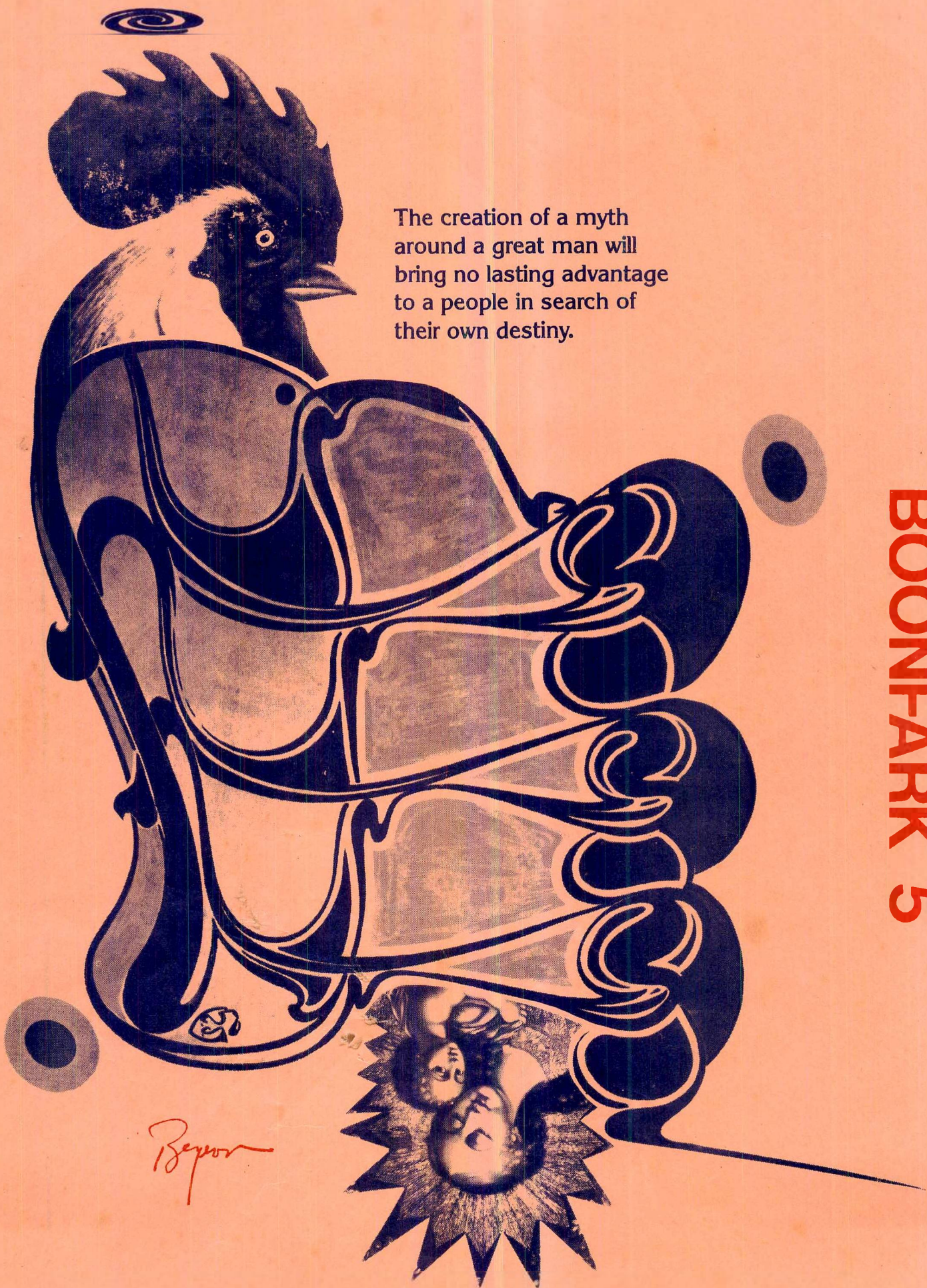


# BOONFARK 5

The creation of a myth  
around a great man will  
bring no lasting advantage  
to a people in search of  
their own destiny.









# BoonFark

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NUMBER FIVE

August 1981

the fanzine with  
thighs below the knees

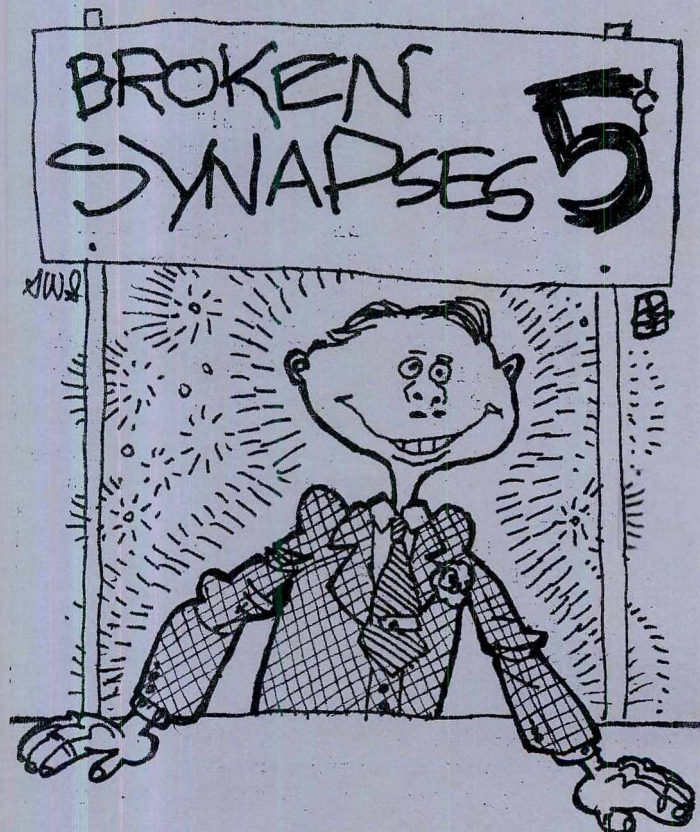
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Dedicated to Bruce Townley for friendship above and beyond the call of fandom.

GRANT CANFIELD FOR TAFF!





# ZEN VAUDEVILLE

July 1981 was an anniversary for me, it marked ten years of genzine publishing. And what better place to talk about the role fanzines have played in my life than in the editorial of this fanzine. It really seems to be all the rage these days; Ian Maule in NABU and Malcolm Edwards in TAPPEN have each written about it recently. So, being the trendy type (although I do not drink Perrier water), I thought it only right that I add my two cents worth to the memories.

The first inkling I ever had that there was something like 'fandom' was in 1965 when a classmate showed me some comics fanzines like Roy Thomas' ALTER-EGO. I thought they were really neat (as we said in '65) and wanted to know more about them. He would let me look at his copies in study-hall, but wouldn't let me borrow them and take them home. As a result, these little magazines had a certain mystical quality -- the idea that somebody was putting out his own magazine was also neat -- and I decided that I would try to do one too.

My classmate, Eric Roberts, was also a cartoonist and one day he showed up at school with a little magazine of his own, and I was floored. It was really a mimeed comic book with some made-up letters, and within two or three months I produced my first publication, CAPTAIN FREEDOM. Like Eric's, it was a comic book with made-up letters (I learn well from example), except mine was done on the school's Ditto machine. It was very derivative of Eric's 'zine, right down to my copying some of his artwork -- which later turned out to be swiped from pro comics -- and was, much to my confusion, a major failure amongst my peers. I couldn't understand it, here I had done all this work, gotten sick from the Ditto fumes, and my classmates couldn't have cared less. I thought that because I was excited by self-publishing, my friends would be too. After all, I made my own goddamn comic book, didn't I? Why weren't they just jumping all over me, begging for copies?

I reckoned it was because nobody knew about it. So to alleviate this problem I had a little announcement put on the school PA system at the end of the day for a week; I knew that this would solve my problems and I'd most certainly have kids jumping up and down and begging for copies.

Wrong again. The end result was that I was humiliated by The Big Boys in the halls and cafeteria. "Hey, Captain Freedom," they would shout from across the lunch-room, "fly over here and bite my ass." Needless to say, I never published another home-made comic book again.

Then in 1968 my family moved to another town 40 miles away, and I found myself in a new school. I was now dealing with a new group of kids that had been together since kindergarten. That town taught me the meaning of the word 'clique,' and it seemed the only way to survive was to get into one of these cliques.

I tried, really I did. The school was 'jock' crazy -- football players were king of the hill (nevermind the fact that their I.Q. was slightly smaller than their shoe-size) -- so I tried to join different sporting teams. The fact that I hated all sports didn't help me much. I just couldn't get serious about it. The others would sit in silence in the bus while going to a game, psyching themselves up. I couldn't be bothered. After all, this sports bullshit was just an attempt to blend in; I couldn't be expected to be gungHo about it, too. So I ended up losing every wrestling match I had that year and deciding to quit the baseball team three-quarters of the way through the season because I was never let off the bench. So I went back to my sf books and comic books -- my attitude was "Fuck those guys!"

About this time I met another 'outsider' one day in French class. His name was Kurt Shoe-maker. He read and collected a lot of science fiction and he introduced me to the magazines. GALAXY was my favorite, it was the easiest for me to get into because they published illustrations by comic artists I liked -- like Wally Wood -- and featured a column that really grabbed my attention: "Our Man In Fandom" by Lin Carter. That column seemed to me to be nearly as mystical as those comics fanzines I'd managed to see three years earlier. It told me about conventions where people went and partied for days. It told me more about fanzines. It told me about sf 'clubs' like the Fanoclasts and it gave me the impression that I (even though I was fat and shy) could become a part of this thing called Fandom. (Years later I learned that Carter's column was full of errors and, as often as not, made up.)

Kurt and I decided that we would send away for some fanzines and then publish one of our own. Kurt was (and still is, I suppose) an aspiring writer, while I was going to be a cartoonist. What more could we possibly need in order to publish a fanzine?

The first one I received was an issue of ERB-DOM -- that tower of fannish wit -- and we proceeded to make plans for our fanzine. We got a room in a third sf-reading friend's house for an office, set up a typer and a desk, a stereo and some shelves and proceeded to accomplish very little. The fanzine was going to be done on the school ditto and we were going to call it VEGA. (Who knew from Joel Nydahl in Cazenovia, N.Y.?) Nothing much got done except a couple of headings and a cover. Our intent was good, but the fun of experimentation with our new muse -- Marijuana -- took up most of our time, and VEGA was never published.

By 1970 Kurt and I were burrowing our way through stacks of books, magazines and pulps, and preparing to attend our first convention, The 1970 Pghlunge. We had somehow conned our parents into believing we were mature enough to drive to Pittsburgh alone in my '66 Chevy, and, you might say my life has never been the same since. For the first time in our sixteen years, Kurt and I



felt like 'regular fellas' instead of 'creepy nurds.' Our excitement at making it to our first con, having our first hotel room and such, was almost too much to bear. We actually danced around the hotel room with joy.

That con hooked me on fandom harder than anything else I'd ever experienced. Harlan was the GoH (and a damn good one, too), there was a huckster room with pulps and stuff and lots of people like Mike Glicksohn and Linda Bushyager selling their fanzines. There were many open parties with drinks, conversation, and little or no condemnation of us because we were 'just kids.'

After that I started to do drawings for other people's fanzines and vowed to publish one of my own, come Hell or high water.

At the 1971 Pghlango we (Kurt and I, along with others like: Jeff Schalles and Brad Balfour) collated and handed out the first issue of my first fanzine, LIZARD INN. From then on, I continued publishing fanzines as the mood struck me. People like Kurt faded from my acquaintance, but fanzines had a firm grip on me.

I published the second issue of L/I in November '71 and the third in June of '72. The fact that I was then in college didn't slow me down a bit, if anything it gave me more time for fanac. I made friends with Jerry Lapidus and Lisa Tuttle and became involved in their TOMMORROW AND...; joined my first apa, SLAN-APA, and started attending several cons a year. Soon I started getting fannish fanzines like FOCAL POINT and POTLATCH, contributed art to them, and eventually got sucked into the fannish social circle and one of those awesome private apas. I published two issues of a personalzine, WIZARD, and one issue of another with Jerry Lapidus called WOODEN SHIPS. I left college, went to work as a construction laborer, took lots of dope, and started having mental neurosis in connection with my job, family, and friends.

Fandom had always been my favorite pastime -- I felt comfortable with it, whereas I didn't with the rest of my life -- and I decided to use fandom to get out of my upstate New York rut.

Disclave weekend 1974: I moved to Virginia and Fabulous Falls Church Fandom, took lots more dope, got my head straight, lost my virginity and became quasi-adult for the first time in my life. The tremendous help and support provided by people like Ted White, John D. Berry and rich brown were probably responsible for keeping me from being just another young suicide. For that I will always be grateful to them and fandom.

Also in 1974, I began publishing genzines again --- sorta. The first issue of this fanzine was published in October 1974, and though I intended to produce issues with regularity, I didn't get the second issue out until February 1977. As part of my rite of passage into adulthood I experienced a lot of things like extreme poverty, which you all know is a major stumbling block for a fanzine publisher. I did manage to do one issue of a snappy little fannish zine with John Berry called BLUE MOON in 1975, but we never got going on any further issues. (Though we did get a poetsarc from Burbee.) Still I figured it counted for something. I was keeping my hand in.

The third BNF appeared in November '79 and featured the second installment of Ted's Minac column, plus the first appearances of Totem Pole and The Incomplete Towner Hall. By this time I knew what I wanted in my fanzine and how to get about getting it. I was determined to publish often and well.

I figured the 'well' would be easy if I applied myself and leaned on my friends for material, but I knew the 'often' would be harder to accomplish. But then in October 1980, after the two of us had left HEAVY METAL, Ted and I started PONG -- a zippy little fannish zine that has been coming out bi-weekly ever since.

BOONFZRK 4 was published with great pains and pleasures at the beginning of January of this year -- a mere fourteen months after #3. It will be hard for some fans to believe that it has only been eight months since lastish appeared. I know one Canadian fan who told me that he had plenty of time to write his loc on #3, as I only published every two years or so. He has yet to write it and now he's two issues behind. He might speculate that I'm trying to publish faster than he can possibly respond, but he'd be wrong. I publish as often as I can manage it. But I think you'll be seeing new issues at least twice a year from now on. No, honest! Would I lie to you...?

Publishing all these fanzines has been a great learning experience. As I've grown, so have my fanzines, friendships, and ambitions. I've got a lot to be thankful to fandom for, so I am trying now to give back what I've gotten in the way of entertainment and information. I can only hope that in the next 10 years I'll have evened the score.

After all, I want to make sure I have good fannish karma, don't I? I mean, bad karma is one thing, but bad fannish karma can break your back. Look at Deglar, he'll never be forgotten by fandom. What a fate!

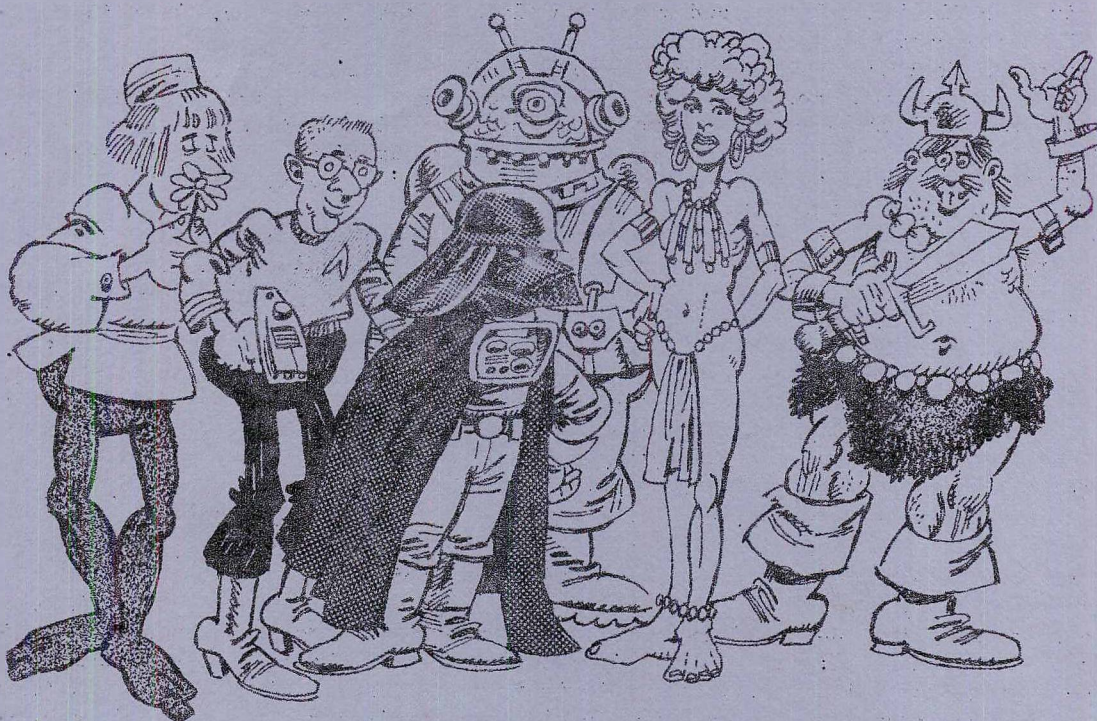
Personally, I prefer to do a good job, be nice, and politely fade away when the time comes.... Let them remember this fanzine, but not me. After all, you never know if I might decide to run for president some day. "A fan?" The congress would say. "We ain't having no goddamn fan for our president..."

I think I would rather have them say: "Dan Steffan? Didn't he publish a fanzine back in the Twentieth Century?"

"Hmmm," the other would say, "I don't know, but with a name like that he's probably a hoax."

Now that's good fannish karma. Hoping you are the same... --djs





# AN INTRODUCTION :: By Ted White

I first "met" Larry Stark -- who lived then in New Brunswick, New Jersey -- through Bhub Stewart -- who lived in Texas. I was living in Virginia. Bhub and I were regular correspondents and Bhub wanted to expand our correspondence into a three-way round-robin type of thing by including this fellow he'd met through EC fandom.

Larry was then in the habit of writing a letter of critique on each of EC's comics as it was issued, and his critiques were literate and surprisingly insightful -- sufficiently so that EC had given him "lifetime" subscriptions to all their titles in gratitude. But Larry was not solely a comics fan; he read a great deal of science fiction (and was to some extent involved in sf fandom) as well as having a broad grasp of literature in general. Additionally, he was a jazz fan (primarily interested in the earlier forms of jazz), a theater-goer (both plays and movies), and a habitue of art galleries and museums.

I was sixteen or thereabouts; Larry was in his early twenties. I was in high school; Larry went to Rutgers University.

Bhub dropped out of our correspondence after only a few months, gaffiating from almost all fannish contacts as he prepared for his first year in college, but Larry and I picked up the slack. In early 1955 he came down to the DC-area to visit me, the first of a series of visits which culminated in his spending the summers of 1955 and 1956 living with me and my parents.

I had visualized Larry as a tall, thin, dark-haired collegiate type, possibly a pipe smoker. When I met him for the first time face-to-face, I discovered he was rather short, thin, brown-haired, definitely not a pipe-smoker, and given to almost nervous laughter. He was almost puckish, in fact.

Although Larry did not seem to be as solidly connected to fandom as I was, every so often he'd surprise me. He corresponded with Bob Silverberg, for instance, and he had a story in the original PSYCHOTIC (then the leading fanzine and one I'd never succeeded in breaking into).

His story in PSY was typical of the "fan fiction" he then wrote: it was a story which drew upon fandom itself for its context and characters, and most, if not all, of its characters had real fan's names. (My memory is long-gone, but I seem to recall that the story in PSY had Silverberg as its protagonist, as a matter of fact, and might have had something to do with Bob's recently having "turned pro".)

