

The KNAVE

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An O U T S I D E R Publication

SEVERAL QUERIES have come in from our readers as to the derivation and connotations of the word "Knavve". Frantic letters pleading for the correct pronunciation of the word have also been received. Well, Knavve is pronounced "non-vee"---the "K" is silent. It all began some time ago when Sam Russell got our Mr. Yerko to stencil the title of Russell's FAPA magazine, Have at Thee, Knaves!. Unconsciously, Yerko added one "n" too many, and it came out "Knavves" instead of "Knaves". This occurrence provoked much merriment, and the word gradually came into use in local fan conversation, although it did not acquire any given meaning. When the four original LASFS self-exiles sought an atmosphere fresher than that which had prevailed in their previous surroundings they decided to call themselves "The Knavves". Our favorite brief definition of "Knavve" is "a genial knave".

Ed Chamberlain and Buns Benson are, unfortunately, no longer with us. Ed has secured himself a better position at North American Aircraft and is kept pretty busy, in addition to which he expects to be drafted shortly. Benson is pretty well engrossed in matters of an extremely personal nature.

We have received with great interest a number of letters commenting on our preceding issues from such distinguished gentlemen of the fan field as Donald A. Wollheim, Harry B. Warner, Jack Spoor, A. Langley Soares, D. B. Thompson, and so on. It has amused us to note, in more than a few missives, tacit agreement to some of our strong opinions and a general liking for our pseudo-serious attitudes. Contrariwise, we observe with equal interest the comments we have aroused among the newer fans, who are more idealistic in regard to fandom and do not particularly care for our iconoclasm.

Although we do not insist on a letter per issue from each reader as recompense for our labors, we do enjoy hearing from you as often as possible. We feel it advisable to mention, however, that all letters will be subject to excoriation for publication, as suits our fancy. In this respect we have had to exercise strong will-power in order to refrain from printing some choice morsels from letters received recently.

FRANK ROBINSON, co-publisher with Ecco Connor of the popular Fanewscard, arrived in Los Angeles on Saturday, April 8, and a special outsider gathering was held in honor of the occasion at Bronson's Santa Monica residence. An outside fan might well have twitched pop-eyed with amazement as the various fans arrived and entered, for the arrivals included two Knavves-Outsiders, six Outsiders, two out-of-town fans, and six members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, including Forrest Ackerman and Morajo. Forry and Myrtle, sad to say, appeared rather ill-at-ease and had little to say. In the light of recent events one would expect our hypothetical observer to dive for shelter beneath the nearest piece of furniture, but, as it went, he would have been perfectly safe in mixing himself a drink and joining the milling throng.

GREATER GLORIES, or, CALLING MISS MOORE!

According to publicity appearing in the national fan press of late, the LASFS, rid of its destructive elements, is going on to "greater glories". We feel that so modest an understatement should be amplified, and so, in keeping with the well-known Knaves policy of giving credit where credit is due.... Each Thursday night the hallowed old shrine is the scene of a near-riot, caused by the hordes of new members clamoring for admittance. One of the most prominent of the newer members is a soft-spoken, charming young lady, Jeannette Crozetti, who bids fair to become one of Shangri-LA's most mature fans. Miss Crozetti is five years old.

MYSTERY OF THE MONTH -- In Shangri-L'Affaires Number 13, the closing paragraph of an article by Walter J. Daugherty reads: "The activity, I should say 'THE ACTIVITY' of the group has reached a new high lately. Publications literally keep the mimeograph humming, and hardly an evening passes by but what the club is a veritable bee hive of activity of one activity or another." Somehow, we shall refrain from commenting on the highly intricate and amazing sentence structure of Mr Daugherty, confining ourselves instead to praise of the LASFS for its true slans who apparently have no need of light for this "beehive of activity of one activity or another". The clubroom has been dark nearly every night except Thursdays (regular meetings) and Saturdays since the Outsiders pulled out.

