

# Turpitude

Slanapa 458  
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February passed with nairy a ripple on my calm. That's the way I like to see the months go. So far things are fine and ~ as far as I can tell ~ they are likely to remain so. Only one distressing thing has happened.

My good friend, Conrad Baker, is riddled with cancer. He has been getting weaker and weaker over the last two months, and really looking awful. He finally got to a doctor, who took some biopsys and sent him home to die. His family just came up (March 20) and took him down to California to be with them.

Conrad and I go back twenty years. I met him at ham radio conventions. We were both interested in old, tube type equipment and had a great time going to the swapmeets together and, at home, buying and selling to one another! Con is 77 years old and was rather a father figure to me, impeccably honest and someone who could do anything mechanical. Matthew traveled with us to more than one hamfest and was a favorite of Conrad's; he was always anxious to be kept up to date on where Matthew was and what he was doing.

We helped him get through the long death of his wife and saw him through two later marriages (to the same woman). We were very close; I will miss him.

As you will see, my contribution missed last month's mailing. Dee was kind enough to send it on to Matthew so that it could appear this month. Thank you, Dee!

**Ned:** It impresses me greatly that you would buy stationery implements like the Hotchkiss #1. And you were so casual mentioning "a collector in South Carolina." What a grand fandom that must be. Do they do fanzines? I used to collect staplers, hole punches, pencil sharpeners, anything like that; I mostly concentrated on the art deco ones. Susie eventually made me throw them all away once there was no longer a print shop in which to house and display them.// How is Ken Faig thought of in the fannish community? I ran into him a great deal in amateur journalism. He seemed an all right kind of fellow, but a bit too pushy about Lovecraft stuff.//I expect Cheney to go back into the Oil world and drop out of politics

all together, even if McCain wins. I was really hoping to vote Democratic this time around, but don't see how I can. // I don't think of comic art as being crude. I believe it is more simple than "fine art". There was good comic art from The Rarebit Fiend through Sub-Mariner to R. Crumb. The Dick Tracy example you cite is not my favorite art; in fact, I would call it lousy.

**Jerry:** You are a better man than I am. I would pack up my stuff at SMT and not look back. The last thing I would do is write a handbook for replacing me! You're a good man. They'll be sorry. // I found it appropriate that you would call the actor playing the young Tommy Lee Jones "the non-entity who plays the young Jones is just boring." That is exactly how I found the elder Jones in Lonesome Dove. Card-board. // It is shocking that you might have to sell your house. I hope not. We just took the first step in losing our home: we got a line of credit against the equity. We are not making enough money to live on and need to eat a chunk of the house each month. // I am surprised to learn from you that *Taming of the Shrew* is controversial. Of course, my knowledge of it comes from the movie *Kiss Me, Kate*. Don't the PC Police have any sense of history? Probably not. // Add my name to the list of accumulators who have tossed their VHS tapes. Twelve boxes of them went to Goodwill and various friends. I just found today another two boxes of them in the garage ~ marked, of all things, "good VHS." I transferred many of them to DVD, all the Inspector Morse shows and the stuff I got directly off TV.

**Bob:** I didn't hear you volunteer your computer for the TanKon Film Festival. Good for you. I am surprised that we didn't take you up on it. As it turned out, I was just as glad that we didn't stop talking for movies. The time passed very quickly with much interest-



ing conversation; it was one of the better cons. // I



read your article on Earhart with interest.

**Gary:** Donald Westlake and Michael Connolly are two of my favorite writers. Their books made the cut when nearly all of my modern first edition mysteries were disposed of. (Actually, they are not disposed of yet; about four hundred and fifty of them are in boxes in my basement while I try to figure out some way of getting rid of them while not hurting my ego by selling them ten cents on the dollar.)

**Dee:** How snarky are you? And whatever does it mean? I always thought you were just plain cool.

Hey, Bucky and Jim and BobV, Let Us Hear From You! We still care about how your lives are running. And with that plea, I am out of time. I am meeting Matthew tomorrow at my aunt's house for a big Easter Feed, lots of relatives and good times. The illustrations: Front cover, random wood block printing that I lifted from an auction house. This page, a poster postcard for the PPIE which I have and a badge from the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Expo that I also have.