Larry wrote many such stories, a number of which I published in STELLAR, which he co-edited. I was fascinated with the possibilities for using fandom and situations organic to fandom for fiction -- indeed, I devoted STELLAR to such stories -- but it bothered me sometimes that Larry used "real people" in fictitious roles in his stories. "But, Larry,"





# CON REPORT

FAANFICTION  
BY LARRY STARK

I'd protest, "why call this character 'John Hitchcock' when we both know that the real John Hitchcock wouldn't behave that way?" I don't recall his response, except that he had one and it made good sense at the time.

It always seemed to me that Larry was the most likely of my close fan friends of the fifties to "go pro." He had a good prose style, he understood the construction of fiction, and it required of him only that he sit down and write a story suitable for the prozines. But, strangely, he never really did. He sold one or two stories to professional magazines, but never to a science fiction magazine, and I wondered if, at the time, making one or two sales when he did it was all he wanted or needed to prove to himself his capabilities, and having thus proven the point for himself he was content to drop it.

I found it difficult to understand, however, for Larry struck me then as a far more ambitious person than I was myself -- although in retrospect it occurs to me that he was more ambitious for me than for himself.

In any case, it was Larry who not only taught me a great deal of what I needed to "go pro" myself, but who supplied many of the necessary nudges to me as well.

We drifted more or less out of each others' lives in the early sixties, and although we retained friends-in-common had no further contact until 1979 when I began as editor of HEAVY METAL. I was astonished to receive in the mail one day from Larry an index to the first thirty issues of HM -- copies were sent to all the editorial staff at HM -- thereupon we renewed acquaintances. It pleased my personal conceit to give Larry a sub to HM in return for critiques on each issue (letters which were read with pleasure by the entire staff), and we began a personal correspondence once again.

At the 1980 Worldcon in Boston we were face to face once again, and I was amazed at how little Larry had changed in his essentials in the twenty years or so since we'd last seen each other. He was no longer thin, having become a little stout in his middle age, but the impishness was still there.

The story which follows is a direct outgrowth of that Worldcon, and it is, like all his fanfiction, a work of complete fiction despite the use of an occasional real name. I find it impressive, not only for the story it tells but for its insights into the ways in which Worldcons -- and fandom -- have changed since the fifties. I find it also impressive for its very clear signal that Larry has not turned his back on either fandom or fiction, and still has much of value to contribute to each.

--ted white



When the editor said, "Well, since you'll be going anyway, why don't you write it up for Monday's paper?" I had a sudden twinge of deja-had.

Going to the World Science Fiction Convention over Labor Day weekend was supposed to be a mini-vacation I had cojoned, threatened, and planned for, months in advance, even though I wondered whether I truly wanted to go or not. I hadn't been interested in "that crazy Buck Rogers stuff" for years, and hadn't seen or contacted a science fiction fan or read a fanzine since the last time the convention was held in Boston -- nearly ten years. I felt the field and the people were all strangers. I wondered if I could get re-acquainted. I wondered if I wanted to.

Still, the convention was dropped literally into my lap, and only a brief time after I had once again drifted into the habit of reading books of fantasy and science fiction. Book reviews in HEAVY METAL reawakened my curiosity, brought some old fan friends back into acquaintance. But I decided I wanted to attend the con when the final carrot was dangled before my eyes: my favorite science fiction writer -- Kate Wilhelm -- was to be guest of honor, with my old favorite, her husband Damon Knight. I bought a membership..

And now, instead of just casually dropping in on a gathering of the faithful, looking for old friends, partaking of festivities and program activities and parties as I chose, I walked to the convention hotel lumbered with the awareness that, by Sunday evening, everything I saw or did would have to be turned into fifteen inches of insightful description of the entire event. Already, instead of wondering what sort of time I was going to have, I was wondering just what sort of angle I should use for my lead paragraph.

And my problem was solved for me the moment I walked through the door. Darth Vader strode imperially and menacingly past me, black face-mask gleamingly realistic, hissing like a February radiator. The uniform and boots and cape were startlingly accurate, and the posture, the presence was chillingly convincing. But that wasn't the clincher. Three paces ahead of Darth, crouched and intently wary, stepped on of his minions. From the intricately detailed laser-rifle in his hands to the white helmet and the tiny communications-headset hanging from his ears, the whole uniform looked perfectly familiar. And the wary little man intently disinterested in all who passed seemed even more to be his part than was his master.

That was new, all right! I remembered the Bilt-con of 1956 -- my first convention. There the traditional costume-ball was attended mainly by people who wanted to watch. The handfull of serious costume-nuts there were looked on by the majority of fans as exactly that: nuts. They seemed to be intruders, slightly anti-social. We had concluded that they had nothing to offer but their appearance, no connection to either fandom or science fiction save their costumes, and nothing much to talk about that any real fan would care to hear. The only person I could recall spending the entire con in costume was Lin Carter, who prowled the halls in a Dracula cape grumpily muttering that no one understood him.

In my first few minutes at the con, I suddenly felt that Carter had been vindicated at last. Every fifth figure that passed me was caparisoned, caped, armed, armuletted, or otherwise festooned. Small stuffed fire-lizards perched on three or four shoulders that I saw in the first hour. Since my readings in the swords and sorcery field was deliberately meagre, I could only interpret as a scattering of Friar Tucks, Will Scarlets and Little John Littles -- the many figures in sandals and boots with beards and feathered caps, sporting either short-swords or quarterstaves that looked odd in Boston's most modern hotel complex.

I was gratified, however, to find that many of the femme-fen (and did anyone dare to use such an arcane term in the era of ERA?) had taken as the norm of fashion the works of that arch male-chauvinist pornographer Frank Frazetta. Fair female flesh escaped skimpy bikini-bottoms and bronze breastplates, was teasingly revealed by billowing capes and swaths of one-shoulder chiffon clouds. There were S&M concoctions of black-leather bikinis and boots, complete with bat-winged masks and headpieces, and laser-holsters strapped to smooth thighs by delicate silver chains. A nubile pair flitted all too quickly through my field of vision dressed -- if that was the word -- in a few whisps of grey gauze and nothing else



but blue body-paint.

Though my narrow taste in science fiction and fantasy made it impossible for me to identify the originals, many of the costumes were precisely detailed and obviously represented specific characters, particularly those from movies. Others, no less careful of workmanship, looked like free-form fantasies. Then there were a whole subset of semi-successful catch-all rags. One barefoot visitor from the mid-sixties wandered the entire con with a pale-blue gauzy cloud hung from one white shoulder to her ankles, clapping finger-chimes and seeming for all the world as though LSD rather than SF was her main reason for being there. Late Friday night I passed a tall young man in obvious drag who looked decidedly uncomfortable and out of place.

I wandered gazine in wonder about me, and finally headed for the auditorium where the guests of honor were to speak, and my lead paragraph solidified. Damon Knight, in rumpled jeans and scraggy white beard, spoke of what it meant for him to be a science fiction fan. He talked of the lonely childhood of the class intellectual, and of first finding "someone who would talk to me" in fandom. And I wondered as he talked how many of those in the audience who had stepped from the frames of STAR WARS or BATTLESTAR GALACTICA would talk to an old-fan-and-tired such as myself.

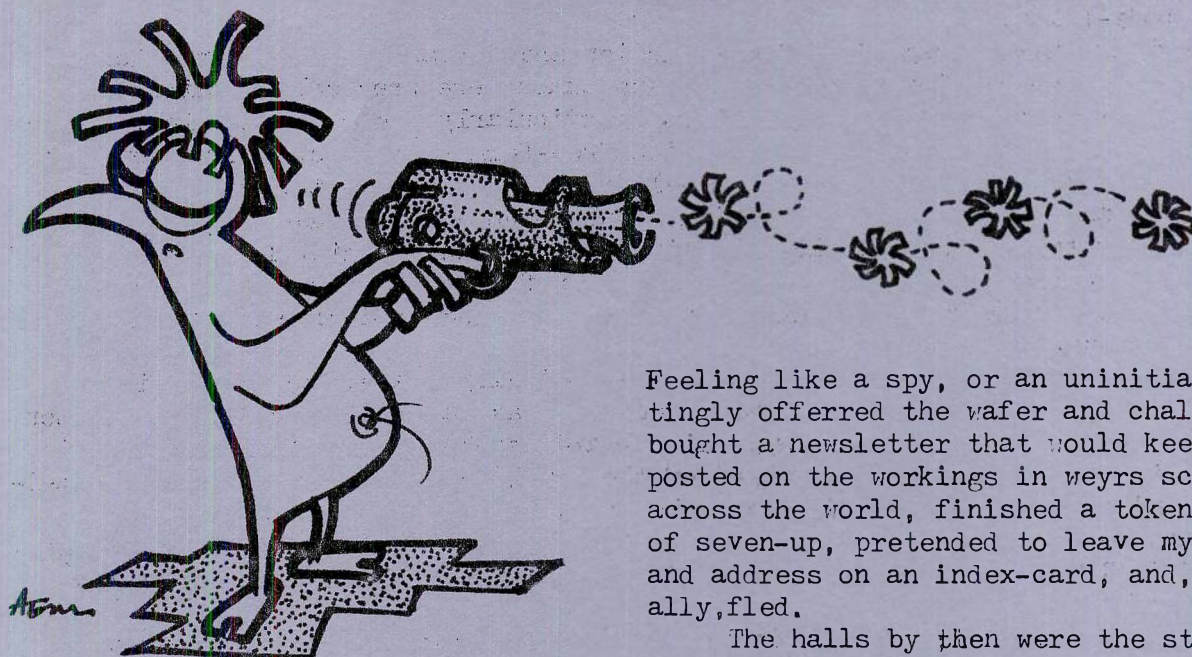
Then lovely little Kate Wilhelm got up and in an almost frail voice read a powerfully passionate defense of realistic science fiction, announcing her conviction that what ideas people believed did shape the reality they live in, and suggested that the better one wrote about possibilities of human behavior, the better one could make the everyday world we had to live in. And I wondered how many of the play-actors wearing their ready-made fantasies even as they sat and listened to her words would really understand even her first syllable.

And that night rivetted my lead into place. It was party-time, with a dozen open parties announced on the hotel bulletin boards. Most of the organizations offering free hospitality were unknown to me, but since I had read one of the dragon books by Anne McCaffrey I decided to drop in on an open meeting of the Brenden Weyr on the eighth floor.

The sign on the door said "The door is OPEN: Push!" and when I did I walked into a room full of three strains of loud, rapid conversation among people half of whom were costumed. One brightly-gowned woman wore a stuffed fire-lizard curled about her neck, and was breathlessly announcing her name, the name of her dragon, the frequency of her flights, the superior experience of her senior-sister who had turned her on the the dragon worlds. A bespectacled young man with the faint smell of MIT about him sat on the couch and warily defended his thesis that the methods used in the game DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS could be profitably applied to events in the world of weyrs and firestone. I never had time to tune in on the third strain because I was met by a man with an elaborately waxed mustache and glasses, dressed in a leather tunic, chest medallion, and short cape, who launched into a detailed exegesis of the genetics of dragons. He and his friends had worked it all out, he declared, and it all had to do with the relatively short time that the Red Star would menace Pern with threads, and the uses to which the time-jaunting and space-jaunting of fire-lizards, in their tiny or gigantic incarnations, must most logically be put both during and after the thread-threats. He spoke eloquently and convincingly of things I hardly understood. I had found Anne McCaffrey's prose labored, her dialogue wooden, and her plot very stolid and unsurprising, and I stopped reading after book one. Pern was not a world I myself would choose to live in, even as a brief fantasy-life.

But for the rest of the room, the reverse was obviously true. To a greater or lesser degree, these eight or ten people felt Pern to be the only interesting reality. I wondered who in their right mind could give up the glorious victories of Kate Wilhelm over true adversities to savor the trumped-up triumphs of a slash and blast'em hack. Ah well, I thought, to each his own perversion. Who was to say their delusions were any sillier than mine? To hear my still-lecturing genetics expert, Ms. McCaffrey's science seemed sounder than Ms. Wilhelm's, even though I preferred the latter's granitic characters to the former's cardboard and tinsel.





Feeling like a spy, or an uninitiate unwittingly offered the wafer and chalice, I bought a newsletter that would keep me posted on the workings in weyrs scattered across the world, finished a token glass of seven-up, pretended to leave my name and address on an index-card, and, literally, fled.

The halls by then were the standard convention-hotel chaos. Fans in various states of costume and/or drunkenness were attempting to reel gaily from party to party, and were thoroughly thwarted by a perverse elevator system that apparently stopped only to discharge passengers. As I waited for the system to begin to work in my favor a lean young lady in a white fur bikini began a slightly drunken and very one-sided dialogue with the elevator button, which was interrupted when a Battlestar trooper happened on the scene and plugged her soundly in the sternum with his yelping laser-rifle.

"They don't work on me," she crowed. "Wrong continuums!" He seemed stymied by the obviousness of her facts. "If you want to do something constructive, why don't you wound that damned elevator as it goes blundering past us for the Eighth Goddamnit Time!"

He tried, but it was an obvious case of wrong continua all over again, so while she resumed her dialogue with the button, he began to compute the probabilities of all the elevators stopping on the same floor at the same time, at which point the car that none of us was attending stopped to disgorge one or two rumpled specimens. The lean young lady sprang into the breach and, before I could do so myself the trooper wedged himself deliciously in beside her, pretending for all he was worth that the enormously crowded car wouldn't close without such intimacy. As they whisked away, I realized they were going up, not down as they had intended, and I gave up and walked the eight flights of stairs to the lobby. I watched the passing parade of flowery fauna for a few moments and then walked home, feeling very old and outgroup. As I fell asleep, however, I reflected on the wide variety of revealed near-nudity and, while getting off on the voyeurism of it all, I began to formulate a plan. Surely, amid all that firm young female flesh, there must be one packaged from a volume I had read and could converse about. All I had to do was pounce at the opportune moment, and.... Who knew?

Saturday morning, as I was walking into the hotel, I met a fellow old-fan-and-tired mumbling and cursing as he emerged from the registration room with a round blue badge saying SAT on it.

"Ghod damn," he greeted me with, "when did the World Science Fiction Convention become 'The BUCKS-con'? I live in this Ghoddamned city, and they're going to charge me forty-five fucking dollars to attend! Even fifteen bucks would be a lot just to hear the guests of honor speak. How much is the damn banquet going to set me back, by the way?"

"Brace yourself for some good news and some bad news, Bhob. There will be no banquet this year, just speeches and awards."

"Well, hail Roscoe for final sanities!"



"...But, unfortunately, Kate and Damon spoke last night."

"What? But no one's ever at the con on a Friday! Will they be autographing, at least? I hear they're publishing a new little festschrift for the occasion, and maybe we can mumble a few words of gratitude for their existence as they scribble. Where's the Filthy Huckster's room?"

We had to accost no less than seven passersby before we found one bright enough or old enough to inform us that The Dealer's Area would be found next door, upstairs outside the auditorium I had been in the night before. We went With The Force, and were assaulted by hype and huckerism in spades. Booths pervayed neo-Celtic and neo-Art Nouveau baubles, miniaures in lead of the Tolkein characters, cheap reproductions of the sword of Conan the Barbarian, sound-track albums to every hit and miss from the past ten years' of sci-fi (NOT sf) films, and TV cassettes of the same sorts of things. Bhob and I stood for a while and watched the agitated crowd at a booth called The Weapon Shops of Isher that offered expensively hand-turned lucite laser-guns -- rifles and side-arms -- that did nothing but flash little colored lights to a bwipboip sonic accompaniment. The place was mobbed! Bhob and I stood and watched for ten minutes, fascinated not by the weaponry but the customers. At least forty percent of the throng came away noticeably crestfallen at the fact that their own sidearms couldn't hold a microswitch to The Weapon Shop's arsenal.

"Hey, did you see that?" Bhob suddenly shouted, interrupting our beard-pulling put-downs. I looked where he pointed and saw, at the edge of the crowd, two little kids of about seven or eight, barely able to peer over the table at the gleaming zap-guns. One of them finally reached a hand around the thirty-year-olds bellied up to the bar and, with a quick and gingerly finger flicked a trigger once. Then both the kids were literally elbowed away from the eagerly fingered, fiendishly expensive toys.

Next to the booth there was a display of books, each one a "novelization" of a show from the series DR.WHO, a kiddie's program that had set the BBC on its ear for the past thirteen years and, due to shrewd programming by PBS was apparently going to do the same for America for the next thirteen. While we watched, people who either had seen or who had missed episodes bought the boo-versions in six and ten and twenty title bites. Not one of them seemed under thirty. While we were there, at least three fuzzy-headed men strode by wearing miles of multicolored woolen scarf wrapped around their person, but only one bore the slightest resemblance to the good doctor. He was accompanied by a delicious young thing poured more or less into a soft leather approximation of the uniform worn by Dr. Who's "friend-and-companion-the-lovely..." as Bhob and I appreciatively referred to her. And, as we staggered away to sample Polish sausage and cokes -- a debilitating combination, we found out -- and await the "Kate and Damon Show" question-and-answer period, I pumped my old fannish friend about his reactions to the costume parade, so that I might have a quote or two for my article. And I got more than I bargained for.

I outlined my angle: the contrast between the hard-milled realism that Kate Wilhelm and Damon Knight used in their works, and the facile fabrications of anything-goes fantasists who played the game without any net. That, and the easy assimilations of media-hyped blockbusters like STAR WARS. Most of the costumes, it seemed to me, revealed fans as wallowing in the UNrealities of their favorite fantasies, and living lives handed them by other people. I had to admit along the way that I had never identified myself with the protagonists in whatever I read or saw, but with the authors or the directors of them.

"Oh, but just look around you at the average fan!" Bhob began, and then proceeded to prick my own fantasy of a sea of waiting, willing women with a dose of pointed observation and commentary.

"Wasn't it Dick Eney who did a thesis on fans as misfits? Look around you. Have you ever seen in a similar crowd such a high concentration of people so obviously out of touch with their bodies? Have you ever seen such a high percentage of overweight people, or of grossly overweight people? Have you ever seen so many sexy costumes on so many unsexy people? Look at all those skinny adolescents



with acne and braces on their teeth wearing their near-nudity as a barrier to any real contact with anyone else. And when you do find a really pretty one, you'll mostly find her terrified that anyone will say anything to her for fear she will have to talk back. It's amazing to me how many costumes seem to be wearing people at this convention."

And, as if on cue, the long lean lady in the fuzzy bikini strolled by, and Bhub was right. She wasn't lean, she was skinny, and the fur over cups was there because she had nothing much under them. Nevertheless, as she passed someone with a Minolta asked her for a few pictures, and she posed: stiffly, awkwardly, very self-consciously. The haughty calm of her expression was undercut by a blush that rouged her cheeks after the fifth pose, when she began to repeat herself. When the photographer thanked her, she moved quickly away as though embarrassed at the people staring at the two of them.

"And how about this specimen as an example?"

Bhub pointed out a short, bulging woman stumping about the floor on high-heeled platform mules in tiger-fur panties with a loosely tied fur cape to match. She looked neither right nor left, but strode about the room heavily, deliberately, with furrowed brow and hunched shoulders, exposing lots of pallid flesh yet looking as though she hoped no one would notice.

"When she made that costume, I'll bet she thought she'd look like Sheena the Queen of the Jungle, instead of a dowdy Neanderthal matron. And have you ever seen so many canes, or braces? I must have seen three people who are deaf. And that doesn't count all the science-majors who can't talk about anything but probability-theory, or all the pathologically shy who are grooving on the ambience because they don't know how to start a conversation. You know, there was a reason you and I got to know each other through letters and fanzines long before we ever met face-to-face. Jesus, I shudder to remember my high-school years!"

"Damon Knight said it wasn't until he met fans that anyone would talk to him."

"That's right! That's right! I found science fiction magazines in high-school, and through them fanzines. I started writing imitation pro stories, and reviews of science fiction books and stories. But back in the Sixth Fandom days the really Big Name Fans were writing columns about how they trained horses, or shot rats at the local dump, or who got tossed out of the convention for throwing a beer can out the hotel window. Redd Boger's SKYHOOK devoted three huge long columns to the symbolism in MOBY DICK, alongside an equally erudite dissection of the concept of 'syzygy' in the works of Theodore Sturgeon. And I never could remember what that damned word meant, can you?"