LEND AN EAR, PLEASE -- Fandom at large is apparently very confused over the situation existing in Los Angeles, as evidenced by various bewildered and inaccurate comments in the fan journals, and strange communications received by The Knaves. In order to clear up the mess to everyone's satisfaction, we present the following analysis:

Ackerman, the doughty Corporal, is mad at 1) The Outsiders, 2) The Knaves, 3) Christianity, 4) Vice, and 5) A. Hitler. Unable to tolerate this intolerance, a goodly number of the LASFS' active fans packed up in a huff and departed to greener pastures, leaving the haloed Ackerman to reflect on his major triumph in kicking the malcontents once and for all from the clubroom. However, Laney hates Bronson, while the latter secretly plans to elevate the Knaves to control in the Outsiders. The destructive Yerke faction continues to create dissension in all of LA, and under T. Bruce's guidance, Mel Brown, Sam Russell, and Mike Fern are attempting to assume power in the Knaves, the Outsiders, and the FAPA, although TBY remains unaware of his cohorts' intention to oust him from the Outsiders, the Knaves, and to prevent his entrance into FAPA. Meanwhile, everyone is buying--or attempting to buy---everyone else's votes in the forthcoming Widner Poll, which has resulted in the growth of many neophytes' collections...and, it is said, the virtual disintegration of 4e's famed garage-warehouse.

HOW'S THAT AGAIN? DEPT.

(From a letter by Charles McNutt in Paradox No. Six)

"Like Burroughs, most of the sentences and paragraphs must be reread to derive the full meaning of them." (Courtesy of Eagle-Eye Warner.)

CAVEAT EDITOR!

FOR ALMOST fifteen years scientifiction fan magazines have been coming out regularly in increasingly larger numbers. As a general rule the editor-publishers have been, with the passing of time, less and less familiar with the concept of good journalism, publishing ethics and mores, and what is even more important, a complete realisation of what, according to law, may and may not be published, written, inferred, drawn, or exposed.

No matter what we may think about the matter (the reader might say "Great Scott! You can't apply the laws that affect Esquire to diablerie"), the fact stands that every fan editor, by proclaiming his mimeographed sheets to be a magazine, and by making use of the third-class mail privileges, immediately becomes subject to the libel and decency laws of 48 states and the Federal government. In view of this fact, never, I imagine, has any one field of publication so frequently and freely violated the legal structure set up to regulate the press of this country. It makes no difference whether or not the various publishers intended to violate jurisprudence, nor is it, above all, my desire to blame them for it. Many of these laws are stupid in the extreme, but the fact that they form a potential stumbling block makes them worthy of note.

The topic of nudos in fan magazines has long been one of jovial and bitter debate. Aside from all this, an alarming number of fantasy nudos, past and present, would be considered pure obscenity. For example, in any but medical books and certain types of art catalogues, the pubic hair of either sex may not be shown. This particular regulation varies in strictness in various states and within various courts of the Federal circuit. Ackerman's Voice of the Imagi-Nation has in the past contained enough of this to send the fellow out of the fan publishing field for a long time. Other magazines are not exempt. The cover of the second diablerie could be subject to censure if so desired. On the subject of nudos there is also the delicate matter of "surroundings", which the Post Office has dealt with in many, many pages. And while it may be permissible to show a woman with snakes for nipples on an oil canvas in an art salon, the Voll nude of a few issues ago would be regarded as simple obscenity. Another nude in the same magazine, showing Bob Tucker's mouth in close juxtaposition to a nipple is grounds for libel suit if the genial Boob were to become incensed. Nudos may not be shown in "unartistic surroundings nor in poses which may be considered or construed as placing undue emphasis on the pubic regions, the rectum, or the breasts in relation to the interest attached to the figure as a whole." Fan editors who run nudos should look into this matter, lest a post-office inspector with flatulence happen across one some day which might not meet requirements.

The matter of printed libel is, compared to drawn material, infinitely more complex. Though the court records are full of libel suits that have at times been ridiculous, the fact remains that almost every fan magazine has at one time or another contained items which could be called "malicious, detrimental to the character of the person mentioned, holding the subject in a ridiculous public light, or violating the subject's right of privacy."

The younger editors, having absolutely no ideas about magazine publishing and its attendant responsibilities, should be watched very care-

fully when they send a magazine through the mails. I learned these things the hard way. At one time I was very near a law-suit with one of scientific fiction's most popular authors over what I thought was harmless satire. If the victim of this sort of thing considers mention of himself in a fan magazine harmful to his professional standing, the editor has to jork the article or else. Recently a local author caused an article in an LASFS publication to be deleted because he thought it harmful to his reputation. On another occasion, with Walter J. Daugherty, I published an item which he wanted withheld, because that time I was within the rights of an editor.

