

The CLOVEN hoof

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Entire contents by Anton Szandor La Vey

During the great depression period in the U.S. in the 30's there was more funny stuff around than ever, explicitly to chase the blues away. Funny songs, funny movies, the comic book as we once knew it, joke books galore, comics in nightclubs, on the radio--a laugh a minute. It was, to quote a title, a medicine for melancholy. It worked, too. Nobody laughs much any more. If you ask, you're told it's because there's not much to laugh about, what with things being so rotten as they are. There wasn't much to laugh at *then*, but there was a lot more opportunity. Consider the gloomy facts: 40% of all new films are horror films (humorless); another 40% heavy action with a social message (humorless); 8% science-fiction (humorless); another 10% heavy romance or soap (humorless); about 2% children's, nature, documentary, or--straight humor. Don't tell me about robot comic relief in science-fiction or the funny pimp in the cop film. We're talking about real, nothing-but-yocks, entertainment. Like the Marx Brothers or Benny Hill. It's a mere speck in a sea of turmoil and profundity.

On our questionnaire for active membership there is a request for one of the applicant's favorite jokes. Many demur, with a "don't know any." I guess these are supposed to be the serious Satanists I've heard about. Most people equate a sense of humor with laughing a lot. What a laugh *that* is! But laughing is most definitely a wonderful tension breaker, and if the laughter is for real, quite contagious. One doesn't need a sense of humor to be amused to laughter, though it helps. A feather will make even the most doleful laugh if properly applied.

We are living in the most humorless period of history with all kinds of excuses and reasons for morbidity. It seems modern technology has almost wiped out humor as a part of human behavior. There are brighter colors than before, more games to play, more skills to learn, yet all with such goddamned intensity and seriousness. The sound of the electronic amusement arcade has replaced the laughter and we have become our own robots. I prefer to cloister myself among the small elite of those who would rather laugh than cry, grunt, strain, ponder, huff, puff, or even sigh with ecstatic agony. The size of "humor" sections in today's bookstores is about the same size as that of "occult." A sad commentary on one, if not the other. ***

One of the main reasons why I'm not a science-fiction enthusiast is because, like religion, it is usually quite humorless, and like religion, it usually relies on the premise that there is a greater intelligence "out there"--one which cares enough about puny earthlings' machinations to aid or destroy. Most S-F also is an extension of the old values of absolute good and evil. Certainly the success of the most popular examples, from Flash Gordon to the Star Wars cycle, have depended on that theme. And devotees, just like those of secular religions, staunchly maintain that the listener is mistaken about *their* belief system and will proceed to expain why in a few thousand words. As far as I'm concerned, most popular science-fiction reads like the Holy Bible, updated to space-age jargon. I do have a few favorites among the films of the genre, though: *Invasion of the Star Creatures*, *Fire Maidens from Outer Space*, *The Creeping Terror*, *Queen of Outer Space*, *The Monster of Piedras Blancas*, *Plan Nine from Outer Space*, among others. ***Freud must be aching in his grave from the repeated blows he has received at the hands of accredited "experts" who continue to account for demons in a manner straight out of the Middle Ages. It seems that the dawn of enlightenment which sparked the psychiatric movement into rational evaluation of anxiety neuroses has been trampled into the dust. If *The Exorcist* (not the movie, but the supposed case) had appeared in the thirties or forties or fifties, it would have been quietly and summarily dismissed as just another garden variety case of psychosexual hysteria--as would have all succeeding "possession" bullshit accounts, right up to the most recent pop case of *Michelle Remembers*. The latter is "accredited" by an actual psychiatrist, who not only defiles Freud's viable legacy, but reduces the entire profession to the level of third rate bunco and jive artists. ***It's surprising how certain things change so little, while others deviate from their original forms. Consider the automobile and airplane's difference in appearance over the past half century, compared to motorcycles and power boats, where design changes are relatively slight. A motorcycle of 1940 doesn't look too much different from one of today. An automobile does. A radical development in technology forces change in a cosmetic sense, where form must follow function. That's why trousers remain basically the same, while calculators change. MESSAGES AND ERUDITION: EZZ890, To command the attention you describe, you must always stand out in contrast to the others. WZZ 698, Approximation is more important than duplication--exaggeration can provide motion where none exists. The best book I've found is

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