinds of archival records and old films and *Deutsche Gramofon* audio recordings. Seeking out obscure venues presenting old revivals of pre-war German culture...people like Kurt Weill, who became one of my ideals, and his friend and collaborator Bertolt Brecht.

They were the voice of pre-Nazi middle-class Germany, and just beginning to get into trouble because of it. (Before long, conditions would convince Weill to move to the USA for safety reasons alone, to say nothing about his career, but that's another story.) They were just on the fringes of the Jazz Age that resulted in the rampant eroticism of

Berlin nightlife and everyone was singing their songs.



There were all those wonderful tunes ("oh, the shark has...") from *The Three Penny Opera* and *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* ("I must have whiskey or die....") from previous years still ringing fresh in people's ears.

It was years later before Jim Morrison could make "Show Me the Way to the Next Whiskey Bar" a world-wide rock and roll sensation all over again.

This was Berlin 1929, the world of Kurt Weill stage-set like *Cabaret* only with a lot more sluts and sleazy bimbos in the cast. It was Mrs. Weill, Lotte Lenya, in bright orange hair, who helped make 1929 such a smashing success.

Happy End was the play, 1929's sensation that Weill and Brecht collaborated on, with its unforgettable "Bilbao Song" and poignantly delicate "Surabaya Johnny," especially as only Lotte Lenya could deliver it, that was filling the Berlin air, between goosestepping and heiling and doing some damned right incredibly awful things that were the lullaby music played on the occasion of my birth.

#

Weill died in 1950, but his music and his legacy will live on forever.

It has been my extreme good fortune, in my dreams and my adventures, to walk side by side with my friend Kurt, humming (I was never very good at singing) his songs, through many of his experiences and favorite dives of decadent Berlin, though I have never been there. Even when I had chances to go, I turned them down. I had already found so many favorite places in Germany I didn't have room for others, besides *that* Berlin was the city of my youth, and I had somehow outgrown it.

#

Musik-Konzepte
101/102
Kurt Weill
Die frühen
Werke
1916-1928
Herausgeber von
Helmuth Klotz, Jost
Metzger
und Karer Wien
Vf./SfE
editions vocal 1975



There was a brief reprise in the late 1960s. *Cabaret* was running on Broadway again for the umpteenth time. Naturally I wanted to see it and I was in New York City on an expense account so to hell with it, buy me a close-up scalper seat.

It came time for the performance to begin, but nothing was happening. The audience somehow became aware that there was a delay and they began rumbling and shifting in their seats uncomfortably.

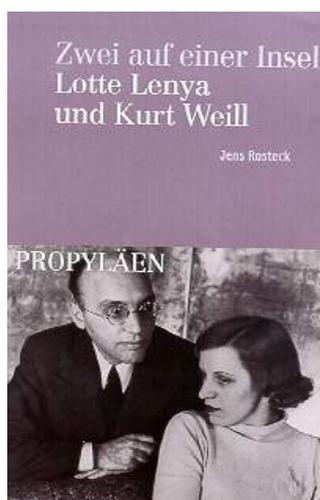
At center stage the curtain flaps opened and a man with a hand-held mike stepped in front of the audience.

"We are sorry to inform you that the star (whose name I have long since forgotten) has become suddenly ill and can not perform tonight," he said, to a growing swell of annoyance and discontent.

"...in her place," he continued, as if he couldn't even hear the angry audience, "we are happy to announce that we have arranged for Lotte Lenya to perform the part

that was originally written for her by her husband. If you will be patient for just a few minutes more, the show will begin. Thank you...."

There was resounding applause at the sudden knowledge that we were lucky enough to be sitting in on a miracle performance by a miracle performer interpreting the work of a miracle music maker.



#

When I took on the crown of the King of Pornography my first charge to myself was to become the world's foremost authority on what sex really was as interpreted by the most people. Toward that charge, my first task was an around-the-world tour of sin cities.

At last I was going to exercise my secret German inherent closetness.

I personally selected those sin cities going only on their reputations as world-class sex providers and the only suitable German spot turned out to be Hamburg...and what a glorious mistake that was.