The subject of name-calling is probably the most frequently overstepped item in scientifiction fan circles. As an illustration, let me say that in the metropolitan press it is never said that "so-and-so died of cancer." You must be content with stating that "so-and-so died from an incurable disease." The constant deluge of stuff in fan mags to the effect that Joe Blow is a drunkard, Joe Blow is unreliable, etc., would be subject in a metropolitan newspaper to libel suit, unless you could prove by legal definition that the party in question is constantly so drunk that he is unable to dispatch his affairs with officieny. It would be wise for fans to take more careful stock of the mores of the press in this respect.

One of the most common whines in court is the old refrain: "But I didnt mean the remarks on Mr. Fisch to be taken seriously; it was all in good fun!" However, if Mr. Fisch, and three disinterested persons selected at random, feel that an item sounds more malicious than funny, the editor starts forking over with the do re mi or else goes out of business. Satire must be carefully watched, and pseudo-serious material meant to be taken glibly must be checked and double-checked, preferably by someone not familiar with the party or parties in question.

Since the old Damn Thing days I have had two years of college journalism, including a course on printed libel and/or obscenity. Los Angeles fans are always telling me I see libel in everything they write. Unfortunately, I was trained for just that purpose. No one who has not worked on a newspaper can have the faintest idea of the terrific problem of libel and law-suit, of what can and cannot be drawn, inferred, or printed. The fan field has been exceptionally lucky in that the participants have maintained a give-and-take attitude---but this little unwritten code of our little journalistic world stands two dangerous chances of being suddenly brought face to face with Uncle Sam or one of the 48 states. The first is the fact that a postal inspector (and they are continually opening at random items labeled PRINTED MATTER) may someday chance on VoM or some other seemingly innocuous publication. The other danger is that an irate parent may resent the liberal display of teats, vulvae, clitori, etc., that garnish the so-called art sections of many fan magazines, and may rip the whole field open for investigation.

By professional standards we editors have all escaped with murder in the past, but this does not mean that our luck can't run out and result in the suspension of virtually the entire field. Always remember, though we call ourselves amateur publishers, we are regulated by the same laws that apply to Esquire, the Post, Cosmopolitan, and the New York Times.

---T. Bruce yerke

10¢ EACH — 3 FOR A QUARTER

THE FAN DEALER RACKET has always been one of my personal pet peeves. The recent article in NOVA by Julius Unger, with its pernicious propaganda obviously aimed at adolescent fans whose spending money exceeds their common sense, practically demands an answer of one kind or another. Unger's plausible use of figures makes one quite forget the sad, but indubitable, fact that neither pro- nor fanzines can be collected by the private individual with any hope of realising even a quarter part of his investment. While of course the true collector is gathering his precious jewels with no thought of reimbursement, other than in personal pleasure, the hard-headed individual will not sink his hard earned cash in unsaleable junk, unless the price shows some faint correlation to the intrinsic value.

WHEN A PRICE OF \$5 PER COPY is asked by a prominent Los Angeles fan dealer for a ten year old fanzine with a cover price of 10c, it is ~~high time~~ to stop and take a rational view of matters. Is there ANY issue of ANY fanzine which can possibly be worth more than 1000% of its original price, considering the matter purely on a basis of content and resaleability? Few fanzines are worth the cover price when published; how can single copies ever be worth \$5.00? A bit of philosophic thought on the dangers of monopoly could well be inserted here.

MANY OLD BOOKS AND MAGAZINES command actual cash premiums on the used book market. In the fantasy field, such items as first edition Poe; autographed items by such writers as Machen, Wells, Dunsany, Blackwood, de la Mare; certain editions of Cabell; and many others have a definite, well-established market value, and may be collected both for pleasure and for investment. But what book dealer is going to give one even so much as a third of the \$5.00 asked for certain issues of THE SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST? The fan with temerity to take such a scrap of wastepaper into a book shop would be laughed out of the place.

WHILE PLEASURE AND NOT PROFIT is the motive of the true collector, it seems highly stupid to tie up vast sums of money--real, expendable coin of the realm---for material which can by no stretch of the imagination be resold for more than a mere pittance. While it may be said that such items can be sold to fans the average collector in need of funds would scarcely be wise to count on such a flighty and undependable market. His only chance would be to sell them back to Ackerman or Unger, a proceeding not likely to be fraught with any profit. Thus, it seems to me that it is very stupid to pay fabulous sums for out-of-date fanzines, unless one has money to burn. In the latter case, I suggest that the primrose path might possibly furnish a better return on one's investment. (more on page six)

UNTIL FANDOM CAN NUMBER its members in the thousands instead of in the dozens, such articles as What Price Fanzines by Julius Unger can only serve to mislead young fans and further inflate already outrageous prices. True, Unger doubts "very much that any such prices will prevail", but the general tone of the article is certainly not such as to contribute to a safe and sane attitude toward scientifiotion fandom.