"Me either, but I remember the article. And after three years of writing for fanzines and corresponding with fans, I had sort of written myself a kind of makeshift personality that I could take to a convention and show to other people. And then suddenly I was thrust into college and, Lo and behold! That same fannishly wrought little personality got along pretty damn well meeting people who weren't fans at all. And, right on schedule, I went G.A.F.I.A. and folded my FAPAazine the summer after freshman year. I wonder how all those kids running around pretending to be Darth Vader or Dr. Who or Vampirella are going to learn how to grow up and be people?"

"Yeah, but look at us, now, twenty years older and wiser, old foofs in residence, sitting here getting bald and paunchy and talking about the Ghod Old Days! Ghod damn, the next step is the American Legion, isn't it? Let's go off and find the Kate and Damon show and think up some trenchantly plonking questions that will make us heroes in every con-report this Ghod damned Bucks-con generates!"

And we went and did just that, or made a respectful stab at it anyway. Kate and Damon seemed to me preeminently people who wrote good books, not personalities, not performers. What they wrote moved me because of the care and thought they lavished on it in private, not how glibly and sparkingly they could talk about it later. They were people, not guests on the TONIGHT show, and somehow I felt slightly embarrassed for them, as though we were invading a privacy that was very important to them, and to me, by putting them on display. I took a few notes, but my mind was wandering and as my eyes wandered with it they were caught by a true



vision of loveliness. She entered the room quietly, discretely, paused a moment at the door, and moved to a seat at the far side of the room, sitting easily and focusing her attention politely on what was being said.

"Who just walked in?" whispered Bhob, whose eyes must have been wandering as much as mine. "Is that Tanith Lee?"

"No, she's not in costume. At least she wasn't when she was signing books this morning. Besides, her hair's nowhere near that red." And I added to myself, gorgeous as she is, Tanith can't hold a candle to this little lady!

She was dressed in a diaphanous cloud of royal blue caught at one side, that left the creamy curve of one arm and shoulder, from wrist to ear-lobe, as one smooth sinuous delight. There were delicate silver rings peeping from a sparkling fountain of red, red hair, a single silver amulet defining the cleft between her breasts, a thin silver chain at her waist, and white sandals held on whiter little feet by sparkling silver chains. And, despite the electric theatricality of it all, she wore her costume, it didn't wear her.

From that moment on I couldn't tell you a thing that Kate or Damon said, but I could tell you every movement, every sound she made. She laughed spontaneously in the right places, even occasionally when the joke seemed obscure. She knew the names of the authors that were mentioned, and of editors, even the occasional name of a fan who was unknown to me, so she must be aware of the field. And through it all her attention, unlike mine, was wholly on the proceedings and the speakers, like any ordinary, appreciative fan, not like someone showing off a costume. She had presence, she had style. She had me!

"Bhob," I said, as the applause died at the end of the show, "I think I'm in love."

"Well, you saw her first," he sighed. "Think you'll find a person inside the clothes?"

"If I do, you'll be the last to know! Wish me luck?"

"Bill Sarill is giving a party tonight, and you and I and Ted White and Terry Carr are expected all to be in the same room there at the very same time. I'll know by the stupid grin on your face. Go, before she disappears in a puff of brimstone or something."

And I went. For a moment I just followed her, pretending to admire her smoothly confident stride, the unaffected assurance with which she moved, the delicate modeling of her chin, her cheek, her brow. All that was true, of course, but besides that I was terrified. What if, inside, she was just another skinny lady in a fuzzy white bikini? What if she called a cop because she knew what I was thinking? What if...

"Excuse me?" When she didn't hear I put one finger on that cool bare arm.

"Uh, excuse me, may I talk to you for a moment, Miss... uh, Miss Carstairs?"

"Who?" She stopped, and turned to me, a pair of cool cut-crystal emerald eyes staring blankly, coldly directly into mine.

I pointed to the convention badge at her waist, without which no one could go anywhere without immediate harrassment. "It says Amy Carstairs. I'm a reporter for a Boston newspaper, and I wondered if...."

"I'm sorry," she said peremptorily, "you don't know my name." And she turned to stride away.

Suddenly, as if an idea exploded in the middle of my mind, I knew I had seen her somewhere before. That amulet was familiar, she was familiar, and in a clear, commanding voice that didn't even sound like my own I called, "But I do know your name! You are Tallis Gwennith Llewellyn, Fourth Countess of Grimspyke and lady in waiting to the Queen herself!" At which she stopped as if struck, whirled, and unleashed the most devastating smile I had ever seen.

"You have visited the Kingdom then?"

"Let's say I know its history, my lady," I smiled, stepping to her once more. "It is a rare treat to find you visiting our city, so far from your home. I did not know the Queen's ladies to travel so far."

Where the strange speech came from I didn't know, but I was not about to ask myself stupid questions.



"We travel," she said evenly, "as the need arises."

"My editor would be honored if you could grant me an interview, lady. It is rare that such a visitor..."

"No, you mustn't!" She seemed genuinely frightened. "This is not a visit of state! I come on... more private business."

"I see. And may I know, for my personal curiosity, what business that is?"

Her dead-level gaze frowned directly into my face. "May I ask just what you know of the doings in The Kingdom?"

I matched her gaze for gaze. "I know all that has been recounted, lady."

"I see. Then I may tell you, for your personal curiosity, but for your ears alone: I come in secret, to meet with Hardeign."

"I see! Then of course, it is our secret. You expect him, then? I mean, you have had a message from him?"

"You know my position at the court! Isn't it unlikely that messages could pass? Yet, without messages, Hardeign often appears -- sometimes appears, where I expect him. And, I expect Hardeign." And those glorious emeralds, fairly melting with meaning, smiled steadily at me again for a full moment, before she extended her hand and said "But I must go now. It is refreshing to find someone who knows The Kingdom, but I'm afraid I have made other appointments."

I brought that soft, cool hand to me for a delicate kiss and said, "Then perhaps we may talk again, my lady?"

"Perhaps we will," she smiled, "unless Hardeign comes." and she turned to go, and then shot me a quick, frightened glance over that cream-smooth shoulder and added, "Or Kobilotta!" and then she was into the crowded corridor and lost behind the turn.

I astonished myself at how much I remembered of a book out of print for over a decade, that try as I might I could recall neither title or author. (John Buchan? Cabell? No, but certainly like John Buchan.) The Kingdom had been founded by English, Irish, and Welsh crusaders in a narrow, craggy valley deep in the Balkans. The large royal family ran to male-female twins, much noblesse oblige, much midnight thwarting of skullduggery and spiteful plotting, much pledging of sacred honor and fulfilling painful promises. The countess had been rescued once by Baron Hardeign, a young man hopelessly beneath her station, yet they loved and managed by those lucky accidents to meet and to pledge faithfulness and even union, though it meant deserting The Kingdom itself to achieve fulfillment. Most of the aristocracy mourned the restrictions of duty yet secretly wished the lovers well -- all except the orphan boy, Kobilotta of the dark hair, who hoped blindly for Gwennith's love himself, and would not hesitate to betray them both to the reluctant grindwheel of justice and duty should he find proof of their illicit meetings. It was a dusty, musty volume I found among my father's bookshelves early in high school, alongside John Buchan, All Quiet On The Western Front, and some tales of the French Foreign Legion by P.C. Wren.

And Ghod but she was really heavy into her role! I could have sworn she was who she said she was, a beautiful piece of foreign royalty, her flamboyantly incognito. Of course I told Bhob about it, but of course that was like Cyrano telling LeBret. Besides, I told him after the third drink at Bill Sarill's party, when he and Ted White and I were all playing American Legionnaires together, and it was obvious that I was making too little sense for any of us to remember anyway. After a few hours of that party, Ted took us over to the SFWA suite in 2208 to search out a Terry Carr that never did show up, neither there nor at Bill's, nor anywhere we searched. And, with a bit more rum in me than necessary, instead of heading home to face my waiting typewriter I stepped on an express elevator to the roof, to gaze at my city of Boston from the Skywalk and to prove to myself that I was not terrified of heights -- something I knew, when only slightly soberer, was a damn lie.

The elevator disgorged me and two equally tipsy astronauts at the glassed-in summit of the hotel and, after a few long minutes standing with my shoulders thrust resolutely against the wall and staring into space, I found I could walk -- slowly -- and even look down from time to time, if I kept the steel security of the banister clutched tightly in both hands. I was just rounding the corner and polishing



a theory about monkey-children and racial memory when I saw her. She glanced up startled, and then she smiled.

"You like looking down, my lady?"

"It's the nearest thing in this city to home," she said, "especially with the clouds. Mine is a very cliff-ridden country given to mists, and I miss it much. And besides, as I told you, I am waiting." The last came with downcast glance and just the halting hint of a sigh.

"Baron Hardeign has not come, then?"

"Not this long day, no. But I do expect him." And her glorious face turned fully, reverently, sincerely into mine. "Here, at this hour tomorrow, he shall come to me. I know it! If you should happen to see him, on your travels, tell him for me, please? Tell him tomorrow, at this hour, I expect to meet Hardeign here! But now, I must rest. Will you descend?"

"I... I think I shall stay to enjoy the view," I said, as off-handedly as one can with white knuckles, knowing he is rooted to the spot.

"As you wish," she said, and brushed past me to the elevator. But when it came, as she stepped inside she said, evenly, over her shoulder, "We will meet again, sir. Will we not?" And she was gone.

It took me twenty agonizing minutes to walk as far as she did in one, and all the while I pondered what I knew of the Countess and what I didn't. There was no ring on that soft, cool little left hand, but that didn't mean there wasn't a husband -- a Kobilotta -- lurking behind the metaphorical bushes somewhere, did it. But I was damned certain we were the only two people in that entire hotel that had ever read that book about The Kingdom, and if that was what she wanted I could play her little game!

So I went my wobbly way home and, after much coffee and much procrastination, I tapped out my lead paragraph, and followed it with fifteen inches of report full of venom and vitriol, blasting all fans for living in never-never land, and condemning all who forsook the hard realities to hide in fanatical, fantastical romanticism where an outre costume is enough to hide from truth. It was grumpy, and misspelled, but it was fifteen inches of promised copy, and my editor took it without a murmur.

Then I phoned a theatrical costume-shop I once wrote a story about, made several promises in the name of the paper I knew I couldn't keep, and spent much of Sunday afternoon being fitted and nervously waiting for alterations. That night I had dinner with Bhob, and attended an awards presentation that looked like a semi-serious parody of the Emmies or Oscars -- though with better jokes. Then slipping into a john, I promised Bhob to meet him at the First Fandom party directly. I certainly didn't want to have him see what I had stuffed into my green book-bag.

Even on the express, it was a long, uncomfortable ride up. I kept removing and replacing the officer's cap which never did fit right, and trying to make sense of the hang of the saber. The epaulettes tickled my ear-lobes and the medals jingled at my every step, and all the long way up I felt very much like a fool. But the uniform was approximately what I remembered from the illustrations, and it would have to do.

The car stopped, the door opened, and I took one step forward, looked down, and froze solid. I wrapped a clawed hand about the bannisters on either side of me, took a long deep breath, and half in panic half in hope I shouted "Gwennith!"

For a moment nothing answered but an echo. Then, around the corner, she came. She was all in gauzy scarlet this time, with sandals and chains of gold. Her dear little ears were bare, but a spicer-net tiara of gold set off that gorgeous red rush of hair. She stood staring for one long, puzzled moment and then called hesitantly, "Hardeign?"

"I have come, my lady!"

"Hardeign?" she called again, and then all in a rush she came and eagerly threw the wondrous softness of her fully into my stiff and startled arms. "Oh, my love you've come at last! Why did you stay so long?"

"Affairs of state my lady," I croaked, "obligations..."



"Oh, but no matter you are here, you're here! Come, quickly, we must hurry!" And we turned away from that awesome abyss into the comforting cramp of the elevator. She punched a button, then settled softly into my arms again, whispering "I had begun to fear you would never come. So much menaces our love, and there is so little time! But come, hurry, we must not be seen!" And we were out of the elevator once again and rushing down a hall. A key appeared from the purse swung from her belt of holden chains and with another breathless "Hurry!" we were through the door and it swiftly shut and bolted behind us. "Safe!" she whispered, "and alone at last!"

"Yes, my lady," I smiled, groping in the pitch darkness for a light switch. "And now I may gaze my fill of thy bounteous..."

"No! No light! Please?"

Puzzled, I faced her in the gloom, and heard the rapid rustling of cloth for a full minute before I understood what was going on.

"Hurry, my love," she whispered. "Oh, we have so little time!"

And I hurried, stumbling over my saber, losing a medal in my haste, and finally fighting free of shorts and shoes.

"Oh, my own dear love I have been waiting such a long, long time! Come now and claim your prize!"

And I groped stumbling forward to do just that. My fingertips found her and swept the cool softness of her to me for our first long kiss. She seemed totally mine, but still I felt confused. Was there a husband -- Kobilotta -- lurking in the closet with a polaroid? And why no light? Could she be misshapen somehow? But my hands found nowhere any unpleasantness, nothing but smooth, cool, unresisting fullnesses and subtleties. No, not even an appendectomy scar across the feminine softness below her deep navel. I wondered for an instant if the moist hair my fingers found could possibly be as red as that in which I buried my face.

Then, "Come my love," she whispered, falling back, pulling me eagerly along. "After such a long time, come now and claim your prize!" And, with one serious shove, I proceeded to do just that. It was an eager, vigorous meeting, at the climax of which Miss Amy Carstairs shrieked "Oh, Hardeign!" and really went wild!

Then afterwards, she lay sprawled atop my sleepiness, her body totally open to me. My barely moving thumb slowly traced the shape of that delicate little chin, the full round curve of her rouged cheek, and found the tiny miracle of her earlobe. With unhurried care I traced the smooth, unbroken sweep of subtle convex curves from her neck down into the slope of her shoulder and the length of one soft arm out to her fingertips and back. My dreamy hands began, slowly, to marvel at all the gentle junctures, swells, and hollownesses of her cool, breathing body. Moving in millimeters, I felt her sigh softly and reach out an infinitesimal kiss. I wondered if she could feel the gentle pressure with which my shoulder kissed back her lips. I believed I had never been so totally interconnected with another human being before. And I hoped the semiconscious bliss might never end.

"The wait was long, my baron," she whispered, nearly inaudibly. "And long the waits to come, I fear. Oh, would you had found me sooner, as I trod that glassed-in crag. One night is not enough when it comes so seldom."

"True, my lady, true indeed. But the night is not yet ended, and as you may perceive, we may yet make it a full one!"

"Oh, I do thank my most generous lord!" she smiled, as I took her again, this time from below. Those rich, lilting cadences had sounded somehow right, weaving a gauzy magical overlay to what was, after all, the sudden feverish grinding of flesh on flesh. I like it. But I wondered who would break down first. I wondered what kind of weirdo would come to a convention ready to jump in the sack with the first clever animal that saw correct costuming as the key to fornication. I wondered why so beautiful and passionate a woman as Amy Carstairs refused to get her rocks off any way but through a masquerade. And I wondered just how sick I must be to take such crass advantage of what must be a sad neurosis. And then my reaching hands filled with the warming breasts of Tallis Gwennith Llewellyn and I wondered nothing at all for a long, long time indeed.

We slept then, all intertwined, rousing suddenly from time to time to note



the flutter of an eyelash, the warm pressure of breath, the unison of heartbeats, or the gentle punctuation of a brief kiss given or one received. But for me sleep had solidified into total, stolid unconsciousness by the time I was rudely, insistently shaken from it by her impatient hand. "My lord!" she pleaded. "It's long past dawn! You must go, and quickly!"

My gluey eyes noted a thin trickle or two of light by the thoroughly drawn and curtained windows, but the room was still swathed in inky shadows.

"But is there not time, my lady, for one last..."

She thrust my lewd hand away in shocked anxiety. "But the risk, my lord! No, haste, haste away! It means disaster if we are discovered, death if any even should suspect. You must not be missed. Please, hurry, dress and begone. And make no light!"

I stumbled on rubbery limbs to do all that she insisted. My dozen thumbs marvelled at the ingenious fastenings built into old dress uniforms, their quaint workmanship and odd placements, the multitude of possibilities for error they presented. Finally, after two "Oh hurry, please my lord!"s from the bed I was dressed enough to chance the corridor.

"And shall I take a kiss away with me, my lady, into the loneliness?"

"You take more than kisses, lord, and need more haste than dalliance!" And so I went, but heard, as my hand paused on the knob, a gentler final word. "There will be kisses, and more beside, anon -- if all goes well. Farewell till our next, chance, meeting."

And I thrust myself out into the inconsiderate glarings of hotel electric lights, tiptoeing away expecting scornful discovery of some kind at every turn.

As I went I suddenly realized that I hadn't an idea at all where I'd left my green book-bag with my normal clothes stuffed unfashionably inside. It wasn't in the john where I changed, nor upstairs at the Skywalk entrance. And Lost & Found wouldn't open until ten. I glanced at my watch, decided the dash home to change would be foolhardy, and committed my gaudily caparisoned self to the misted morning light of Boylston Street, feeling a million awestruck eyes on my selfconsciousness from every window I could see. I wandered about aimlessly a while, and finally entered a down-to-earth eatery by the unpretentious name of Zeke's.

I felt every eye lift in suspicious awe as I made my entrance, tangling the tip of my saber in the door by my hesitance. The counter-help and waitresses were all decked out in flannel and bib-overalls and flouncy gingham, but somehow that did not make me feel at all right at home in my epaulettes and braid. I lurked in a booth, sinking my face between hunched shoulders and wishing mightily that I were invisible.

"What'll you have?"

I smiled at the brusque waitress. "I'll bet you've seen a lot of people in crazy costumes in here lately, haven't you?" I thought I'd try getting us both on the same side.

"All the time! You'd be amazed what those AmVets got themselves up as!"

I tried businesslike command. "I'll have a number four, eggs over well, and an English with jelly instead of the toast please."

"That'll be extra."

"Fine. Oh, and lots of coffee."

"Coffee with, or now?"

"Now, please? Oh, and cream on the side?"

"Thank you. It's a funny thing, but all them extra-terresstruls been in here this week-end ate the same food as the rest of us!"

There was a moment of panic when I couldn't remember if I had transferred my wallet when I changed the night before. The uniform's tight pants had no pockets, but inside the jacket there were several, and nestled inside one, thank Ghod, was the billfold.

Over the first coffee I decided it just wouldn't end like that. I'd simply camp in the lobby till she checked out, demand an address at least, and take it from there. Mondays at the con were always days of farewell and scribbled addresses, anyway. No "Kobilotta" need suspect. So I stumbled back to the lobby, hoping she

--Concluded on inside back cover--



# MINAC

BY TED WHITE



WHEN WE WERE YOUNG: Dan's series on Towner Hall has produced several remarkable reminiscences thus far, with the promise of more. This mildly croggles me, since I play a prominent part in these pieces as Towner Hall's proprietor, and not only do I enjoy the egoboo, I find it instructive to see how others saw me then.

I saw myself very differently, of course, and considerably less flatteringly too. While even then I had the ego and the drive that pushed me to my accomplishments of that period and since, I was very insecure in nearly every aspect of my life and I rarely appreciated my own successes.

Although Lee Hoffman was even then assuring me that in her book I was a BNF, I saw myself as a journeyman fan, surrounded by more talented and more successful peers. I knew, for instance, that Terry Carr was a better fan than I was -- he was wittier, a better prose stylist, and a better fanzine editor. And Greg Benford -- it brought me up short when I read (in BNF 4) Greg's comments about how "Terry and Ted and Pete were all older than me, and I tried to write up to their standards," and how we were "older figures, better known, whom I wanted to resemble." Because I had always assumed that Greg too was a notch or two better than I was.