Hamburg, Arkansas is the county seat of Ashley County, the place of my birth. Somehow it secretly fit into my secret Germanness, only not. It was certainly a determining factor in picking Hamburg as the site of my first visit to Germany. It is a notorious major port city (somehow sailors are strongly identified with whores and indiscriminate fornication) plus possessor of the St. Pauli girl and the infamous Reeperbahn red light district.

So here I am, the King of Pornography, finally making it to what I had long felt was my ancestral home where... surely of all places in the world...I would feel most at ease. And I was going to tour some really hot places in one of the world's foremost bordellos.

Finally it became time for me to begin my task...to first-hand tour the establishments and rate them as to quality and class and price and flavor and anything else I could think up as I went along and made the rules up by ear.

A taxi driver eagerly took me right to the St. Pauli district where all the hookers and whorehouses were, and cruised around it a bit giving me an overview before letting me out somewhere about mid-way along the line of street shills hawking out their wares and the delights to be found once you enter the doorway being held open for you....

The first place I entered was a bit smaller than I had expected, for such a garish front and verbal promise of erotic delights. In fact it looked a great deal more like a neighborhood cocktail lounge on ladies night than anything else... and a bad night at that.

I was shown to a booth and almost immediately a charming young girl who thought she could speak some English sat down beside me and went into "pity me" routine No. 6.

"I haven't been earning any money at all," she told me, as if I was interested, "and they're going to fire me for sure. I need this job very much...."

"Sorry," I said, "I can't help you out. I'm not buying right now, just looking."

"Well then," she said, "could you please at least buy me a cup of coffee? That's all I ask of you...."

"Well, okay," I said, a bit reluctantly.

She looked up and waved a finger at the maitre d', who surely doubled somewhere as a wrestler or a gorilla. As if on a signal and with a loud drum-roll, with arms and aprons a flutter, a waiter instantaneously appeared at the table and simultaneously popped the cork of a bottle of champagne that in California could have been passed off for \$3.98 to someone who didn't know any better. Two champagne saucers, filled with the bubbly, were placed before us with a flourish.

I didn't drink a drop of it. I was so pissed at the ripoff...\$50 USA for the bottle...that I paid the bill (I knew the real reason Gorilla was on staff) and left immediately.

Out on the street, looking around, I was struck by the sameness, somehow, with what I was looking at and what I knew so well back in Tijuana and realized without a moment's hesitation that there was no way in hell Hamburg could ever catch up with a real sin city.

As if a heavy burden had been lifted from my shoulders, the feeling that I was inherently German that I had caressed and secretly fondled for so many years, evaporated in a flash. I never once even subconsciously reverted back to it again.

The taste of Hamburg was so unpleasant, in fact, that I cut my visit there short and moved on to Stuttgart and Benz and all those wonderful animals in the zoo.

It was in a museum basement (unfortunately not one of those Albert Speer erections) archive in Stuttgart where I found my first racial identity clue. I was busily researching "Kemp" when an elderly bearded man who spoke perfect English turned to me and said, "You're going about it all wrong, you know?"

"Kemp isn't a German name, it's Dutch. You need to check records in the Netherlands."

"Oh," I said, suavely. "Thank you very much...."

And when I left Germany far behind I moved on toward Paradise...also known to the cognizant as Amsterdam... where I might find some long-lost Kemps to claim me as a relative, and never once looked back at dank, depressing, mildew-shrouded Hamburg.

#

*In memory of my good friend Dirk Schnee, his science fiction world and his Frankfurt. Dated October 2000.

Of course, all autobiography is mythic, just as all myths are stories that never happened but are always true.
--Jaime Meyer in a review of Theater Mu's "Dancing Crane"

The Ballad of Killer Kemp*

By Earl Kemp

When I was a kid (I was 11 years old in 1940), you could get an awful lot for a dime. The problem was coming up with a dime in the first place.