---Francis T. Laney

REGARDING FAN CONVENTIONS -- In the last issue of The Knaves we were pleased to present our Postwar plan for the world. In connection with this, we have done considerable work on our idea for the Postwar Convention. Realising that many fans will be slightly on the bankrupt side apres la guerre, our happy little group offers for the field's consideration the "Perpetual Travelling Convention". In essence, you fans will sit at home and the convention will come to your home town; to your house, for that matter. In exchange for this entertainment, the ten or fifteen members of the Perpetual Convention will naturally subsist on the countryside, i.e., your side!

The ideal length for a convention should be about, say, a week. Naturally the convention members will be a bit tired upon arrival. It will be necessary for the group to lounge about for at least two days, availing themselves of your lawn, shower, and hammock. The convention proper will begin on a Wednesday, and should last two days unless the liquor supply runs out early. Scientifiotion will often be discussed, but in the main the members of the troupe will be their usually funny selves while the victims can sit along the wall and watch Bronson, Laney, Brown, Fern, Yerke, et autres in action. After convalescing over the week-end the Perpetual Convention will depart for some other city, bid farewell by the thoroughly amused and thrilled onlookers, who may then start building their houses again.

We suspect that the Convention will have a generally slow but consistent turnover in personnel, so that other fans may become members of the select body. Old Conventioneers will drop out due to kidney trouble, cirrhosis of the liver, intestinal strangulation and related elements, and provisions should be made for stand-ins, as one or more members of the cast will usually be laid up from botulism, trichinosis, ptomaine poisoning, or just too much 3.2.

Fandom should welcome the Perpetual Travelling Convention as a solution to the gripes that the convention is always on the wrong side of the continent. It will save the expensive obligation of protracted trips once a year, and of course, it will lessen the national employment problem by fifteen or so.

So don't be alarmed if, some day in 1949, you receive a card way up there in Hagerstown, Maryland, gaily announcing: "Dear Harry: The Convention will arrive next Monday. Hope you have a swell time!"

WHO WANTS TO BE A SLAN? -- A lot of fans consider themselves, as a group in toto, to be on a slightly higher level than ordinary mortals. I haven't found this to be the case. Out of the--perhaps--one hundred fans whom I have met more than twice, six were homosexually inclined, one a lesbian, two were prostitutes, one was arrested for bigamy, one skipped with his employer's car and considerable swag, two were rejected from the army for manic-depressive psychoses, two were dipsomaniacs, one a case of arrested development, one a paranoic, one case of simple dementia, one rejected from the army as a moron, three possessed abnormal sexual appetites (and two had to have medical care), one was a plagiarist. In addition to that, an abnormal percentage (as based on percentage of army rejections for a given number) of fans are simply sub-par physically.

Well, let's make way for this new super race. And I might save Jack Speer the trouble of writing me to ask for specific names. If you doubt the above, simply don't believe it. ---TBY

WE NOTICE MR. DEGLER is back with us in the mails defending the much maligned Ack-Ack. Oh well, water seeks its own level.



"Don't be afraid, Darling--they can't get in."

VENI! VIDI! VOMITI!

IT HAS BEEN THE PLEASURE of various local Outsiders and Knaves to entertain one Frank Robinson, prominent Chicago newscard publisher, in the local atmosphere for the past three weeks. During this contact both sides let down their hair and East met West....Robinson describing in intimate detail the debauches at Stan Shack, Tucker's secret sex life, and answering queries about Ashley, Liebscher, Wiedenbeck, etc. On receipt of these thirteen pieces of gold, we reciprocated, loading Robinson down with seven years of Los Angeles filth. Both sides benefited immeasurably from this interchange of folklore, Robinson departing East on May second with a smug smile on his face, and local denizens crawling back into their holes, also with smug smiles on their faces.

The upshot of it all is that we are thoroughly convinced that the Midwesterners are a bunch of filthy-minded, drunken revellers, just like we are.

During Robinson's first week, he stayed at Yerke's, where the latter wine and dined the visitor, and deplored the lack of character possessed by Laney, Bronson, Benson, Brown, Fern, the LASFS, and home sapiens in general. Robinson was treated to Yerke falling into the house at 4:25 each morning, swearing at North American Aviation Inc. During the days, Yerke crammed culture down Frank's throat, culture being the art of lounging about all afternoon in a lurid red lounging robe, drinking wine, listening to symphonies, and remarking exotically: "Was ist mehr schoene als das Kulturleben?"