I don't recall when I first heard of Greg, but I believe he sent me an issue or two or VOID in trade for my STELLAR, back when he and his twin brother Jim were living in Germany. VOID was rather scruffily mimeod, but by its tenth issue or so it was one of the better fanzines coming out and numbered some of fandom's better writers among its contributors. It seemed to me that Greg had somehow overcome an obstacle which I was still butting up against: getting high quality material from an international group of contribu-

tors. I recall being very impressed that Boyd Raeburn contributed to VOID, for example. Ever since I had started putting out fanzines I'd had trouble getting enough material for them. Bhub Stewart became a co-editor of my ZIP in part because through him I could get more material. Larry Stark co-edited STELLAR with me for similar reasons, and after he left I obtained fourth-hand the unused material Harlan Ellison had amassed for DIMENSIONS (after three other faneditors had picked it over) to continue





STELLAR. In 1958 I was putting out one- and two-sheet fanzines (GAFIA NEWSLETTER, GAMBIT) which I wrote myself, and the occasional larger-sized issue had contributions solely from my immediate and local circle of friends.

Why did I have this problem? Part of it had to do with my basic interest of the time, which was essentially the publishing aspects of fanzines. I spent hours carefully hand-stencilling art. I applied all the art training I'd received while growing up (I had trained as an artist) to layouts and design, which was my one visible talent then. I was primarily interested in the fanzine as a package, as an artwork. I was not oblivious to the content of the writing in fanzines, but it was not my primary focus. (By the late fifties this was shifting. STELLAR had been my magnum opus, with its five- and six-color mimeod covers, its elaborate layouts and classy design. My move into small frequent single-sheet fanzines in the fall of 1957 reflected a move into writing as my primary area of expression, and was a major turning point for me.)

Another reason I had trouble soliciting material was that I was painfully shy. I doubt this was obvious to most readers of my bombastic fan writing, but I hated to thrust myself upon those whom I considered my "betters" in fandom, like Grennell, Tucker, Burbee, and Willis (and a good many others too). I didn't want to be thought an uppity pest, and I didn't want to court rejection either. Instead I told myself that if I turned out a really good looking fanzine the BNFs would want to be in it and their contributions would eventually turn up unsolicited. To an extent this did occur, but not often enough. (What I failed to realize then was that something more than a well-packaged fanzine was needed -- potential contributors had to feel involved with a fanzine before they'd submit material out of the blue.)

Until Kent Moomaw died, in the fall of 1958, Greg Benford and I had never exchanged a personal letter. But although we only knew of each other through our fanzines, we were both close personal friends of Kent's.

Kent killed himself the day he turned eighteen. Less than a week earlier he'd written a letter to my roommate, John Magnus, expressing the fear that my impending marriage to Sylvia Dees would necessarily cut into the time I'd have for our correspondence and our friendship might be diminished. I intended to write him to reassure him the day John showed me the letter, but I didn't get around to it in time. Then came the news of his death by suicide. I knew the primary cause was the draft, but I felt guilty about the possibility that I might have been a contributing cause.

I no longer recall exactly how or why Kent's death brought Greg and me together, nor which of us wrote to the other first. We were Kent's closest friends, though, and it was inevitable that the shock of his death would put us in direct contact.

In my basement files I have one folder marked "VOID correspondence." In it are Greg's letters to me concerning our collaboration on VOID. The earliest letter (undated, but probably from late November, 1958) was not the first letter Greg wrote to me, and perhaps not the second. But it was the first in which he responded to my suggestion that we merge our fanzines into one and co-edit it.

"Have been delaying writing this letter to you because I wanted time to think over your proposal for the combination of our two zines," Greg began.

"VOID has been more or less dead on its collective feet for a few months now... ever since the 13th issue. I find myself with increasingly small amounts of time to use on it, and a steadily dwindling desire to work on it. I think that the main reason VOID has been irregular for the past few years is the fact that putting out an issue was always a great undertaking, requiring a great amount of time and effort. Especially mimeography. I hate to run off pages and sweat and strain to put out an issue. But I still like the general idea of a fanzine -- something with a bit of M\*E in it. So this is what I'd like to do.

"Instead of a Benford-White combo in the old tradition, I'd like to turn the zine over to you, its backlog, contacts, etc., and let you run the show. ... I won't have time to type stencils, or do much of the basic, pre-publication work for you, but I believe I have a good backlog of people who are interested in VOID --



bless their souls -- and would like to keep getting material in the same line. I know this will be difficult to accomplish, but a combining of two personalities (with yours predominating, natch -- it'll be your mag) would work out very well. In other words, I'd like to be a non-stencil-typing, non-paying jr. editor. ... You'd have to shoulder the expenses, mail the zine, etc.,...but it would be your zine. What's more, you wouldn't have to spend a lot of time garnering material. Naturally, you'd probably have to drop GAMBIT, and your two-sheeter one-shots, but man, dig the results!

"Before I close, would like to say, Ted, that I think your efforts so far have been broken up in several different ways -- like through the Cult (publishing giant!), OMPA, FAPA, etc., and getting out little two- and one-sheeter efforts. They were all rather good -- excellent in spots, when you really tried -- and I think you could do a great deal of good with a monthly fanzine, if you'd try. Of course, you're getting married, etc.,...and you might not have the time. But I think if you would like to try, and could consolidate your resources, you could really turn out some fine stuff.

"One more thing. I think what made VOID a more-or-less success was not me, the editor, but simply the way it didn't waste much space. It was compact, fast-paced, and could be absorbed in one sitting, which encourages comment. I believe a zine with an atmosphere of this type will go a long way, given regularity. I wish I'd done it."

As is obvious from Greg's letter (only a small portion of which I've quoted here -- it was three pages long), he was enthusiastic about our doing VOID together, even to the extent of pushing me a little.

In that letter Greg essentially defined the nature of the VOID we would subsequently publish. It was obvious to me even then that we complemented each other. Greg hated the physical process of producing a fanzine, and I enjoyed it and was good at it. I hated to solicit material, but Greg had "a lot of contacts" and promised to take care of that task. We both believed that fandom needed a "focal-point-type" monthly fanzine and we both wanted to produce it. And from Greg I took the idea of a compact fanzine (originally twenty pages, and, as a rule, never over the two-ounce postal weight limit, which turned out to be 24 pages when we used 20# paper) and refined it. (Since the VOID days I have been fascinated by the idea of compact fanzines in which the essence of genzine is distilled into fewer and fewer pages. MINAC, EGOBOO, and PONG are all reflections of this fascination, each using a different approach to the same essential problem.)

But on one thing I did not agree with Greg. I was not willing to accept him as a "jr. editor." I insisted that we be listed as co-editors and co-publishers. I wanted VOID to be a genuine collaboration between us to whatever extent was possible. Although in fact Greg was the junior editor, due to the logistics of getting the zine out, I wanted him as thoroughly and obviously involved in VOID as possible. I was very aware of the fact that VOID had enjoyed a better reputation than any of my zines, and I did not want people complaining that I'd devalued it in taking it over. (But of course a few people, notably Archie Mercer, did anyway....) For that reason I would send Greg copies of run-off covers and other pie pieces of the issue-in-progress, and I always sent him all the material which had come in to me and all the letters of comment for him to edit. The latter made him visible in the letter column in addition to his editorial column, and in the process Greg taught me a good deal about lettercol editing as well.

In a letter dated December 10th ("or so"), 1958, Greg wrote back to say, "Got your letter about five minutes ago, and wanted to dash off a letter to acknowledge same, and accept offer, as it were. We are, as they say, in business."

And thus our collaboration began. "I feel that, both of us working together on this thing, we can produce a fine fanzine. Material will roll in, I'm fairly certain, immediately after announcing the monthly issues. Fandom is aching for a good, monthly fmz. ... With your contacts, man, plus mine, we should cover about 99% of active fandom, plus quite a bit of the fringe element."

Sylvia and I had gotten married on November 30th, and at Greg's suggestion I



sent him a photo of us. "Ye gods, I've written a page & not wished you two happy wedding and like that. Now that I have Witnessed and Seen For My Own Eyes the beauty of this female, I envy you no end. All the happiness in the world. Sylvia is the most attractive femmefan, period."

The next couple of months were spent settling into my marriage, setting up our Baltimore apartment, and working for the Post Office (my last mundane job) but work progressed on the new VOID, and VOID 14 -- our first in collaboration -- was out by March. The first copy went first-class to Greg.

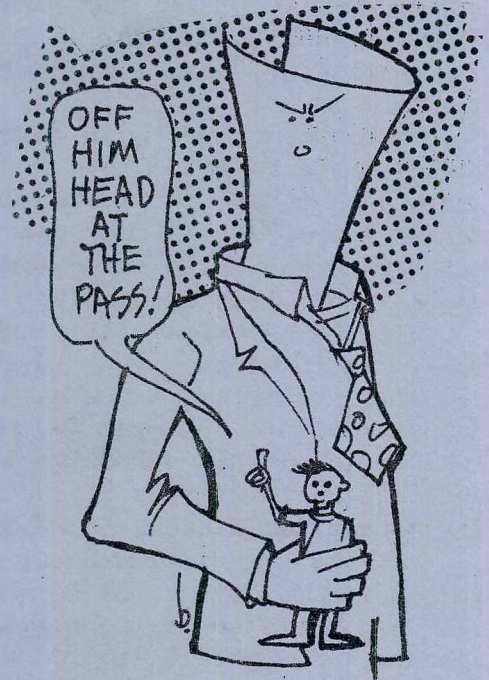
In a letter dated March 7th, 1959, Greg wrote, "VOID 14 is more like the zine it should become than I'd expected the first issue to be. ... I feel that you've done a good job on your end, and made the first issue (which, during a change-over, would ordinarily be below par) very good for the amount of delay between issues, and the slight bit of material I had on hand. Congrats. And now let's see what we can do with the next few." He ended that letter with this remark: "So shall cut off and get to work on some happy Benford chatter. As a matter of fact, that might be a good title for the editorial. Yes, man, yes." That is the genesis of the subsequent title of Greg's editorials in VOID, "Happy Benford Chatter."

Less than a month later, Greg wrote, "Got VOID 15 just a few minutes ago, which floored me. ... Whole issue was good, very good. If you can do this well with an unbalanced selection of material, I wonder what you'll come up with when we get rolling?"

As you may have gathered from Greg's remarks about the "slight bit of material I had on hand," and "an unbalanced selection of material," we were not exactly swamped with contributions. Indeed, several of the contributors Greg had been relying on earlier (principally, Raeburn) never did turn in anything. So I wrote more myself. "Your fanzine review was excellent -- frankly, I didn't think you had such talent; you can review very well but seldom seem to have done so in other things you put out. Your analysis of TWIG" -- a long essay-review -- "is very penetrating and in spots brilliant -- seldom have I seen reviews better than this since the days of the old PSYCHOTIC." Greg knew how to keep me fueled up and going.

For the spring of 1959 I kept VOID on a strict monthly schedule. VOIDS 14, 15, 16, 16½ (a letter-supplement), 17 and 18 were all published from Baltimore. But late in May my landlord informed me that he wanted us out of our apartment by the end of June -- our going up and down the stairs after 9:00 pm offended our elderly neighbors and they'd complained. I considered finding another apartment nearby (there were plenty) but there seemed little point in it. I'd moved to Baltimore originally because most of my friends lived there, because I had been dating a girl who lived there on my weekends, and because it was convenient to Falls Church (an hour by car) where the bulk of my stuff remained in my parent's house. But I knew Baltimore was only a stopping point on my way to somewhere else, and by early summer 1959 I knew the "somewhere else" was New York City.

I had graduated high school in 1956 and the three years which followed my graduation had been a period in which I had cast about for a direction in my life. I had worked for a while as a typesetter and printer. I had run my own mimeo shop. I had run through a succession of more than a dozen mundane jobs (rarely staying with one for more than a week), the worst of which was selling encyclopedias and the best of which was market research. I had worked indoors and out (as a "rod & chainman" for a surveying company). My last job before moving to Baltimore had been as night manager of the mimeo department of a big printing and mailing company





in D.C., where I worked for four months until I was fired because a fan had left the stencils for his SAPSzine there while I was out, and the boss read them. In Baltimore I'd applied for and gotten a job with the post office, sorting mail. I hated it, and in the spring of 1959 I quit it. I would not hold another salaried job until 1963, when I worked for a while for Scott Meredith's agency with Terry Carr.

Throughout my school years I had considered myself an artist. For a time I wanted to be an automotive stylist "when I grew up," and I drew designs for futuristic cars in all my notebooks. I taught myself commercial art techniques -- scratchboard, zip-a-tone, craft-tint, brush and pen styles -- and I learned to paint with both oils and colored inks. But I lacked something. I could render a photo into a drawing easily, but I did not consider myself "creative".

In the meantime, I'd fanned. I'd been putting out fanzines since I was fifteen. At first they were largely vehicles, as I mentioned, for me to learn mimeography, layout, and a few editorial skills, but as time went on I learned to write. When I got into the apas -- the Cult, when it was formed in 1954, and FAPA in 1955 -- I exploded into verbosity with extensive mailing comments. By 1959, as Greg's accolade for my review of TWIG indicates, I had become a moderately good writer in the context of fandom.

It was starting to occur to me that perhaps my writing and editing abilities were worth pursuing professionally. Maybe this was the direction I should take.

And there is only one place to go if one wants a career in professional publishing: New York City.

So Sylvia and I drove up to NYC and, while staying in the Nunnery, searched for a New York apartment to move to. We got a stay of one month from our Baltimore landlord, and finally found a five-room apartment in Greenwich Village to which we moved at the end of July..

Since I had not been working at the post office for several months, money was hard to come by, and VOID was one of the first things to be dropped for the duration. Greg must have sensed this. In May he wrote me, "I fear for your fan-nish existence in NY. That city has a good reputation for ending fannish activity, and getting fans embroiled in politics. What's more, I dislike the place."

In New York I spent a hard half-year scuffling as a neo-pro writer.. I made a few sales, but not enough to do more than live minimally on. I hocked one of my typewriters, my sliderule and my drafting set. Sometimes we lived a whole week on day-old ("used") bread and cream cheese, while dreaming aloud of the steaks we'd someday be able to afford. Those were strange time -- the sort which one can look back upon as part of one's "romantic youth," but which weren't a lot of fun to live through. But I made contacts and I persevered, and when METRONOME magazine was revived with its May 1960 issue, I was in it as a featured columnist. I'd broken through, and established myself as a professional jazz critic. Subsequently I would become a Contributing Editor of METRONOME and a columnist in JAZZ GUIDE, and in a few years I'd be writing and editing science fiction -- my original love.

In February 1960, almost exactly a year after I'd published VOID 14, I resumed publication of VOID, launching its bestknown phase, the New York issues. But they deserve a seperate column, which I may or may not ever write.

-- Ted White

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"Nobody can make a machine so smart that some jerk  
won't be too dumb to run it." --Gyro Gearloose  
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CANFIELD FOR TAFF '83





## WEIRD RAILROAD STORIES

BY RAY NELSON

Science Fiction is always looking for anecdotes about successful predictions made by authors in our field, and recently I found that I myself might be able to supply such a prophetic success story. Leafing through the December 1980 issue of THE FUTURIST, I came across an article entitled "Macroengineering: Appropriate Technology on a Planetary Scale" which described, much to my surprise, something called "The Planetran" which seemed to me a perfect example of science-fiction becoming science-fact, only this time yours truly was the inventor of the fiction. But allow me to begin at the beginning.

In 1947 I was a freshman in high school in Cadillac, Michigan. One day I was fooling around with solenoids in the school lab when suddenly an odd notion popped into my head.

I had noted how the iron core jumped out when current was applied to the wire-wound cylinder, and I fell to daydreaming about what might happen if the cylinder was longer and the core larger. I saw it right away in terms of a train going through a tunnel, perhaps because I was as much a train buff then as I am now.

In the early fifties I participated in poetry readings staged by the so-called beatniks, Alan Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, William Burroughs and Co. I began writing a kind of serial to be read aloud in segments at these events, a science-fiction serial about a train of the future entitled "Turn Off The Sky".

Because it was not written for publication, but for public reading in a literate, tolerant atmosphere, "Sky" was not your average shootum-up space opera. It was more episodic, more philosophical, more dramatic, and above all, more sexy than anything I would have done for the magazines of the period. In some ways it is more a play than a piece of fiction, a play in which, during the original performance at the Mistrail Bookstore on the banks of the Seine, I took all the parts, hamming it up outrageously.

The plot (if one can call it a plot) concerned the transition between a fairly free society and a total anarchy, debunking the notion that anarchy is incompatible with high technology. The hero, whom I called Abelard Rosenberg, is transparently modeled on my friend, the Chicago Black Activist Joffery Stewart, and the heroine on a combination of Detroit Science-Fantasy League member Reva Smilansky and Rita Stargazer, a premature hippie I knew in San Francisco. The heroine I called Rita the Witch.

(An earlier version of this article appeared in WHISTLESTOP JUNCTION)



Abelard and Rita fall in love, Rita gives Abelard a glimpse of the lifestyle which later was called hippie, then she is killed in a terrorist bombing by one of Abelard's anarchist friends. The central symbol, tying together a narrative that borders on free association, is a magnetic train that hurtles to and fro around the globe, demonstrating (I thought) the potentials of human freedom. Rita dies on the train, demonstrating (I thought) the dangers of freedom without respect for the life and freedom of others.

Alan Ginsberg liked it. William Burroughs, who is the most avid science fiction fan I've ever met outside of the fannish microcosm, suggested I seek publication.

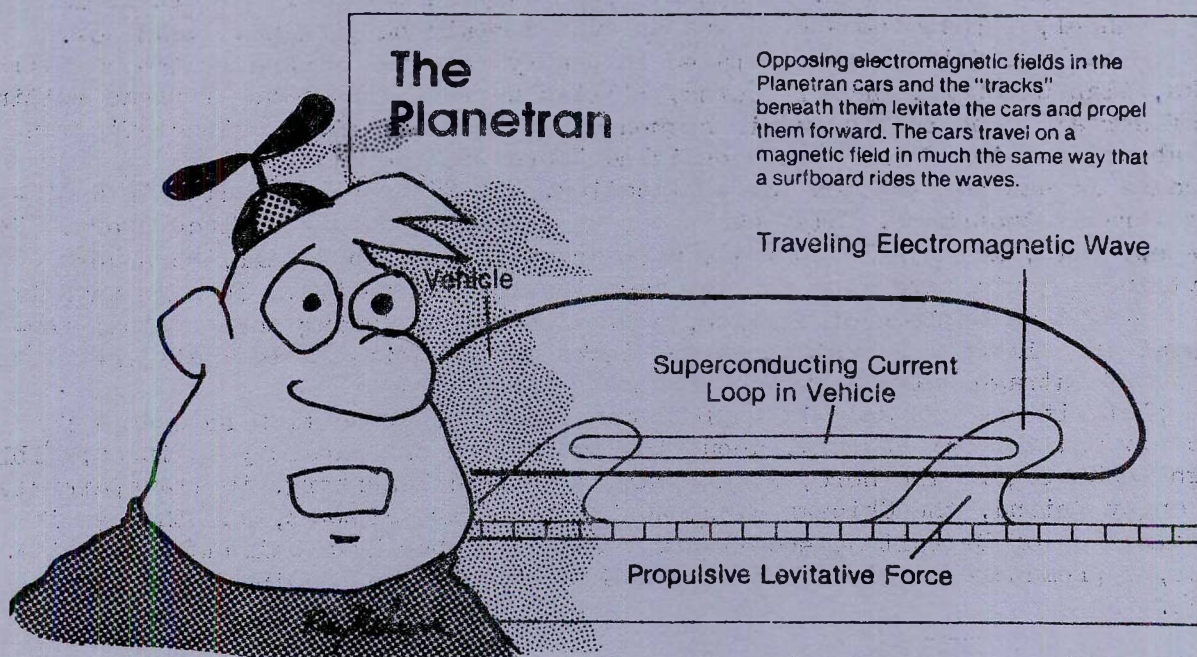
In 1959, when it was finished, I sent it to my friend, Forrest Ackerman, who was then, among other things, a literary agent, he in turn sent it out to market. It was rejected by every magazine in the field and finally returned to me with a pile of rejection slips all of which said more or less the same thing. "I like it but my readers won't." One slip even indicated it had been read aloud by Damon Knight at a Milford conference as an example of good but unorthodox stuff that couldn't be published because of editorial taboos.