When I had that dime, the best way I knew of to spend it was to go to the Saturday afternoon matinee showing at the movie theater. If I was lucky enough to have another dime to spend, I could eat enough popcorn and drink enough soda pop during the run of that show to make me puke.

I finally figured out that if I wanted to have that dime, I had to work for it. I delivered handbills for the theater every week in exchange for free passes to some of the movies. There was only one theater in town, of course. The features changed five times weekly plus a sixth, midnight special showing every Friday and Saturday late night.

There was always this serial, too, something like Bela Lugosi as *Chandu the Magician*, Clyde Beatty as *The King of the Jungle*, Buster Crabbe as *Flash Gordon*, and their like, that kept all us kids right on the edge of our seats until the very last frame flickered across the screen.

My cowboy heroes were people like Tom Mix, Buck Jones, Johnny Mack Brown, Bob Livingston, Tim Holt, Lash LaRue, and the big-timers, Gene Autrey, Roy Rogers, and Hopalong Cassidy.

... matinee this Saturday....always a Western with banal dialogue and unreloadable guns and the next exciting episode of some raunchy cliff-hanger that never, somehow, started just where last Saturday's had ended. That, a Betty Boop, a newsreel, something unmentionable by Pete Smith, and Previews Of Coming Attractions.

... That and the popcorn and the circus peanuts and exploration in the flickering shadows.

--Earl Kemp (33 years old), Editorial, *SaFari* Vol. II No. I, FAPA, dated 1962

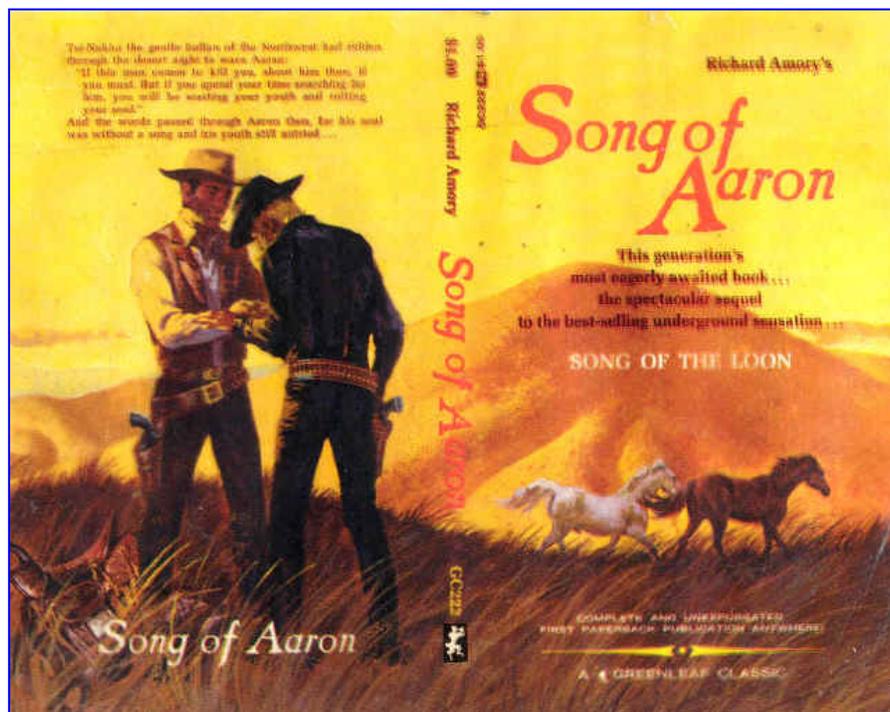
I acquired a Western Americana heritage that stuck with me all of my life. It helped a great deal that I was what passed for a farm boy. I was surrounded by saddles and tack and the smell of alfalfa and leather. I had cowboy boots and hat. I had my own horse and could ride wherever I thought of going with my fellow preteen cowboys. In later life, it was just this background that stepped forward for years where I lived on mythical Rancho Viejo amid tons of soft black Italian glove leather and rode along with the biggest cowboys in the whole damned National Finals Rodeo arena, but that story will have to wait until later. This story started out trying to lead up to a point.