On Robinson's second Saturday, a banquet was held at the Carolina Pines, where photos were taken, and where local non-LASFS fans showed up in profusion. The object of this was to impress the visitor with the buzzing activity of the Outsiders and Others as compared to the LASFS. The following afternoon a visit was paid to Bronholly Canyon, where Robinson reached new heights in the fan world by climbing over two hundred feet up the side of the canyon. (See photo in Knave #2.) That evening a wedding supper was given to Benson and his bride as of the previous night, the former Marine Faith Sennecal. After this was digested, the celebrants were wine and dined further at the house of Charles Burbee. Mrs. Burbee specializes in Chinese food, and is an excellent cook.

The next day Robinson moved from the Gordonstrasse to the Bixelstrasse, a great, messy, two-story outhouse wherein reside a strange collection of Outsiders and Undecided LASFSers, such as our own Mel Brown, plus Jimmy Kepner, Glenn Daniels, and one or two more-or-less permanent guests. Here Robinson got the lowdown on Yerke, and was enabled to spend some time in the ruins of the LASFS where Walt Daugherty, a fan of some local prominence and an officer in an organisation known as the NFFF, dug up all the filth on various Outsiders. During the week Robinson made almost daily pilgrimages from the Bixelstrasse to the Gordonstrasse, where, to a recumbent Yerke, he presented the day's load of gossip and counter-gossip. From this rubble Yerke, between exclamations of "Was ist mehr

wunderbar als das Kulturleben?" analysed and probed the stories, constructing for his guest a brilliant synthesis, pointing out that all persons except perhaps a few of the four Knaves were perverts, mental cases, and incompetent dolts.

On several occasions Robinson was able to tear himself away from this lewd atmosphere of intrigue and counter-intrigue. He visited several Los Angeles bookshops, which he reports as far inferior to Chicago dealers. Twice he went to Bronson's Santa Monica residence, where slander was kept at a minimum. Music and Beer (not to mention Goulash) were served in profusion.

As for Robinson, we like him, except for a few localities who think he is a snot. He managed, during his itinerary, to ingratiate himself. To do this, it is only necessary to appreciate the Fassebeinder sense of humor, agree that the LASFS is no good, and tell a few dirty stories. Robinson scored on all of these points. In addition, it was Robinson who amused us with his projected fan newspaper wherein prominent fans would be charged various rates to have their stuff published. Tucker, for instance, would be socked 10¢ per inch, but Hoy Ping Pong!: not less than 15¢.

If Robinson did not, at the time of his arrival, possess an appreciation of our peculiar decadent antics and humor, he rapidly became weaned to it. In fact, the visitor should go back to the good, clean air of the middle west a perfect louse, highly prejudiced, thoroughly loaded up with the hush-hush life of a number of well known fans, and ready at the drop of the hat to become, like us, a slinking, suspicious fan, a skilled Machiavellian used to living in an atmosphere of diabolic plot and counter plot.

Of the many persons who have come over the desert to Shangri-La, not one chose a more abominable time. It is as if Christ Himself were to have appeared in the middle of the Inquisition....a presumed friend of all parties, subjected by all sides to whisper-whisper stories about those filthy catholics, or those heretic Protestants. Walter Winchell would have been in a seventh heaven, for while no official efforts were made by the LASFS to influence the boy, Cardinal Richelieu cornered him in the clubroom with the usual official version.

Robinson departed with the wishes of your correspondent that he blast the whole local picture wide open, sparing no one. Surely no single person, no single fan visitor, has ever been treated to a more hilariously revolting spectacle than the last three weeks in Los Angeles.

Still, we like Robinson, and we have a feeling that Robinson sorta likes us. Perhaps it was much the same as the liking a Chinaman would have had, standing in the ruins of just-collapsed Rome, looking at a once fabulous civilisation sitting in the gutter with a barrel of wine and some of Nero's bawdy paintings. There is something wonderful about a full-blown colossus in his last stages of decrepitude. This was what Robinson saw of Los Angeles fandom.

---C. J. Fassebeinder

THE KNAVVE is produced irregularly by T. Bruce Yerke and Philip R. Bronson, aided and abetted by such charming individuals as Francis T. Laney, Charles J. (Mike) Fern Jr., and Frank Robinson. Produced at "Fran-Shack". Mailing Address: 1710 Arizona Avenue, Santa Monica California.