With a shrug I put the coffee-stained, dog-eared manuscript in a box and stashed it away in the basement. Then four years passed and I forgot all about "Turn Off The Sky" until one day when Andy Main, who was then renting a room in my house, told me he had heard that Avram Davidson, who had been a slushpile reader at FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION when my masterpiece passed through, was now editor, and that he remembered my story and wanted to publish it. Moreover Avram was now on the West Coast, visiting friends in the Venice district of Los Angeles.

I had an appointment for a job interview as an art director that day, but I said, "To Hell with it", and set off at dawn driving my decaying Nash Rambler down the coast from the San Francisco Bay Area to L.A..

I arrived around sundown only to discover that Avram was not at home. I settled down in my car, parked in front of his quaint, sagging little house. I waited. And waited. And waited. I slept a little, off and on, as best I could. At last with the dawn came bearded, jovial Avram, clad in the plaid yarmulke that in those days signified that he was an orthodox Jew, but not too orthodox. He had been partying all night long, blissfully unaware that I lay in wait for him, yellowing manuscript in hand.

I leaped from the car and confronted him. Imagine his relief when I informed





him I did not want to mug or rob him, but only sell him a story!

"Turn Off The Sky" finally broke into print in a somewhat shortened form in the August 1963 issue of F&SF, and though it was my first publication in the science fiction field, (except for fanzines) Avram honored it with a superb Emsh cover and a full page introduction in which he said, "The story is quite unlike anything you ever read."

Allow me to quote a few lines, where I describe the central gadget of the whole imaginary world I made up for this tale:

"The undergrounds... hurtled through a vacuum, magnetically suspended and propelled, like the transcontinental and transoceanic tubes, at over a thousand miles an hour."

The story proved to be one of the most controversial in the magazine's history. Avram was deluged with so many letters that he started a letter column. (F&SF had never had a letter column before.) Many attacked the story as not being science fiction, since it totally lacked the standard science fiction furniture of rayguns, spaceships, robots and bug-eyed monsters. Others were shocked that I used a female protagonist, and absolutely outraged that I allowed a white woman to co-habit with a black man without benefit of clergy. (The early sixties must be lived through to be believed.) Avram printed a handful of the more printable letters and forwarded the rest to me.

I didn't bother to answer the letters attacking me on moral grounds, but I did write to everyone who attacked me on technical grounds, claiming my magnetic train, for one reason or another, wouldn't work. These people, mostly electronics engineers and other tech people, forced me to work out the details of the train, and in arguing with them I convinced myself the thing was at least possible.

Nevertheless it never entered the warehouse of standard science fiction props, and the story itself, unlike many other of my later efforts, was never anthologized, never published abroad in F&SF's foreign subsidiaries, never reprinted, and, though nominated for a Hugo, was removed from the ballot for reasons that remain unclear to this day.

I heard no more about magnetic trains until 1975, when a friend of mine from way back, Ernest Callenbach, self-published the now-classic science fiction novel, "Ecotopia". "Ecotopia" was one of three breakthrough novels in that year, but like the others, was not even nominated for either the Hugo or the Nebula. (It went, if I'm not mistaken, to the orthodox and forgettable "Where Late the Sweet Bird Sang.")

Let me quote Callenbach's delightful throwaway description:

"By the time you notice you are underway in an Ecotopian train, you feel virtually no movement at all. Since it operates by magnetic suspension and propulsion, there is no rumble of wheels or whine of vibration."

Though Bantam eventually published a mass-market paperback edition of "Ecotopia", the magnetic train then whisked silently off into the oblivion from which it had come, except among a small group of Callenbach fans, or Ecotopians, who published the posh but short-lived magazine SERIATIM and advocated the secession of the West Coast from the Union.

However, according to THE FUTURIST magazine, a certain Robert Salter of the Rand Corporation read a paper before the 1978 annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in which he described what he called the "Planetran", an exact duplicate of the underground train in "Turn Off The Sky", except that he raised the speed limit to 14,000 mph.

Shortly thereafter Henry Kolm at The Massachusetts Institute of Technology built a small-scale prototype which "functioned flawlessly", but was unable to get funding for further research.

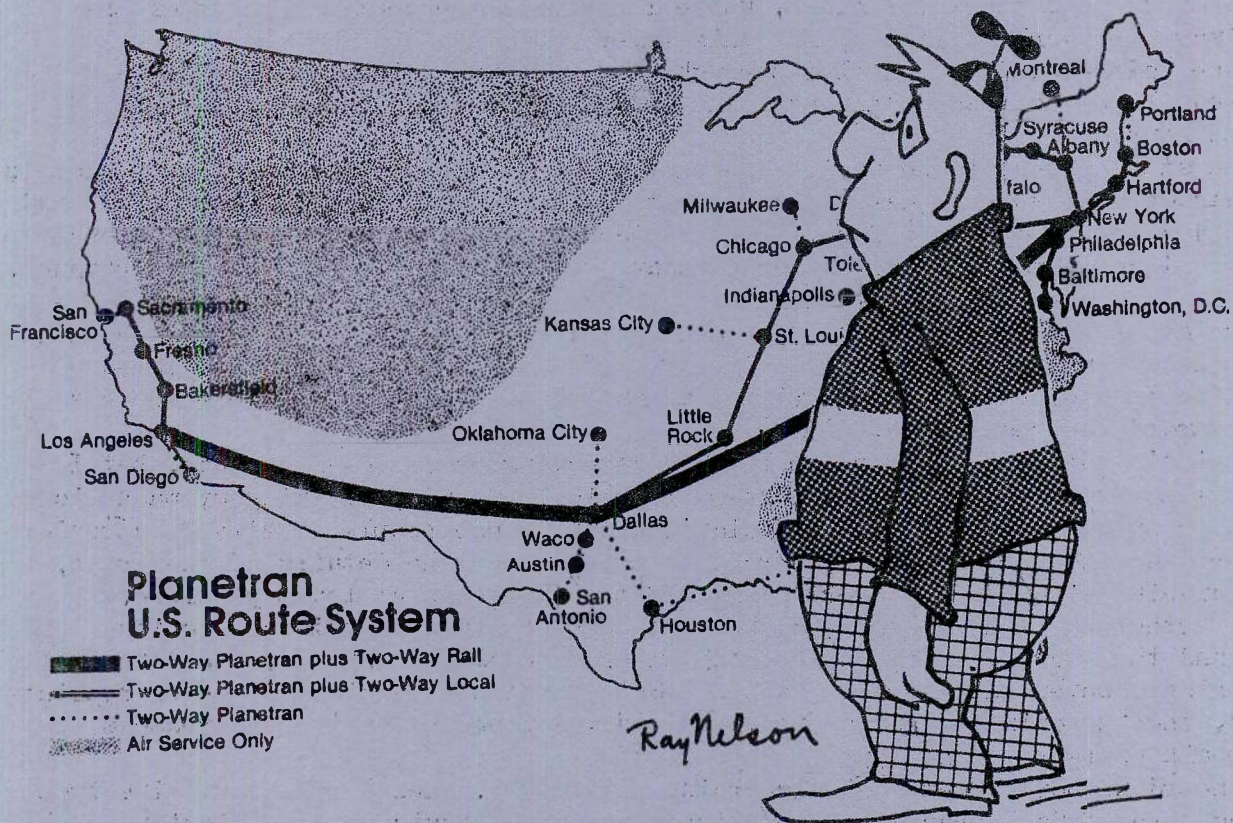
At this point the clever orientals entered the picture, building a full-



scale locomotive that went 300 mph. Again according to THE FUTURIST, "the Japanese will probably begin commercialization before the end of the decade."

What kind of a railroad would a science fiction writer design if he were designing a railroad? One that looks absolutely crazy, but works!

-- Ray Nelson



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 "One thing is for sure, the sheep is not a creature of the air!" --Robert Fripp  
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A few days ago I attended a going-away-party for Avram Davidson, who always seems to be either going away or arriving, and there I encountered none other than Terry Carr. As we sat in the cluttered Eden of Avram's back yard, eating scientological canapes and sipping Japanese beer, I asked Terry, "Which number of fandom are we now in?"

After first thanking me for asking him one of the few questions to which he knew the answer, the Sage of Towner Hall replied, "We are now in Last Fandom, since everything that can be done in a fandom has already been done."

"I'm sorry I asked," I said in dismay, but a little later my Beanie Boy eternal optimism returned and I asked him, "Then how about reviving the glorious days of the past? For example, don't you think this would be a fine time to revive the Golden Gate Futurians?"

In dark and sepulchral tones the witty Mr. Carr delivered himself of the following showstopper. "The Golden Gate Futurians is an idea whose time has come ...and gone."

Thus has the light and clever and nonserious spirit of one of fandom's finest withered away to gall and wormwood. --a letter from Ray Nelson, 9/4/80

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 "One who studies Fanhistory is, they say, NOT doomed to repeat it." Larry Stark  
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# THE TRANSATLANTIC HEARING AID

PART 2

DAVE  
LANGFORD

THE STORY SO FAR: Miscreant TAFF delegate LANGFORD has spun an alarming number of words out of an uneventful plane trip ('uneventful' admittedly not being the view of travelphobic HAZEL) and sketched first impressions of America in a few deft heat-strokes, causing satirical GARY DEINDORFER to remark that, actually, he already knew that New York City was hot in the summer and that hospitable STU SHIFFMAN was Jewish. Meanwhile, falling prey to those symptoms of TAFF-report sickness already noted in the famous historical case of PETER ROBERTS, hapless LANGFORD became rather dormant just as he wrote his way into sight of Boston's legendary WORLD-CON. Mere months later, he is unfeelingly roused by the cruelly barbed hints of TED WHITE and DAN STEFFAN, and---

THURSDAY 28 AUGUST 1980, continued

"Copley Plaza Hotel?" said the taxi driver.

"That's right."

"You sure you don't want the Copley Square?"

"No."

"I can wait around if you like, let you check you've got the right place."

"We're fine, thanks. Copley Plaza's the one. My notebook never lies."

Suddenly the taxi swerved appallingly towards the wrong side of the road... no, of course, the right side of the road. "Here you are, Copley Plaza, Now you see over there, that's the Copley Square, and---" Gibbering, we thrust dollar bills at him and ran for the pavement, there to inspect each other for the stigmata of Boston visitors who were inexorably marked down for the Copley Square hotel.

Our first reaction to the Copley Plaza was, indeed, to wonder ourselves whether we'd found the right place. "Gorblimey," I breathed as I surveyed the lofty halls dripping with gigantic chandeliers. "I have seen the nineteenth century and it works."

"Art nouveau," explained Hazel, who is an art nouveau fan. "Art nouveau carried to the point of, er, vomit." I deferred to her invariable good taste and kept my mouth shut. Thus, keeping close together, two shabby British fans moved furtively through the vaulted halls, casting sidelong glances at marble, mirrors and gilt; Hazel broke down altogether when confronted with furry, carpeted fire-doors which van Sacher-Masoch would have considered to be very much along the right lines.

Reaching our room somehow, we shut the door on America for a while and set about recuperating from the journey and the pattern of the upstairs carpets. But America came straight back in at the window as I peered at the most surreal hotel-room view I've ever seen. Why were there two skylines, one on top of the other? After much fubbing of eyes it turned out that next door was the John Hancock building -- hundreds of feet tall, prism-shaped and mirror-surfaced, with a convincing reflection of our hotel in the sheer side facing us. I waved at the reflection and



looked long and fruitlessly for the image of a far-off Langford waving back. Was this a little-known side effect of being a British tourist -- not showing up in American mirrors? For a crazed moment I wondered if we still cast shadows. It took a ridiculous time to work out that the Hancock'd wall made a 45° angle with the hotel'd, and that true to form I was searching for myself in entirely the wrong building.

This might explain my tiny vindictive grin when later informed that Hancock's Erektion was gradually sinking into the soggy Boston soil. In a way, that disconcerting moment was prophetic; I seemed to spend a good deal of Noreascon looking for fannishness in the wrong places, or maybe looking for the wrong sort of fannishness.

But our first visit to the Sheraton-Boston hotel and the con proper was more encouraging: we found a system of little corridors and lobbies rather than the vast echoing chambers I'd feared, and it was only moderately and selectively crowded, so where we'd dreaded teeming anonymous hordes we were instead besieged with many familiar, repulsive faces of British fandom. It was, of course, only the Thursday night.... There was time only to say preliminary hellos and hideously insult Mike Glicksohn (as required by the Unalterable Law) before Graham England decided we needed food and efficiently led us to the toilets. My plane- and New York-shocked faculties still couldn't cope with more than whichever room or hall we actually happened to be in; it was like threading one's way through an ultra-modern Dungeons & Dragons scenario, encountering odd people and odd creatures at intervals through the random labyrinth. That particular feeling became overpowering when we were suddenly confronted by idiots in contemporary combat rig, carrying lethal-looking carbines. Very science fictional, no doubt. Graham did three impersonations until the menace was out of sight "The right to bear weapons in the right to be free," I intoned, not without nostalgic memories of those unconvincing cardboard-and-tinsel rayguns at home cons. What fun it must be, to get up in the morning and look forward to a whole day of frightening nervous fans.

(I must mention -- before some wretch like KeV Smith does -- that I'm not 100% guiltless in this area. At the second convention I ever attended, I wore cheapo sunglasses adapted by adding LEDs to provide tiny glowing red lights at the center of each lens. These I would suddenly switch on as I encountered fans in dim corridors; I'm still buying Bob Shaw whiskies to atone for the resulting shock to his nerves... As a means of causing alarm and despondency at a con, this now seems relatively humane.)

Graham's chosen eating-place was the Ground Round, a title which I correctly guessed was another hamburger euphemism. Americans seem rather coy about referring directly to their supposed national dish, any particularly enigmatic-sounding item on the menu always turns out to be a hamburger variant. I can't remember much about the food (other than that I contrived to avoid the lurking burger, chiefly by ordering chicken), but I do recall the waitress being charmed by our cultured British accents.

"Say something else," she would plead, and we would duly elocute, choosing sentences which properly showed off our vowels (eg. "How about if you brought the beer?"), and she would quiver as though Graham's vocal chords were plugged directly into her pleasure senters. My own cultured British tones were slightly less prized than his, possibly because they're tainted with a trace of the Welsh, look you, bach.

"I could listen to you all night," the waitress said lingeringly; it seemed by that time that she had.

Infatuated with this success, I went back to the Sheraton and tried my cultured mumble on Terry Hughes, who was more blasé about Brits and merely handed over a pile of TAFF dollars with the cheery comment that he'd been frightfully worried about being mugged whilst carrying this titanic three-figure sum, but not at last he could walk the streets without fear. "Gee, thanks, Terry," I said, mentally counting the streets between me and the Copley Plaza.

We said cultured but increasingly inaudible things to numberless fans, most of whom seemed to the fevered brain to be British. Our very own Paul Kincaid had even



insinuated himself into the vast staff of con helpers, this being about as difficult as insinuating oneself off a log: "I wrote the Noreascon press release on British Fandom," he said with the sort of smile Nineteen Eighty-Four's Ministry of Truth hacks must have worn when they'd rewritten a particularly good bit of history. I tracked down a 'Noreascon Press Kit' later, an imposing folder slightly less thick than WARHOON 28; there was an interesting sheet about someone called Hugo Gernsbach, not written by Paul, and one about me (possibly written by Paul, since it subtly told me I was going to write a TAFF report in no time at all, coffcoff), and photos by Jay Kay Klein of guests of honour Damon Knight, Kate Wilhelm and Bruce Pelz (I know they were by Jay Kay Klein because they each had a rubber stamp saying so on the back: to discourage the Press from actually using these photos, they'd been stacked while the stamps were wet, giving each GoH an interesting tattoo on the forehead)... However, Paul's Britfandom release was missing and I suppose I'd never know what he wrote about us all. "Since 1975, all fannish activity in British Isles and points east has been dominated by the colossal figure of Paul Kincaid..."

Some confused while later I was bending double in order to listen to Alyson Abramowitz (who is a member of neither Tall Fandom or Loud Fandom) telling me about all the fanzines I'd failed to send her over the last several years, when the ground began to tremble. Fans in the crowded lobby gazed this way and that with wild surmise; some dived under tables for cover as an Unidentified Female Object thundered towards us at transphotic velocity. The impact came, as described at rather too much greater length in Lucifer's Hammer; the resulting shockwave hurled fans to the floor and Alyson into close orbit. Painfully I dragged my bruised body from the crater at ground zero. "Hello, Joyce," I said.

Joyce Scrivner -- for it was she -- proceeded to welcome us to America with all the vast enthusiasm at her disposal. When one has been welcomed to America by Joyce one feels one has never been welcomed properly to anywhere before, and that one may never survive being welcomed to anywhere again. The greeting hug of a grizzly bear is a feeble and pallid thing

## TAFMAN DISCOVERS AMERICAN'S SECRET RITUALISTIC TATTOO





compared to Joyce's. Pausing only to gigglingly introduce me to a bemused Anne-Laurie Logan (with whom Joyce believes me to have some dire feud), she promised us the run of all Noreascon's most secret room-parties. The thought of parties this early in the con was, however, too much; exhausted but happy, we staggered off into the night.

JULY 1981

"Look. How long is this thing going to be?"

W "Well... I'm halfway down my eighth page of notes. There are only 55 pages if you don't count the mysterious interleavings marked '26a' and 'Dunno where this fits'. The overall length isn't the problem (since I never wear overalls); it's a matter of Structure.

"If you're going to go on about Structuralism and Catastrophe Theory -- Its Relation To The Hugo Results, you can stop this imaginary dialogue right here."

"Fear not: my structural secret is that basically there isn't going to be any. The trouble is that the TAFF experience has changed so much from the old days. Once you could travel to a Worldcon and find it a cosy refuge from the vast tossing sea of mundanity -- a strange exotic island where fannish castaways had adventures as a close-knit band. The pattern of a trip report would emerge more or less naturally from such communal adventuring..."

"How do you know? You weren't there."

"No, but I saw the film. I mean, I read the fanzines. Now Noreascon wasn't exactly a refuge from the vast tossing sea of mundanity; it was a tossing sea in its own right. From time to time you could shout to other lifejacketed fans as they happened to drift nearby; these meetings seemed so random that I felt helpless and at the mercy of the waves. In short, to scrap the watery metaphors before they start gurgling out of the typewriter and across the floor, Noreascon was---"

"You're going to say it!"

"Certainly I'm going to say it."

"But everybody says it. It's already a cliché. Be different! Be orig---"

"Noreascon was too bloody big."

FRIDAY 29 AUGUST 1980

One of the decadent joys of holidaying is going out for breakfast; this morning, at a place called Brigham's, Hazel took it upon herself to exert linguistic skills in the matter of fried eggs. "Sunny side up, basted," she said with quiet confidence -- whereupon a waitress tolerantly informed her that these are entirely different things. After the 15-minute lecture (with diagrams) from our helpful waitress, a chastened Hazel decided that really her favourite eggs were scrambled ones. Meanwhile I scanned the restaurant for the mighty and famous but only found Barry Malzberg, who walked past moaning faintly and looking rather less connected with reality than his own characters.

Outside, we admired the US flags flying everywhere: how patriotic. I wondered if they were all at half-mast because of the convention, but it turned out that flags were flying thus all through Massachusetts and were supposed to be staying that way until the hostages came back from Iran. (In Washington, I found later, they'd adopted still more brutal sanctions against the Ayatollah by not taking the decorations off the municipal Christmas tree.) A more homely note was struck when we re-entered the Sheraton lobby to learn from homely Greg Pickersgill that beer in the hotel bars cost five times as much as in shops outside. "I was in this liquor store place," said Greg, "saying 'God this is cheap -- that's bloody cheap,' and the guy at the counter was saying 'How do you live over there?' I wanted to give him my address -- maybe he'd have sent me food parcels..."