#

In the 1960's, after the Porno Factory moved to California and when I was boss, one of my biggest thrills was posing for the covers of some of our books. And, later, when we began using lots of photographs, I enjoyed that one as well for different reasons. The cover artists who worked for us quickly learned of my addiction and would occasionally conspire to involve me a bit more directly.

I remember one particular cover of one of our books that I was very proud of for a number of reasons. I seem to remember it as being an exceptionally good novel and one that I singled out for special handling. It was GC222, *Song of Aaron*, by Richard Amory, a sort-of sequel to his best-selling *Song of the Loon* from the previous year.

I had Robert Bonfils, our in-house Art Director, do a wrap-around painting for the cover. It shows two cowboys in the middle of forever (two hills over from Corflu Creek), stopping, dismounting, and stretching. I posed for both cowboys in this painting.



Song of Aaron cover painting by Robert Bonfils. GC222

In the foreground, dressed all in Killer Kemp black, wearing my own cowboy outfit and my own six-shooter, I really felt like Killer Kemp, heading for the last showdown. Only I seem to be getting a bit ahead of myself again.

#

I was starting to feel pretty good about myself in 1961, and many things were looking up for me. In the world scene, my hero Major Yuri A. Gagarin, rode into history aboard *Vostok I*. At home, President Kennedy messed up royally when he tried to invade the Bay of Pigs in Cuba and, as if that wasn't enough, began sending "advisors" to Vietnam almost like we're doing in Colombia and Peru these days. Earnest Hemingway, the Pride of Paris and Havana, died inside the self-constructed closet he could never out himself from.

Ralph124C41+ Hugo Gernsback wrote a letter congratulating and thanking me for producing *Who Killed Science Fiction?* Praise from The Master. *I walked on air for awhile after that.*

As a science fiction fan, I thought I had died and gone to heaven. I was producing copies of my fanzine *SaFari* for FAPA and was hard at work on my second *SaFari* annual, *Why Is A Fan?* I had been president of the University of Chicago Science Fiction Club for almost a decade and the club was growing by leaps and bounds. Club members were everywhere, at every convention and every party and every picnic, politicking for the next world convention and partying for all we were worth.

I had just begun working as an editor under Ajay Budrys at Blake Pharmaceuticals in Evanston, Illinois, producing pornography for William Hamling. No one would believe that I knew absolutely nothing about the subject area and had never even encountered any. I was actively trying to locate some stag films (they would be my first) and researching the history of pornography while taking voice lessons calculated to teach me how to say the word "fuck" aloud while blushing copiously on the inside.

And that wasn't enough for me.

I had been working very hard at politicking for a number of goals for several different reasons and they were starting to pay off big-time. Everything seemed to be coming to a head for me, climaxing with the World Science Fiction Convention held in Seattle over the Labor Day weekend.

During the masquerade ball, my costume was judged "Best Science Fantasy Costume."

During the awards banquet, my first *SaFari* annual *Who Killed Science Fiction?* was awarded the Hugo as "Best Fanzine."

Robert Heinlein made an unsuccessful attempt to apologize to me for some of his voracious egoness.

During the business meeting, Chicago won the bid to host the 1962 World Science Fiction Convention with Theodore Sturgeon as guest of honor and me as convention chair.

Then, like chocolate sauce atop the best ice cream sundae imaginable, the LASFS (Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society) dragged me right up on top of the hill and just left me there screaming in joy and bellowing out my delight at the top of my lungs.

They screened the all-fan 1960 Unicorn Productions production, *The Musquite Kid Rides Again*. An honor I appreciated and probably deserved.

#

I published my fanzine *SaFari* for SAPS (Spectator Amateur Press Society) during the 1950s and into the '60s (then switching over to FAPA in 1961). My zine was regularly accompanied in the SAPS mailings by zines of the famous and notorious. I could hardly compete with them on any level. These were people like Lee Jacobs, Howard DeVore, Wrai Ballard, F.M. Busby, etc.

Lee Jacobs was an exceptionally good writer. At that particular moment in time, he was regaling SAPS with a series he called "The Ballard Chronicles." Each installment of the Chronicles contained a complete narrative story itself in a different theme and was not a continuation of a single story.

The third installment of "The Ballard Chronicles" was an American Western named *The Musquite Kid Rides Again*. It was included with the 51st SAPS mailing in April 1960.



The Ballard Chronicles Installment 3 front cover by Bjo Trimble. Dated April 1960.

I am the central villain of the piece, thinly disguised as Killer Kemp.

The story, by Lee Jacobs, is replete with fannish references and clichés but, besides that, it is a stand-alone work of real genius. It not only incorporates all these many science fiction references but manages to remain true to the form itself, that of a classic American Western. It could have appeared in any issue of *Ranch Romances* or been converted into half a Saturday afternoon matinee double-feature from Monogram starring Johnny Mack Brown.

It was a singular honor to be pilloried by Lee Jacobs. And by the others who followed after Jacobs and took what he had created to the next logical step...humiliating and glorifying me...thank Ghod for Unicorn Productions.

#

Following are a few brief excerpts from Lee Jacobs' Chronicles (mistakes intact):

Big Daddy Effem Busby...kinda frowned a bit. "Corflu Creek is 'bout a half-days wagon ride, 'cordin' to the map, but Mother an' me was goin' around it. Afore we started cross country, we heered a fast gun by the name of Kemp took over the town. I ain't agoin' t'expose the women-folk to a town what's run by no outlaw."

"Jist a furshlugginer minute," interrupts the Kid. "Did you say Kemp? Would he be known as Killer Kemp?"

"That's what they calls him." Big Daddy sneered. "He allus has some Young Guns with him. Prob'ly some neos what jist seen their names in print an' likes t'think they's BNF's with a big iron. A youngun like Terry would run 'em off the stencil if he ain't been winged by them injuns."

I looks at the Kid real significant. "Killer Kemp was a real mean son. He was purty fast, so I heered. Kemp started out, 'cordin' to the talk, by robin' stages to subsidize his pocketbook collection, an' sorta graduated to switchin' votes at conventions. He'd ride into a town with a bunch o' Young Guns, do a leetle shootin' to scare the old folks, do a little killin' to scare the young folks, an' then collect a percentage from all the businesses in town...."

#



Ernie Wheatley as Killer Kemp. Photo from the collection, and used with the permission of Bruce Pelz. Also featured on LASFS.org web site. Dated 1960.

...Pecos blusters, "but yuh better clear out o' town fast. I'm gonna tell Earl 'bout what happened an' he's goin' t'come lookin' for yuh."

"Yarst on rasty you," says the Kid. "You tell Kemp that Corflu Creek ain't big enough for the both of us. We'll be back in the Surplus Stock Saloon before sundown, an' he better be hyar or on his way outa town."

#

"Fandom is a way of life," Bjo says, real beligerent.

"Fandom is jist a hobby," returns the Kid, rememberin' Mister Toskey's instructions.

Bjo relaxed, an' shut the door. "I never know when Kemp's gonna send somebody to check on me," she explains. She gives us a searching, professional look. "But you ain't like most of my customers. You don't look like you've lost yore sense of wonder. How come Mister Toskey sent you to me?" The Kid explains what happened in town. "I know 'bout Killer Kemp," he says. "An' it'll be a real interestin' gunfight, since I ain't met nobody yet thet c'n out draw me." He warn't boastin', jist statin' the facts. "But I gotta know how many boys Kemp has with him, so Cyclone hyar can take care o' the strays."

"Killer's purty fast," agrees Bjo, "but you gotta real good reputation, Musquito. Shore wish I could be thar to see it, but I reckon I better stick around here, less'n Li'l Eva git suspicious."

"Kemp has three Young Guns ridin' with him, Musquito," she explains. You've already met Pecos Pelz. The second is Rebel Lee. He's not real bad, yet. Heered talk 'bout his

pappy bein' a BNF back East, an' young Lee got his nickname rebellin' agin his pappy's fanac. The third gun is a furrin' hombre by name of Stranger Stone. He can't talk American too well, since he hails from Canada, but he talks right well with a six-gun."