At Greg's recommendation I stocked up with something called Michelob, which differed from most US beers in almost having a taste. At \$2.85 for six largeish bottles, this nearly but not quite had me wailing "How do I live over there?" (The last straw came when I was told this was not a cheap and nasty thirst-quencher but a 'premier beer' of some distinction... I was carried out in strong hysterics.)



The bottles were stowed in my habitual vast shoulder-bag and I started pulling out fanzines to lighten the load. At once Roz Kaveney appeared, yet another Briton and practically the only one to have Done Something about the age-old question "Why aren't there enough women in UK fandom?" she grabbed TWLL-DDU 18 with the hyper-abstruse literary competition I'd included to annoy people, and proceeded to display repulsive intellectualism by looming over me and reeling off all the more obscure answers without even opening the fanzine.

The crowds were thickening as more people pressed in to register for Noreascon. "Why are we standing round here in lobbies?" I asked. "Where do the true fans hang out?" No answer came. I consulted the official map in the pocket programme: this resembled a cubist map of the Underground, and I still don't understand it. Indeed I never found the 'fan room', which by all account didn't much resemble the convivial fan rooms at home, being instead devoted to continuous showings of Harry Andruschak Collates Fanzines. The cheap bar to which I was instinctively drawn as a possible fannish gathering-place turned out to be a fast-food counter with an exciting choice of two drinks, beer or large beer. It seemed that to meet fans one just had to stand around in lobbies.

One o'clock approached, and firm hands led me through new labyrinths to where a TAFF/DUFF panel was to be held ('Fans Across The Sea: Fanfund Politics') -- in a vast unfinished-looking hall called Lower Exhibit, containing partitioned-off hutches for minor programme items and, in the center of the great bare floor, TAFF and DUFF sales tables which proved excellent places for meeting the two fans who happened to be manning them at the time. Let us not conceal the horrid truth: TAFF no longer arouses great interest at US Worldcons. I'd braced myself for the terrors of a scaled-up audience... let's see, about 50 out of 600 at a TAFF event at the 1980 British Eastercon, meaning that with 6000 at Noreascon we could expect 500, dear God, how will we ever squeeze them all in here?

The audience numbered twenty-two (22). We could have held the event in a lift.

(This isn't, by the way, a stricture on Noreascon's committee: though much derided, they were considerably more generous to fanfund delegates than demanded by any reflection of the enthusiasm of the membership at large. After that panel it was a relief to learn from ever-friendly Selina Lovett that hotel bills would indeed be covered by the convention, and to recall that a whole page had been devoted to each of TAFF and DUFF in the programme book.)

## TAFFMAN DISCOVERS U.S. TRUFANDOM





The panel itself wobbled at great length -- unmemorably, until someone brought up the old notion of weighted fanfund voting. The sending country's votes should count more because those fans know more about the candidates; the receiving country's votes should count more because those those fans will have to put up with the cretin who's actually elected.... Nobody really wanted to make a decision on that one, and sure enough nobody did.

Afterwards I found the book-dealer's room, which must have been the size of two football pitches -- though the word, of course, wasn't 'book dealer' but the sleazier-sounding 'huckster', and sure enough the few books on show were entirely lost in wads of Star Wars t-shirts, fantasy games, unicorn jewellery, Spock badges, plastic spaceships, Gandalf candles, stuffed tribbles, balsa-wood dragons, cuddly Alien dolls for the kiddies: all the things which (unlike books) make big money these days. After fighting past an endless Asimov signing queue which looped and coiled everywhere like the Midgard serpent, I managed to find several books hidden away in one corner of all this, and duly bought some super James Branch Cabell first editions as mementoes of the fading past. Here Alexei Panshin sobbed at my feet, pitifully wailing "Cory needs a new pair of shoes," until I condescended to accept a copy of SF In Dimension for a trifling sum.

Then at last we found Avedon Carol, a Momentous Experience. She glanced into TALL-DDU, instantly located her letter and screamed "Oh God! You printed my snide remarks about Taral! OhGod! I'll have to apologize!! He's really a great artist, you know, it's just that he's all fucked up..." She leapt about alarmingly in an impressive, histrionic outburst of guilt, and subsequently apologized to Taral several times before he saw TD himself.

Hazel thought Avedon was really terrific; when she found Avedon was also Armenian, she wanted to take her home with us. I asked, but she said no.

Possibly as a result of Avedon's difficulty in hearing me and vice-versa, the notes became confused at this point. Moshe Feder explained that he only has to sniff to tell Coke from Pepsi, as misreported in DNQ; Gary Farber said "Jacqueline Lichtenberg has been a pain over here for years"; Jim Barker's Captive slideshow (the connection is with The Prisoner, emphatically not The Capture) was performed to great hilarity though little attendance owing to the Sheraton's refusal to allow the event's existence to be announced on the internal PA; Paul Kincaid reappeared wearing a pretty badge from 'Cranberry World', which he swore was a museum of cranberries in Plymouth, Mass. (visions of eighteenth-dynasty mummified cranberries in individual carcophagi); and under the inarguable leadership of Joyce, we were marched off for an evening meal.

The Bulkie was, astonishingly, named after its version of the great American burger, which looked remarkably like all the other versions. Dim and crowded, The Bulkie had been overwhelmed by hordes from the con across the road, and gave us the opportunity for hour on hour of scintillant conversation, as follows:---

Moshe: "What did you order?"

Hazel and me: "Mumble mumble."

Moshe: "Oh, that's probably safe. You musn't ever order bagels in Boston, they're not authentic here."

(An hour passes thus.)

Rochelle Reynolds: "I CAN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER!" (She walks out.)

Lise Eisenberg: "AAAAAARGH!" (She walks out.)

Me (after another interglacial period or so with no food in sight): "Suppose we protest by going on hunger strike."

(Lise returns with a cheeseburger from elsewhere, and pointedly eats it. Rochelle returns with a couple of peculiar orange lumps.)

Rochelle: "These are knishes! You've got to try them!"

Moshe: "No, they're not, they're the wrong color."

Rochelle: "Why do you have to make everything a drag...?"

Moshe: "But you're misrepresenting the knish to our guests!"

(Even longer pause. Entropy tends to a maximum; the universe cools; the stars begin to go out. Suddenly in a flurry of motion, the food comes and we



eat it and the bill comes and Moshe is pouring over piles of change to settle up...)

Rochelle: "Our American equivalent of Kevin Smith."

Moshe looked hurt by that cruel blow, as well he might; British fans might think him more of an American equivalent of our Gerald 'Boris' Lawrence (it's the beard that does it).

Back at the Sheraton, Candice Massey (little knowing that she would shortly be added to the improbably large list of Martin Hoare's claimed conquests at this con) explained that though American to the core, she couldn't get a US passport. I asked if she'd overthrown the government recently: "Worse than that! My parents were too cheap to buy me a birth certificate!" With awe we realized that we stood in the presence of a lady who, however precocious, was legally unborn.

Then came the great meet The BNFs party, held in a foyer barely large enough to contain the names, let alone the fans. Here I and DUFF winner Keith Curtis combed the crowds in search of the really famous fans. promised; we couldn't even find Bruce Pelz. Slowly the hideous realization crept over us: "We have met the BNF," I declared, "and he is us!" Keith and I swapped notes on fanfundery, and incautiously revealed that -- Australian delegate or no -- his passport address is Cramer, Norfolk, UK. Suspicious, I call it. Then Mike Glicksohn appeared (as is his unfortunate habit) and we demanded his homage. "BNFs should wear funny hats," he grumbled. "I don't recognize any here."

"There you are," said a lady called Doris, grabbing Mike accusingly. "You left me saying you'd be right back."

"Well, um," Mr. Glicksohn explained. "Here's Hazel Langford, she doesn't like Americans, ask her why."

"Another fine mess you've gotten me into," said the light of my life.

Then the Great Moshe ascended the stage -- this merely being a foyer, the stage had been cleverly improvised from a chair -- and through a small megaphone explained that BNF status was fleeting ("I don't like that," whispered a worried Keith) and that, possibly to make sure of this, all BNFs would now have gold stars attached to some portion of their anatomy. "And the garble BNFs I can see," said the megaphone, "are Dave Garble the Taff

## TAFFMAN DISCOVERING THE LANGUAGE BARRIER





grackle and Keith Crackle garble winner." Suddenly Keith and I were up on chairs to make a joint speech which we instantly agreed to forget and which nobody else had any chance to remember, the megaphone's batteries plainly not having been changed since its former use by Paul Revere. Nevertheless our sheer force of personality caused someone in the audience to see the light and contribute all his worldly goods to the grackle fund. After shrewd TAFF/DUFF bargaining, the administrators pocketed 50¢ apiece and went looking for the beer, which had run out.

It certainly is a wonderful thing to be a fleeting BNF. But I won't reveal where Moshe attached my coveted gold star.

With Friday evening's parties, Moreascon began to seem more like a real convention. There were good points: the SF/A suite, object of much popular hatred at Seacon '79, had been merged with the programme participants' watering-hole and was happily free of security fetishists checking credentials and fingerprints. There were not-so-good things, like the way this and so many other parties were on the 22nd floor or thereabouts of one of the hotel's two towers: since the towers weren't linked above the fifth floor (improbable location of the swimming pool), and since the average TAFF emissary of 1980 had great difficulty remembering which tower he was supposed to be going up, this resulted in a great deal of extra travelling time. And there were bizarre scenes which stirred my British sense of wonder, like all those ice-filled bathtubs from which wild partygoers would snatch inexhaustible supplies of canned Coke, whilst a solitary six-pack of beer was denied fulfilment until some transatlantic sot arrived.

Party memories from that night are mercifully few. Again I failed to communicate with Tom Disch... He: (feeble joke). Disch: (baffled noise). He: (louder feeble joke). Disch: (wary frown). He: (very loud embarrassed rendition of feeble joke). Disch: (sudden distaste; turns away quickly to ask Roz about The Operation).

Then Chris Atkinson (of Malcolm Edwards fame) and Malcolm Edwards (of Chris Atkinson fame) united to tell me the one about Harlan. This was largely a monologue from Chris, to be treasured since her usual conversational approach involves cryptic remarks varied with alarming silences. "We met Harlan at the airport, and I was thinking, Gee, my Hero, and he was a tit. He was very rude and I told him not to be. We were staying with Charles Platt in New York and he had a lot of Cockroaches. Now Charles wanted to pretend the car we'd hired was his own when we picked up Harlan, but first he went back to the wrong car at the airport, and halfway home I said the wrong thing about our car, and Harlan said 'This isn't your car then, Charles?'"

"So that," she concluded obscurely, "deflated Harlan Ellison."

After I'd thought about this story, and carefully jotted it down, and thought about it some more, I began to worry that my brain was not working as well as it should. It seemed a good time to wander off to bed, after an evening (and a few hours of morning) which had made good fannish fun -- as proven by the extreme illegibility of all my notes.

As I left, a few SFWA stalwarts (Diane Duane is a name which vaguely springs to mind) were standing at the door of the suite, feebly calling "Closing in five minutes! Closing in five minutes!" This proved anew that SF authors are indeed lousy prophets: the same weak chant had been audible when I wandered in, two hours before.

JULY 1981

"That's it? You're stopping here, without getting further than Friday night?"

"Early Saturday morning. You don't read these immortal words carefully enough. This is Structure, this is. It's what we hacks call a natural break."

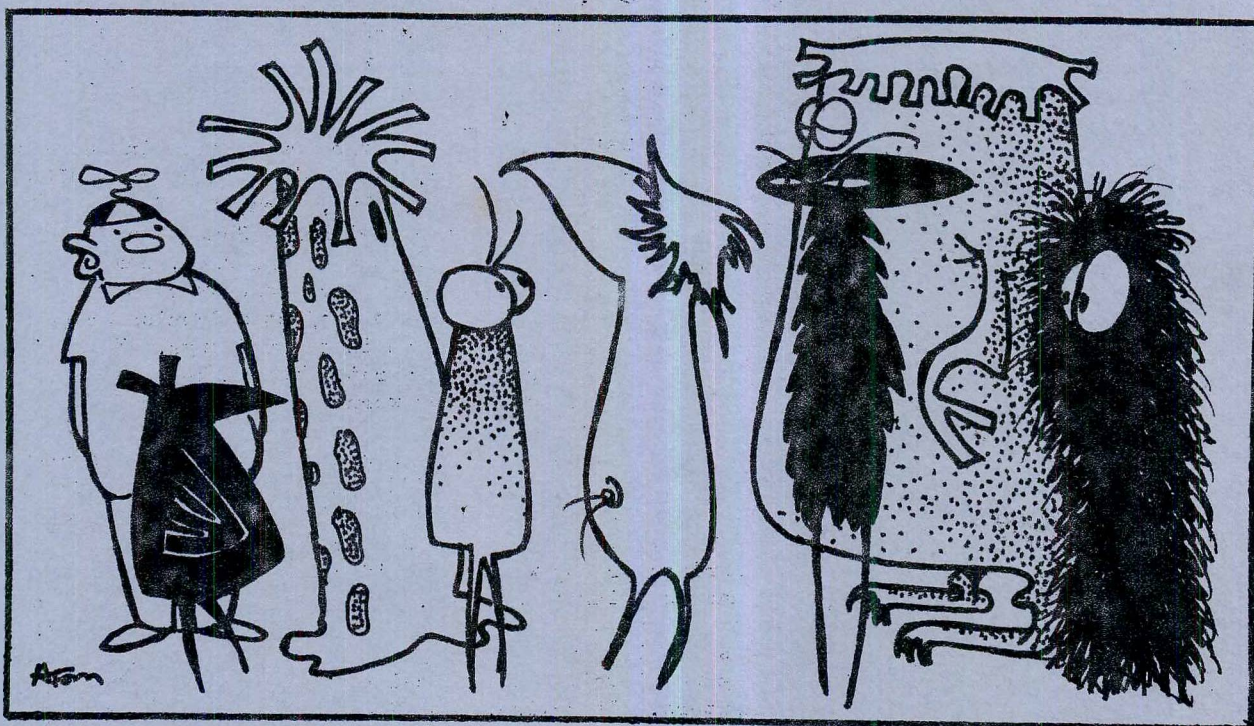
"Very suspenseful. Fandom waits agog to find whether you were mugged as you tottered through the dark streets to the Copley Plaza..."

"Well, as a matter of fact -- no, let's not destroy the suspense. Time for the ritual Words of Invocation for the next installment---"

"Real Soon Now!"

--Dave Langford





Gary Deinderfer 447 Bellevue Ave. #9B Trenton, NJ 08618

I count myself lucky that I got to meet Walt and Madeleine Willis when they were here in the early 60s. Believe it or not, in the mid-60s I got a letter from Walt with favorable comments on my humble little fanzine LYDDITE. He also solicited an article by me for HYPHEN. I was pretty much gafia at the time and never wrote the article. It was shortly after this that I wrote a letter to rich brown about having been locked up in a closet for a few years which he seemed to take seriously for a while. With humor that obvious, what could a submission to HYPHEN have led to but a rejection?

Ah, Willis...his subtle mind, his kindness, his civilized humorous detachment from the swirling phenomena going on around him, his genius for synthesis of all kinds, on numerous levels. Without him, fanzine fandom would not have become so rich and intricately self referential. It is as though he alone realized the real potential that his hobby group had for being made more complex.

I think it ended up bothering him more than we realized to become an object of worship, adulation and veneration. It was almost as though we were saying to him, "WAW, we have frozen you in a timeless moment as a hieratic god. The real you that lives, eats, sleeps and breathes is no longer our concern; we have captured the ur-Willis."

This must have gotten on Walt's nerves. Fans, especially among the younger generation, were no longer treating him as a real, live human being. He was being reacted to in terms of the idealized ghod-Willis that had come to blot out the living reality of the human being Walt Willis. It must have been discouraging for him. Small wonder that he gradually entered the glades of gafia (and it was a very protracted, stage-by-stage gafiation). As Ted says, fandom no longer was the wonderful place for him that it had been in the years he carved out his legend.

Well done article by Ted.

Agreed, Greg Benford's article is a major article of fan history, as well as being a probing psychological self examination, and, not least, loaded with nuggets of humor.

I never realized before this article that Greg had never met the other VOID Boys face to face while VOID was being coedited. Nor, amazingly enough, that he never saw Towner Hall.

I know what he means about the distancing, the easy cynicism, the biting tongue. Many of us have decided that these traits are the essence of fannishness. Now Greg questions this. Can you be fannish without succumbing to these self limiting characteristics? Yes, Willis shows us that you can. But you have to have Willis's talent, and none of us do.

One thing I like about fandom nowadays is that we are freer to be our own sloppy selves. We let it hang out more. We don't have to present such highly polished, glittering facades



to each other as we did in the old days. As you say, Arnie Katz's writing shows what a grisly caricature fannishness can be done with too much attention paid to facade building, and too little thought given to facade demolition.

We've been through the drugs, the mind expansion, the social upheavals. We can't be like the VOID Boys were in the early 60s. But, then, the VOID Boys can't be like they were then, either. Some of us have grown, some of us have stayed the same, some of us have shrunk. Nowadays we are more aware of what it can mean (and unmean) to project a fannish archetype/stereotype than we were in the old days. We don't have to get stuck in a rut. We can keep growing, expanding, outgrowing worn out selves and projections of selves.

Greg's article helps me realize all this anew. The reprints of his VOID editorials reread awfully

well, partly in spite of their high degree of artificiality, partly because of it. Greg's comments on the reprints help give them New Levels of Meaning. The Frenzel write-up was especially amusing to me, since I got to know Marland pretty well in California.

Now I have got to ask what Pete Graham is doing these days. I know about Ted, Terry and Greg. Pete is a mystery to me. He was then, he is now. He was always the most mysterious, hard to figure out VOID Boy for me. I suspect I am not the only one this is true of. One of the few things I know about him is that he was involved in radical politics for a while, and was involved in something to do with computers. Otherwise, Pete Graham is an enigma to me. I wouldn't be surprised to learn that nowadays he is very prosperous and also perhaps living a life of rather square affluence, including the big house, wife, kids, membership in exclusive (nonfan) clubs, etc. This is just one scenario I envision for Pete. Another one is that he is leading a more bohemian life than any of the other three VOID Boys. But I don't know. Can you give us any information on Pete in the next BOONFANK?

Bruce's article is pleasant and amusing, with that wacky, slightly askew sense of humor of his. More than slightly askew. But somehow the piece doesn't really go with the other articles. It feels like a "ringer" to me. Maybe this shows that I would not be a good faned. Maybe it is a good idea to throw in an article that doesn't deal in one way or another with Willis, Bergeron, WAINHOON #28, Towner Hall or the VOID Boys. You're the editor, what do you think?

It's a funny piece, but it is like a hillock overshadowed by the Himalayan Benford and brown pieces hemming it in.

Egad, rich outdoes himself in the new "Totem Pole". There are so many subtle twists and turns in this excursion into intricacy of imagination, that it is down-right labyrinthine. I love labyrinthine writing, as long as it is good, which is why I have become so hooked on mainstream author John Barth recently that I have read four of his books and am beginning a fifth one.

I would love to write a long, complex, subtly reasoned piece of writing like rich's new column installment. It is so multifaceted that I can't grasp it in its entirety, but can only skim through it again, marvelling at its sequential esotericnesses.

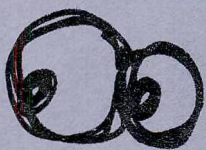
Now, the odd thing is that I remember the Willis ashtray anecdote involving Jim Webbert. I may be way offbase, but I remember either reading about it in Willis's own words, or in somebody else's words about Willis. Now, I may be completely wrong, but, as I say, I used to have a copy of LeeH's QUANNISH. Did I read the anecdote in Willis's column in that issue? Or did that issue come out before Walt even made his first trip to the U.S.A.? I don't know, I just don't know.