"Any special way Kemp likes to place his boys?" the Kid asks, real serious and constructive.

"Well," Bjo pauses a moment, "did y'ever tell Pecos Pelz who you were?"

"Nope," I says, grinnin' a little. "Pecos saw us with a settler's wagon, so he thinks we're a couple of homesteaders.

Reckon he might be a leetle suspicious, cos of the way Wrai looked in the Surplus Stock, but he don't know the gents he thinks of as sodbusters is really Wrai Ballard, the Musquite Kid, and Cyclone Coswal."

"Then he'll prob'ly feel real confident," Bjo says firmly. "Kemp likes to do most of the killin' himself to set an example 'round town. He'll have his boys around him to watch how a real BNF does things if'n the play is made inside the Surplus Stock. If'n things are moved outside, Stranger Stone might disappear to pick you off, Cyclone, so y'better watch him."

"Don't you worry 'bout me none, Bjo," I growls. "I'm a biapan an' know all 'bout suspicious characters. Wetzels off the FAPA waiting list."

"Here," she gives the Kid a stencilled illustration. "Take this with you, an' show it to Li'l Eva, so she'll think I've been workin'. Shore hope you gits him, Musquito. I had a good life 'til I met Kemp. I don't want no more girls to wind up like me, doin' other people's fanac. Now git!"

#

The main street of Corflu Creek was deserted as we rides up to the Surplus Stock Saloon. Reckon Killer Kemp and the Young Guns had tole people there was goin' t'be some shootin'. But I noticed the faces peerin' out of windows, followin' us with their eyes as we rides into town. Reckon they was real tired of havin' Kemp a-ridin' herd, but y'can't argue much with a six-gun.

#

The Musquite Kid Rides Again **Cast**

Wrai Ballard the Musquite Kid

Cyclone Coswal

Big Daddy Busby

Mother Busby

Terry Carr

Pecos Pelz

Rebel Lee

Tombstone Johnstone

Killer Kemp

B.R. Toskey, Editor

Doc Eney

L'il Eva Firestone

Bjo Trimble

Bartender

Ron Ellik

John Trimble

Charles Burbee

Ingrid Fritsch

Terry Carr

Bruce Pelz

Robert Lichtman

Ted Johnstone

Ernie Wheatley

Jack Harness

Jim Caughran

Karen Anderson

Bjo Trimble

Dean Dickensheet

Following are a few brief excerpts from the shooting script (mistakes intact):

INT. SURPLUS STOCK SALOON

MED. LONG GROUP SHOT - KEMP, PELZ, LEE AND JOHNSTONE, BIG DADDY

LEE and JOHNSTONE are conversing, at the bar. KEMP and PELZ lean against bar with drinks in hand. BIG DADDY stands at end of bar, pretending he doesn't know anyone.

KID and COSWAL enter, go to bar, and signal BARTENDER, who gets up drinks.

PELZ whispers something to KEMP, who looks KID and COSWAL over carefully.

#

EXT. STREET - DAY

LONG SHOT OF STREET - TWO GROUPS OF MEN ARE WALKING TOWARD EACH OTHER. P.O.V. FROM TOP OF UPPER STORY OF A BUILDING (IF POSSIBLE).

SOUND of shot rings out. JOHNSTONE staggers from behind something and falls in street behind KID and COSWAL. They take no notice and continue.

CLOSE SHOT - KEMP

At sound of shot and sight of JOHNSTONE falling in street, KEMP's face flinches slightly at the knowledge that his ace-in-the-hole is gone. But KEMP keeps walking toward the impending gunfight.

#



Shootout photo by and used with the permission of Bruce Pelz.
Left to right: Pecos [Bruce] Pelz, Killer Kemp [Ernie Wheatley], and Rebel Lee [Robert Lichtman].
Courtesy Bruce Pelz Collection. Dated 1960.

CLOSE SHOT - KEMP'S EYES NARROWING.

CLOSE SHOT - KEMP'S HAND, REACHING FOR GUN.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - KID AND COSWAL, WITH DRAWN GUNS, LOOKING AT GROUND.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - KEMP AND PELZ ON GROUND, WITH LEE STANDING BETWEEN THEM, HOLDING HURT HAND AND LOOKING DAZED.

#

The Ballad of Killer Kemp

Lyrics written ??? and performed by Ted Johnstone on the soundtrack of
The Musquite Kid Rides Again

INSERT LYRICS HERE

Who has a copy...?

In his 1960 SAPSzine, (17-year-old) Robert Lichtman wrote a long article called "I Was An Angry Young Man For Unicorn Productions, or Through Darkest Calico With Camera and Confusion." This was a detailed account of gathering the cast and crew and getting them all together in Calico Ghost Town, the forerunner of Knott's Berry Farm. This was to be used as Corflu Creek for Unicorn Production's film *The Musquite Kid Rides Again*.

Robert Lichtman wrote (mistakes intact):

"Then we moved out into the street in front of the saloon for the show-down. This is where Cyclone Coswal (John Trimble) and the Musquite Kid (Squirrel-Ron Ellik) face Killer Kemp (Ernie Wheatley), Pecos Pelz (who else?) and Rebel Lee (me). The action of the scene is about as follows: Coswal and the Kid start walking toward Kemp, Pelz, and Lee. As they get partway up the street, out jumps Tombstone Johnstone who is shot by Big Daddy Busby who is behind a building. Johnstone is there on the ground while the gun battle takes place. Finally the two groups stop. They draw. Kemp and Pelz are shot while Lee is merely wounded in the hand.

"It came off quite nicely; everything went as scheduled, and I'd swear that Bruce bounced as he hit ground. Right after the scene was over, Al Lewis ran up shouting "Stay where you are!" and we went into the next scene, in which Ellik and Burbee shake hands over Wheatley's dead body and Trimble-brave fellow-motions to me to move out of the way, or else. It took about fifteen minutes to finish up this scene and just as we did, the sun went down over the hill off to the west...."

#

The film faded to black and ended as the houselights slowly reached their maximum glow.

It must have been a very good movie to have such an affect on me. I only saw the film once, and that was over forty years ago. Just goes to show that good things leave their lasting marks on our memories and the bad things just take their chances with whatever comes along.

The only thing that would make the whole experience perfect would be for me to be able to see the movie again....

#

*In Memory of my sidekicks Pecos Pelz and Rebel Lee; It was a damned fine ridealong, pardners. Special thanks to Howard DeVore, Bruce Pelz, and Robert Lichtman for helping corral the pieces of this memory. Copyright, c, 2001 by Earl Kemp. All rights reserved. Dated September 2001

And the end of all my searching will be to return where I began and know it for the first time.
--T.S. Eliot

**WELCOME TO FANDOM,
MR. KEMP!**

A MERE \$1.60,
(PAYABLE TO JANIE
LAMB, BOX 364,
RTE. 1 HEISKELL,
TENN.) ENTITLES
YOU TO LOADS
OF FUN
IN THE....

WHY, THANX,
BUT.....

... NATIONAL FANTASY FAN
FEDERATION! HERE YOU
CAN LEARN TO PUB A
FANZINE, JOIN ROUND
ROBINS, **MEET...**

... LOADS OF **BNFs!** MAYBE
YOU COULD EVEN RUN FOR
OFFICE (WOWEE!) OR DRINK
BHEER WITH FANS LIKE....
... EH... *WELL...

... WHO KILLED S.F... HUGO...
FAPA... CHICON AND....
... *... *... HA!...
... WELL...

SO HEY, WELCOME TO THE
N3F ANYWAY! HOPE YOU
ENJOY IT! GOTTA RUSH NOW
AND WELCOME SOME
GUY NAMED
GERNSBACK...

VISIT OUR HOSPITALITY ROOM
- SEE NOTICE ON REGISTRATION DESK FOR DETAILS