It is all a great enigma. Where rich outdoes himself, I think, is in making the transition from speculating on this piece of faanish minutia into a science fiction concept, the stuff about multiple timelines. What amazes me is that he makes his ideas about this so plausible that they transcend what has gone before. Suddenly we are in realms questioning the very nature of reality, realities, etc. We have moved out of fannish lore and into questions of ontology. I have long been fascinated by anything having to do with the nature of existence, nonexistence, the interplay between the two -- even more than being fascinated by discussions of fanlore.

So, for me, a great article about Willis, fannish trivia etc. suddenly became a transcendently great article on ontology. Brilliant, brilliant, brilliant. Rich's mind is so subtle. And the humor underlying his philosophical discussion is sly, both misleading and leading -- moving simultaneously towards and away from the center.

An article from my old friend Bhob Stewart. Now, that was a real surprise to me. I

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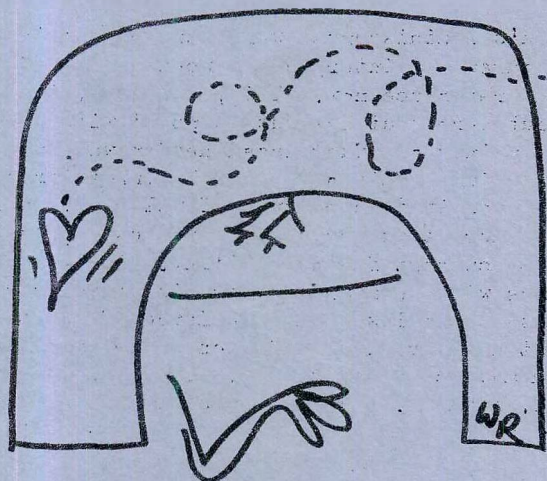
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don't know what he's up to these days, except that he's living in Boston. This letter/article is a real blast from the past for me. Will the mystery of who actually owned the luggage straps ever be solved?

I partly agree with Norm Hollyn about the Towner Hall reprints. Much as I personally got a charge out of them, I am aware of their essential artificiality, the artificiality which became a reductio ad absurdum in the clumsy hands of Arnie Katz. I can see how such reprints might strike a younger crop of fans that way, more so than me, for instance, who was around back then, though I myself was not one of the Powers That Were then. On the other hand, I can imagine other younger fans as intrigued by the Towner Hall writings as Hollyn was turned off. This seems to be the case with Bostick and Cadogan.

I wrote a review of FAST AND LOOSE that slammed it hard enough that Bostick stopped sending it to me. But as I said, I've completely changed my mind about TELOS. I didn't like #1 that much. I liked #2 much better. And #3 was fantastically good, a magnificent issue. TELOS #3 and BOONFARK #4 are two of the most fannish (in the true sense), interesting, well produced fanzines I've received in a long time. Alas, they are both very large and must be a great financial burden. Yes, even in spite of your free xeroxing, because of postage alone. In the years to come the number of fanzines of this size and quality will become very rare, I am afraid. I intend to enjoy them as much as possible while they last.



((Jinkies, Gary, even with editing and micro-elite your letter ran almost two and a half pages. But I'm not complaining -- I wish all my LoCs were this good and this long. :: It seems to me that there is a certain amount of guilt in the minds of fans of your generation, when it comes to Willis. In retrospect they seem to be assuming blame for Willis's gafiation. They (you) seem to be assuming that your enthusiasm for wanting to meet Walt and Madeleine in '62 was more than they could handle, and after fulfilling your dream they removed themselves from the arena of fandom and the possibility of having to go through a third trip to the States at some future date. While this may have been a factor is Willis's gafiation, I don't see how it could be considered the only cause. Surely his increased participation in his government and his country's problems was a major factor, as well as run ins with jerks like Charles Platt and the fact that Willis probably thought he'd accomplished everything in fandom that he could. So I doubt the blame falls solely on the bickering, selfish fans of 1962, "and the terrible way in which we treated Walt and Madeleine." Of course, only Walt himself can tell us the truth of the matter -- but then, he is gafia, and probably doesn't care to think about such things. :: I have asked Terry Carr for a report on the actions of Pete Graham since the VOID days, but as yet haven't received an answer. Watch this letter column for future reports. :: Ted still insists that the luggage straps did not belong to Robert Dashlow, but to a chin-dealer friend. :: You aren't the only one that Alan Bostick stopped sending F&L to...he stopped sending it to everybody. After publishing #9 prior to the '80 Westercon he ceased publication, and hasn't been heard from since (at least not in these parts -- in Seattle they say they still see his shadowy figure lurking in the bushes outside of various fan residences). Too bad, since he has several unpublished columns from TWhite.))

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Just getting ready for Australia when BOONFARK #4 arrived and first thing I did was sit down on my valise and read the issue from cover to cover. The further I got the more I caught myself nodding -- not in boredom or fatigue, but in agreement with all the comments which characterized the zine as a nostalgic throwback to the early Sixties. Which is precisely what I wanted to say, only to do so now would be mere repetition.

"What in Foo's name can I tell him?" I kept asking myself. Until I came to your strip of THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR. Then I knew exactly what to say. Wonderschoen, tres bien, and not ziggety, as we ethnic minorities would have it. You did a marvelous job! But at this rate it will take years to see the rest of it!

((Yes, it will take a couple of years, but when it is finished it will be, like you, superb.))



Ted's reminiscences were very entertaining. I believe it was Ted who mentioned that there is no longer the interplay between LA and NY fandoms like there used to be, although I can't find the reference now. This, in a way, is a prime example of the divergences of fandom. There is a club here that has much contact with LA fans by way of a monthly apa. Both these groups consist mainly of fuggheaded neofen who have little or no conception or sense of what fandom is --- they're merely out there having their own good time, which doesn't necessarily need my approval for it to continue. I will say, though, that their apa mailings are probably even more incoherent and esoteric than most apa mailings, and I doubt that any of them could compete with current faanish writing. They do have a very open attitude, however, and welcome newcomers with open arms (which is to their credit).

Also Ted talks about the London fans at the '57 Worldcon voting for South Gate in '58, he might have avoided confusion if he had mentioned that worldcon sites were voted only one year in advance at that time. It later changed due to the fact that hotel policies, in general, changed. But I suppose it's all that dope... Plus all the other stuff I read is pushing my slight fanhistorical knowledge out.

I still haven't gotten around to reading the stack of VOIDS I bought from Richard Bergeron about four years ago, although if I had, I probably would have felt the same way about Greg Benford's writing as he himself notes here --- his first excerpt of his own sounds even more jaded than Laney in ASI! While I think there is a certain merit in cultivating a healthy sharp tongue for fuggheads who plead for a put-down, I'm glad to read that Benford has mellowed somewhat.

I suppose "Neon Noodle" by Bruce Townley kept the zine from seeming too insular in its faanishness, but somehow it just didn't strike me as being appropriate to the rest of the zine. Since it's your fanzine you obviously know what you want to do with it, but my personal reaction is that it didn't seem to mix well with the rest of the issue. Which is not to say that I think Townley is a bad writer, because I don't think that at all. It's just that I didn't get the same kind or level of enjoyment out of this as I did the rest of the zine.

I find myself wondering why anyone would want to subject themselves to a train ride just for the sake of the train ride, when one also has to tolerate the bombardment of noise, air pollution, and strange people. I did like the continuing railroad cartoon at the bottom of his article, however.

There's not much I can say about your comic strip adaptation of THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR, except that I think it's a FABULOUS IDEA! I wish it had gone on longer. I would think of offering to publish a chapter of it myself, but the

idea of me publishing anything is laughable, at the moment. I don't think there is anything wrong with you serializing it in your own fanzine; is your hesitancy to do this because of your knowledge that you publish so infrequently, or do you perhaps feel some trepidation about featuring too much of your own art in your genzine?

The cover is so bright, colorful, and inventive it almost makes me glad that the Bergeron cover didn't arrive in time.

((Your comments about Bruce's article last issue seem to be those of most readers.

As Gary Deindorfer said, it felt like a ringer. You say it just didn't fit. Well, I have mixed feelings about the piece now, I guess I can see what you are talking about. Bruce's article didn't have much to do with fanhistory or the other items in the issue, but who said I was publishing a fanhistory zine. While I'm the first to admit that I like to publish material by old and tired fans; I'm also acutely aware that I can get trapped into doing a zine that looks in on itself, and doesn't pay enough attention to what is going on in fandom now. Bruce's piece was my attempt to broaden the scope of what I publish. But that doesn't mean I'm on the verge of pubbing an issue full of unknowns --no, no, no, in fact it only shows that I want to mix new and old writers and artists together to give me a contemporary fanzine. But as long as I continue to get submissions and contributions from those Eofen I will continue publishing them. Besides, it is really hard to get any contributions from the current crop of fanwriters --- there's so few of them and they're so busy. :: I put as much of my own art into BNF as I can stand -- besides, there are so many others I like.))





BOONFARK #4 was a little of an overdose for me. I guess I can only take so much looking back on Sixth Fandom in one installment. Perhaps if I had had my fannish beginnings in the days of VOID, and HYPHEN instead of FOCAL POINT, MOTA, and TITLE, I would react with more of a warm glow. All I know is that I started to read Bob Stewart's Towner Hall Piece, looked at the cartoon of the guy cranking the mimeo, and thought, grown men do this?

I guess this isn't really Right Behavior, but I think you are laying it on a little thick. It is one thing to attempt to revive the treasured spirit of faandom, another thing to exhume its corpse. Please, BOONFARK might be a much more rewarding fanzine to read if you devoted less space (but yes, definitely some space, and regularly, too) to years past, and more space to new writing. I'd also suggest that reprints from old fanzins are more fun to read than people writing about reprints from old fanzines. The amount of scribblings I've seen on the WARHOON Willis issue threaten to fill another \$25 book.

Of course, if all this stuff in your latest issue had been about early 1970s fandom, this whole letter would have been simply variations on goshwowohboyohboy.

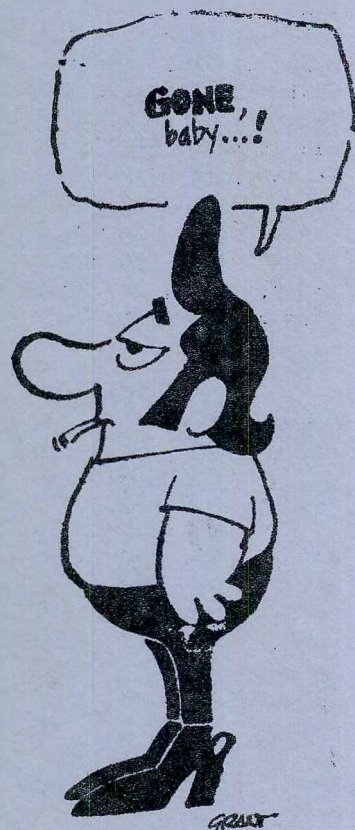
Speaking of goshwowohboyohboy, may I congratulate you on your first installment of THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR, comic strip style. I hope you'll continue it, and I hope you'll see about getting the finished work printed up on its own. TED has always been a tricky work for me; I'm just never sure how seriously Willis and Shaw mean it to be taken. It's the fijagdh in me, I guess. Is fandom really that precious? If I were drawing the work (if I could draw), I would probably tend towards a certain amount of visual sarcasm to alleviate my misgivings about the mood of the text. Take a look at the way Elder and Wood would handle Kurtzman's scripts in the early MAD, staying faithful to Harvey's wordy talk balloons, but going on with little tangents of their own, exemplified in the reactions of the characters not talking, and the endless amount of doodads added to the picture, notably in the Elder material. That's probably the way I'd handle it. How you will handle it is another thing. But I hope you won't be content with simply following the original, Classics Illustrated style.

Druce Townley's "Neon Noodle" was fascinating. Sort of like the view other people must get looking into our fandom. I thought while reading it, this is almost as silly as fanzine fans. Oh, how ambivalent I can be.

((For an ex-Trekky Jim, you certainly are hard to please. I think you should acquaint yourself with Creath Thorne; you two are made for each other. :: You betray your ignorance by the way you speak of Kurtzman and Elder. In fact, Kurtzman was notorious for giving his artists complete panel breakdowns, and they included everything in the panel; including all the little background details and facial expressions. Kurtzman lost his enthusiasm for his own art during the late Fifties and used other artists (especially Elder) as his drawing arm. That's why artists like Wood and Elder had such similar details in their panels when drawing for Kurtzman. :: In truth, I feel that my adaptation of TED is very MADlike. But at this point in the strip things are pretty simple and dull (this is the land called MUNDANE) and stay that way until Jophan gets across the mountains. Then it really gets nutty. As for my version being too precious, I think of TED as a fairy tale, and it involves a lot of innocence. So I tried to show that in the style which I chose to render the comic strip.))

Tara Wayne McDonald 415 Willowdale Ave. #1812 Willowdale, Ontario M2N 5B4

This is a good issue, I think, though, that you are trying too hard to be WARHOON. I hate to say that -- since it implies a criticism -- because it looks so good and we don't have Bergeron doing that these days. But so much of trufannishness these days seems to be a calculated imitation of things that were done spontaneously by people long ago. It shows in PONG, in TELOS, in FAST & LOOSE, in RAFFLES, and in most zines that aren't about Luke Skywalker or cats. I've been guilty of it too. But it's beginning to seem a little creepy to me now. Surely Willis, LeeH, and Tucker weren't as self-conscious as we are today about our fanac? In 1958, did Terry Carr write about his exploits 20 years ago, as he does now? Or did he write about





things that were fresh on his mind then? Why doesn't he now?

Fandom seems to be very much like a middle-aged man reminiscing about his adventures and amorous conquests when he was young. We mustn't forget the past, but it isn't healthy to try to live in it to the extent that nothing new is done today.

Of course, what is there in fandom today that is worth going on about the way Berry went on about Willis and vice versa? Probably not much less, only the writers with the skill to infuse some of the magic of a HYPHEN or a QUANDRY in fandom are no longer with us. Nor have they been replaced, as far as I can see, by anyone with quite the same flair or style. The new writers who show talent are into writing a different sort of thing that isn't fannish in the old way. I would imagine that advocates of sixth fandom aren't too aware of what has been happening in places like Apa-50 or GROGGY, which exemplify the much more personal and relevant kind of writing that the later 70s will come to be noted for, nor would they be much interested if they knew, I suspect. Examples of this that were most accessible to people like you or Ted White would include Avedon Carol's INVISIBLE FAN (now defunct). It remains to be seen, however, whether after 20 years this sort of material speaks as articulately to fandom as zines like HYPHEN do. Many modern zines are as good. I have doubts though. Fandom has changed and will likely change more. Sixth Fandom existed in circumstances that were uniquely suited to the perpetuation of its memory. It was small and incestuous, and mythologized itself. Fandom today tries to mythologize itself, but it is no longer small; it is incestuous, but this has only broken it up into mutually exclusive groups. And it may be that fandom in the future will have no interest in itself except on a day to day basis. With the exception of fans like Gary Farber, Joe Siclari, myself, and even "shudder" Martin Morse Wooster, fandom is oblivious to its past today, and I suspect all that kept fan history alive is the continued presence of people who lived through it. Will there be a Tucker of the 21st century -- a fan who lived through the fandom of the 70s and 80s who has reached a position of influence and can continue to educate generation after generation of neofans with his anecdotes, jokes, and schticks? Given the factionalization of fandom in 1981, how much of a history based on the rememberings of such a person would be real history of fandom is a moot

point. I often wonder how much fanhistory transmitted to us from the 40s, 50s, and even the 60s, is biased, incomplete, and unsystematic. How do we know Ed Wood wasn't the most important fan in 1954? Walt and his friends told us, that's how...

That wasn't a very serious suggestion, but I think it illustrates the point I'm making. Fan history is made by those who survive to tell the tale. Those who are gone may have no say.

So while I retain an admiration and respect for the legends of the past, I feel as if the ground under my feet were quicksand. The reality of my perceptions seems in question. The ghost of Camus points to the rushing waters under the bridge and offers a heavy rock.

The Towner Hall series that I was indifferent to originally is taking shape, and I liked Bob Stewart's installment particularly. Because it was more anecdotal in form, it was more alive.

Recently I asked where all the excitement over the WASH was. Terry's review in SFR, and the essay by Ted in this DOONFARK have made up for some of the apathy elsewhere. My piece in FILE770, and Create Thorne's in TELOS -- though you disagreed with it -- did their bit too. It doesn't cover up the noticeable lack of enthusiasm in most fanzines, though, including those in the current faanish idiom such as CHAT, HOLIER THAN THOU, RUNE, THE BI-MONTHLY MONTHLY, the many clubzines, newsletters, and other places where you would expect something more than a brief notice that there was this zine of Bergeron's for sale along with the other fanzines raising money for DUFF or whatever. That is a problem with most fanzines today, they aren't about fanzine fandom anymore. Increasingly often, a zine is just a handy way to remind people about the con next month, and swapping experiences about the cons last month.

((I will admit freely that WARHOON has been a big influence on my ideas of what a fanzine should be. But I don't feel that last issue was as WARHOONlike as you do. Certainly there are similarities -- the multi-color offset art (including the Bergeron illo), the type-face and certain design ideas -- but there differences as well. Dick always used his own artwork exclusively and he would never have done anything like the railroad illo that accompanied Townley's article. I think the real similarities are in tone-of-voice and attitude towards the material I use. If I were trying to look derivative, then this issue would look like VOID because I'm using Ted's old micro-elite typer. It doesn't -- and I really don't want it to.))





Hmmm, yes, so this is where the fannish 'Floating Crap Game' is currently at! For a while it was at Mike Gorra's place, then Terry Hughes found it a home after they'd taken Mike away; I haven't heard anything from Terry for quite some time since SEACON... have they taken him away too?

I'm enjoying both issues you sent and as much of the material refers to fen I know/used to know its all quite evocative stuff. Take that Totem Pole piece by rich brown on Ted Johnstone (in #3) for instance. I was involved in tape-correspondence with quite a number of Stateside fans around that period and I may even still have the dubbing of the tape Ted sent me on his 'plans' for filming the LoTR; I seem to recall Ernest Borgnine got cast as Boromir, but that casting the Hobbits proved to be the stumbling block... even my suggestion of Mickey Rooney as Frodo not helping further the cause. I enjoyed being enlightened (perhaps a few years late!) about Coventry; I recall being bemused by references to this fannish scenario in West Coast fanzines of the period but there was so much happening around that period that no one got to take it all in... rich doesn't mention it, but wasn't Tedron also involved in the "Musquite Kid"?

I think my tape-correspondence with Terry Carr predated his move to New York and the Towner Hall period... he wasn't able to return my tapes after his move because the cockroaches there kept pulling the plug on him! These roaches were quite probably in the pay of the Futurians -- right, Ted? Terry?

I read Ted White's fine piece on WARHOON 28 and I'm fairly sure that his estimate of Walter's reaction to being lionised is correct... certainly throughout my contacts with him, by tape, letter and in the flesh, I found Walt modest about his talents and eager that his contemporaries should share the egoboo that came his way. I'm not sure that WARHOON 28 in this sense, does not do him a disservice; his talent could not have flowered without the many highly talented fans who were around in the Fifties and the interaction which perhaps created fandom's most innovative period. It might have been better to publish a volume interspersing Walt's writings with those of Vin Clarke, Chuck Harris, Mal Ashworth, BoSh, James White, Ken Bulmer, Dean Grennell and many others active in fandom of the time -- to give a clearer idea of WaW's contribution to fandom. I suspect he would have preferred it that way, too.

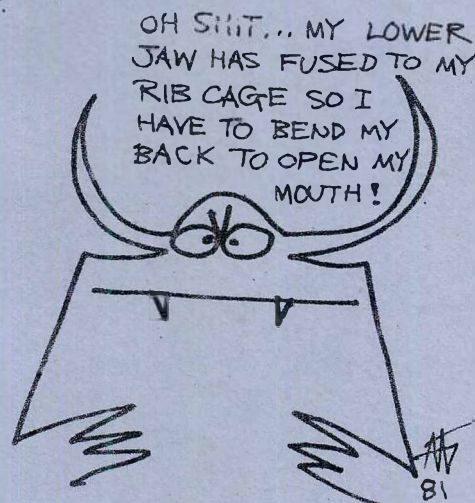
((No, they haven't taken Terry Hughes away. I know this to be true because my wife sees him on the subway from time to time. Naturally he claims that he is 'hard at work' on MOTA #32 -- but I think that's just a smokescreen to cover up his efforts to become the Harry Warner/hermit of his fannish generation :: Speaking of Harry, be sure to read his following letter for more thots about Willis's connection with some of the people you mention. Harry seems to agree with you about a companion volume to WRNIN #28.))

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I don't remember 'boonfark' as part of fanspeak very long ago. This isn't necessarily any evidence that it's a recent creation, since in my FAPA publication I predicted that a special assessment to meet a financial emergency which that organization's constitution authorizes would never succeed, even though the assessment had been invoked only ten years or so ago and worked out quite well. When I see a strange word as a fanzine title I usually assume it's an allusion of some sort which I'm either too stupid to decipher or too remote from face-to-face fanac to have heard about. If I thought about the word 'boonfark' at all, I probably wondered if it was some sort of pun on boondock, since the sound would be more similar than the spelling, particularly if spoken by a fan in Boston or Liverpool.

The conversion of THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR to graphic story form strikes me as extremely well done. I haven't the background in comic books to know the right terms to use so I'll simply content myself with the opinion that you've caught the spirit of the original very well, and you've utilized the special opportunities of this form to create effects that wouldn't be possible with prose, like the avalanches of fannish treasures and words which burst from the fairy's wand manipulations. If you don't decrease the interval between issues of BOONFARK, I probably won't live to see the completion of the project, unfortunately.

I'm impressed by the way some adequate reviews and comments on the 28th WARHOON are finally appearing. Ted White's is one of the finest, one that would assuredly cause me to want desper-

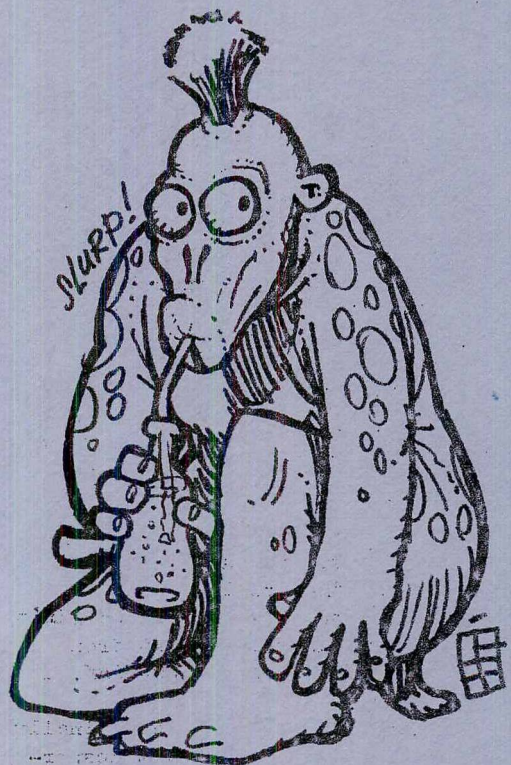




ately to obtain a copy if I hadn't already attained that desire. Ted's memories of Walter Willis made me realize something that hadn't occurred to me before: what a fine supplement to the Bergeron accomplishment could be created if someone took the time, trouble, and money to produce a substantial volume of fanzine material about Walter. There must be at least a dozen John Berry, Chuck Harris and Bob Shaw items which would be essential to such a collection, along with the best of the accounts by various United States fans of Walter's journeys in this country, a whole passle of fine Lee Hoffman writings in QUANDRY on Walter, and goodness knows how much other stuff which a search of fanzines published during Walter's main period of fanac would reveal. I thought I did a fairly comprehensive job in the biography in that issue of WARHOON, as far as detailing Walter's fannish life and sketching his mundane side, but I was disappointed for my failure to cover more adequately the effects of Walter on other fans and fandom in general. A big collection of contemporary material about him would repair the gap I left.

rich brown's bafflement over the ashtray anecdote is similar to some of my own difficulties which I've blamed on poor memory. For years, I've been referring to Mark Twain's remark that spelling words the way everyone else spells them is a betrayal of lack of imagination. Then last year I re-read every one of the 26 volumes in my set of Mark Twain's collected writings, and I didn't encounter that remark, even though he mentioned spelling in at least a dozen places. I found in the Mencken collection of famous quotations a Mark Twain comment on spelling which isn't in my set, it comes closer to the remark I remember, but it isn't the same. Conceivably, I could have run across it originally in a biography or magazine article, or I could have misremembered the other things Mark wrote on the subject. But this could be another case of different time streams. And I sometimes wonder if there really is time travel from the future into our present and our past which creates alternate time streams just as science fiction stories have postulated, and for some reason which the prozine stories failed to take into account, not all human memories are automatically changed by the impact of time travellers when they alter the past. Maybe FAPA is destined to survive for many decades into the future, and proof of that fact is evident in the way I remember a different FAPA which never invoked the assessment provision of its constitution, a varied memory which must depend on some fans from a future when time travel is practical having come back to take a look at the early years of the organization, inadvertently changing its history in one alternate universe.

This could also explain the different memories of Towner Hall which several fans draw upon in this issue of BOONFARK. There might even be a time stream in which I was the importer and owner of those elastic bike straps which created such a problem in the storage room. Proof of this might be the reference by Bhob to the mundane who had his floor covered with coins. I have sections of the floor in a theoretically unused bedroom covered with 78 rpm records. I've always assumed that they're there because I haven't found yet boxes of a size and sturdiness to permit storing them on end without the danger of warping or breaking. But it could be temporal confusion between coins and records.



((The 'terms' you chose to comment of TED were more than adequate. Thanks. Of course it will take several years for the whole strip to be completed, but I don't expect it to take much longer than that. I'm guessing that I'll finish it in \*gasp\* 1984. Big Brother will be there to read it, and I hope you are as well, Harry. :: To tell you the truth, I think the only reason that time travelling fans from the future would bother to check out old-time FAPA is to acquire old mailings. You know how fanzine collectors can be....))

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About VOID and all that. Did you know I was probably one of the very first fans to meet Greg and Jim Benford. This was way back in the early Fifties when Greg and Jim were about 15/16 and were pubbing VOID from Germany where their father was stationed. I'd done a couple of illos for them. They were going back to the US and coming through London, so I arranged to meet them, and did, in the then new Royal Festival Hall near Waterloo Station, for a few hours. To timebind



that, I met them again in '64 at the Oakland convention. I went out one of the evenings to dinner with them, and Terry and Carol Carr, also Philip Dick and his estranged wife. (At least I was told she was... estranged that is) Mostly what I remember of the meal was how Philip Dick managed to eat and smoke a huge cigar at the same time throughout the meal, and the amazing amounts of highballs his wife drunk nonstop. And how she turned the Benfords off by cooking at them, "Aren't they cute!"

Saw Greg once more, in London a few years back, when I took him on a Sunday morning to Petticoat Lane, a large street market where he bought a genuine Bobbies cape... wonder if he's still got it. Then later that day took him out to meet Ethel Lindsay at Courage House where we went out to a nice English pub full of oak beams and brass ornaments and spent a few good hours chatting.

An anecdote about Ted White... I met Ted first at the Coulson's in '64 when we were all travelling to the Oakland con. We all stayed up most of the night talking, and I remember Ted telling how he has problems with Cola bottles, he'd drunk one recently and found a dead fly at the bottom of it. He finished slurping the bottle of cola Buck had just given him and found the bottom full of broken glass.

Ah yes, the picture of the Duper in the ATOM ANTHOLOGY... can't remember if that did appear in a zine or was drawn just for AA. If it did come out anywhere it might have been in Dean Grennell's GRUE.

Some of the stuff in AA was just drawn for it. Ella Parker who was the insigator of it all and hyper active in those days just gave me blank stencils and staggered back when I kept shoving the stuff back at he illoed.

On that, it was then that Ella got her name as a Planet destroyer. One of the illos was a space scene, and I'd pricked all the little dots through the stencil for the stars and drawn various sized circles for world, etc. When Ella was running off that particular stencil on the duper she thought it had a little hole in it, and corflued out a Planet.

Again, on AA, she worked a ploy on me. She said she'd have a photo of me at the front and I supplied one of me all cleaned up and looking very artistic, sitting down drawing. She printed the one of me taken at a fan party at the famous Parker Pen, propped up against a wall drunk and in a slightly comatose state.

Talking about stencilling, stencils and ahl, maybe you'd like to hear a little known anecdote of an atom illo that appeared in Mal Ashworth's last issue of DEM. This was a sort of post Atomic Age illo showing a furlclad figure standing with a spear, looking at a ruined city... gazing at the windowless skyscrapers. I'd cut the stencil pretty deep and put a lot of lines showing rubble, etc. in the streets. Well, as Mal ran off the stencil it started coming apart and as each sheet of paper went through the machine, the buildings started sliding down on the stencil, as if they were crumbling till in the end the illo that was coming out finally showed a figure crouching down, looking at a heap of rubble with only the stumps of buildings left.

I admired your strip on Jophan. I'm not a strip cartoon fan, but take my hat off to any artist who is... so much work, panel after panel, not my cup of tea, as we so quaintly say here. I guess I'm more of the one gag type drawing. Seems too much work for me to do all those illos one after the other.

I haven't thought much about the Foglio thing; as Bill Rotsler says, our time was way back before it all. Certainly some US artists of that style seem to have a sort of mechanical way of line... no flow to the illustration line. But I guess this is all over, for whilst I can admire say, Eddie Jones' competence and technical ability, I don't really care all that much for his stuff... it seems too stiff.

((Are you trying to tell me that the Benfords aren't cute? Does Greg know this? :: I think maybe Bill Rotsler and yourself were better off in the pre-Hugo days. You were able to do your art and have fun with it; there weren't any awards around to be in contention for -- except maybe winning a category in the FANAC poll. You got your egoboo in print and in letters and didn't even consider any of this bullshit. I also think you have an advantage over fanartists of my generation because you can look back at what you were doing ten (and even twenty) years ago with some pride -- not worrying about it coming back to embarrass you. I can't look at most of what I drew ten years ago.))





As for Peter Graham, I last saw him four years ago when he was out here on a business trip ... visiting Stanford. Most recent news from him was when he called to talk about John Lennon's death, which shook him as it shook all of us.

He's married and has two kids, a boy who's ten and a girl, six. Took his degree at Oxford, where he was on the crew team -- tell that to Ted and hear him chortle, or maybe just coggle a bit. We're in touch only vaguely and seldom now: the occasional phonecall, or an envelope will arrive with a bunch of newspaper clippings that struck his fancy, and maybe a Xeroxed photo of the kids.

((Thanks, Terry. This info is for Gary Deindorfer and the others who have made inquiries about Pete. :: I have a question about the Xeroxed photos of his kids, though. Do they complain when the little light flashes in their eyes?))

Eric Mayer Spring Lake 140F Powers Lane Rochester, NY 14624

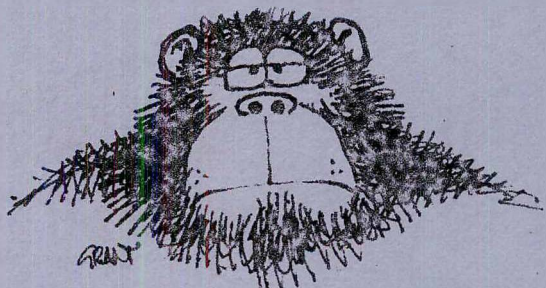
I'm afraid this won't be one of those long letters you mention in your editorial. Something about having a four month old baby in the apartment mitigates against long letters. In fact it is a sort of triumph to write any letter at all. But I could hardly let a fanzine like this pass through my mailbox without at least noting my appreciation. (Two months ago when Fleur was still keeping my wife and me up all night I could've ignored a new issue of MYPHEN...)

I was very impressed by the general appearance of BOONFANK. Actually its kind of neat to see an all xerox faanish fanzine. As in sf itself some of the most interesting faanish productions result when people who are aware of and respect the traditions choose to work knowingly against the grain. The color is striking. Bergeron is of course one of our best artists. And its a real pleasure to see a fan artist who chooses to stress color and design rather than pictorial representation. I've often wondered why it is that fans will acknowledge that fanwriting should be something different from professional writing, to the extent that fiction is practically taboo, but insist that artwork be either cartoons or pure commercial illustration. Maybe Bergeron will start a trend. Your covers are good examples of a similar approach. Amusing visual pun on the back and a nice line drawing on the front. And the run-on train was great.

Having only entered Fandom during the seventies there are few comments I can make about the historical articles except that they are appreciated and enjoyed. its an era I admittedly know very little about. Your ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR project is truly a sensational idea. Its the sort of thing that is so natural you could swear that somebody must have done it before, but for some reason no one has. I only regret that I will probably miss half the installments since I get so few fanzines. (And the higher their circulation the less chance ther is that I get them.) I'm looking forward to seeing how you visualize all the various creatures and characters. (The first installment was particularly promising because of the fine job you did with what is probably the least visually interesting part of the story.) Wish I could figure some way you could do the hecto swamp in real hecto but, alas, as you can see from the picture on this paper ((a hectographed landscape)) once you get to 85 or so the stuff fades away.

Wish you wouldn't downgrade WoFAN however. I found my first zine addresses in the column Ted ran in AMAZING. We don't have that sort of thing anymore. Fanzine review zines seem to me one of those things that helps keep Fandom a community, help forestall the seemingly inevitable breakup into smaller and smaller factions each unaware of the other. Publishing such a fanzine is a pretty thankless task but Brian has done the best, longest running job of it I've seen in my nine years here.

I also wonder, not for the first time, whether Fandom's past was really all that superior. I suspbse, for one thing, we all wish we could turn the clock back and fill Fandom up with those people who got us interested in it in the first place but are now departed. I think that's part of it. Then too I wonder if in comparing fans past and present we tend to make the wrong comparisons. If we compare using as or basis, say, those fans and zines nominated for FAan or Hugo awards its like saying that the music of the sixties was better than today's music because Harry Manilow can't measure up to all those old British groups. I fear that in today's larger Fandom





we ignore our best talents. Bruce Townley, for instance, is a cinch not to be nominated as writer but, as this article proves, he is one of our best and superior to the usual suspects we round up when handing out accolades. Well, enjoyed the issue. You say you're going back to mimeo but with the postal increase we may all be going to microfiche.

((I think one reason there is so many of us cartoon-type artists in fandom these days has a lot to do with who was popular in fanzines when we began contributing to them. In my case, when I started seeing fmz in '68/69 I was immediately impressed by the work of the cartoonists I saw. I was more or less 'serious' oriented when I drew my first few fillos, but the work of Bode, Atom, Lovenstein, and Rotsler swept me off into the realm of funny stuff. I had suppressed my cartoon side after years of Marvel comics and the like, but when I discovered these fannish cartoonists and Underground comic books at about the same time I went bonkers, and let the other side slip away. Now I am struggling to learn to draw in a more serious style again. Anyway, I suspect that seeing those other cartoonists set the tone for me and others who got into fanart during the early 70s. :: The color in #4 was something I'd wanted to do for a long time, and seeing WARHOON 28 made me decide to do it. When I did the color separations for Bergeron's illo I tried to do it the way he would have. (The illo was originally the cover to a late 60s WSFA JOURNAL, and done as a black and white illustration. The color was a complete surprise to Bergeron. When he saw it, he said: "Wow!") I view color as a simple extension of what can be used in a fanzine. I intend to use color again in BNF when I can afford it, I really like the added dimension it gives the fanzine. :: I've changed my mind about WoFAN. I recently got a copy and thought it was actually well done for what it was. Of course, I prefer the type of writing that John, Rich, and Ed did in AMAZING about fanzines. Opinions always are preferable to listings, but all things considered, Brian Earl Brown is doing an admirable service to fandom at a job I'd never attempt myself. But I'm still not sure that it is preferable to an enema. Some people seem to enjoy that sort of thing...))

Jay Kinney 3165A 16th Street San Francisco, CA 94103

BOONFARK #4 is beautifully laid out, enchantingly duplicated (ha ha), and well written. Good zine, great zine in fact. Dare I say you're picking up the moldy fig torch from T. Hughes and carrying high the tradition of fannish time-binding or some such nonsense.

All I know about this Webbert anecdote is that Arnie Katz told it to me over 10 years ago so it must be true.

Too bad I moved since I wrote my LoC in #4. I know you noted my CoA in some loose sheet of paper which I've already lost, but remind me again why you didn't bother to change my address on my letter/page itself? Hmm. Actually, now that I think about it, if you had, the letter would have been even more inaccurate as it would have been discussing a different address altogether. Anyway, now I live next door to a sleazy residential hotel full of Welfare winos.

Great to see you cleaning out your art files. I always did like ol' R. Flinchbaugh, and how come he never got a Hugo? Yeah, I know... silly question. Similarly, that 8 year old drawing of mine was top-notch. Gee I was good back then. Ah, youth.

Last but not least, this ENCHANTED DUPLICATION adaptation is S\*U\*P\*E\*R\*B, as Ted might or might not say. Better even than your Underground stuff. And you're doing it for free! Actually you're doing it for 1) posterity and 2) egoboo and 3) fannish love thrown in for good measure. Whatever, if you keep it up it's bound to be a classic. Keep it up! (Gee let's get redundant while we're at it, eh?)

((I didn't change your address, Jay, because the letter section was xeroxed before any of the rest of the issue, perhaps even before you got the boot from Fell St. I think that sounds like the most plausible excuse, don't you? :: Most folks hated Flinchbaugh with a passion. I guess they didn't understand him. I've always appreciated him in the same way I appreciate Ralph Steadman. :: All you say about TED is true. But it takes just as long to draw as anything I do for money.))





MOONFARK #4 does such splendid things with the Xerox medium that I'm actually sad to hear you'll be returning to mimeography with the next issue. Jeez, mimeo is so limited and difficult, especially in terms of changing inkpads to do repro in different colors, and you hardly ever can get the registration right when you're trying to coordinate two colors, and you have to mess with those primitive shading plates instead of Zip-a-tone or else get your fingers all yucky-sticky glueing in photostenciled drawings, which come to think of it, photostenciling I mean, is the only way you can do those nice thick lines like much of the lettering in this.... I wonder how the eefans of twenty years ago ever managed to pub anything worth a damn; are you sure they did?

No, really, the issue's gorgeous, and the Xeroxing does have something to do with that. Such nice crispness in the type, and how, without Xerox, could you have reproduced Greg's old editorials from their microelite mimeography so clearly? Putting them through photostenciling and remimeoing would surely have made them fuzzy, whereas this way you capture the just slightly imperfect, fannish look of the original mimeography and it looks so vouty. (Maybe that's what fanzines today need: to be mimeographed first, then Xeroxed from the run-off sheets. The best of both possible worlds!)

Greg's piece is a good one, of course, and gives an interesting view of how our fourth co-editor saw the Towner Hall scene from afar. I'd forgotten that he'd never so much as met any of us at the time, and I certainly never dreamed that he regarded us as older and more sophisticated than he was. He picked up the Towner Hall style so quickly, and did it so well, that I always thought of him as an equal who just managed not to be around when the work of stenciling, mimeoing and collating had to be done...which struck me as an intelligent move. (I also remember that Pate Graham in particular loved Greg's line about the VOID Coeditors' Club: "...if you chance to meet us in a back alley somewhere -- it's that sort of club.")

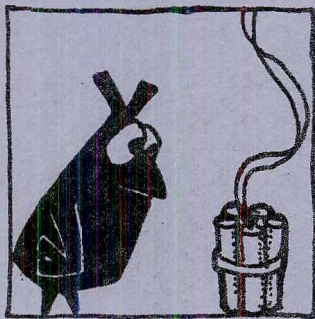
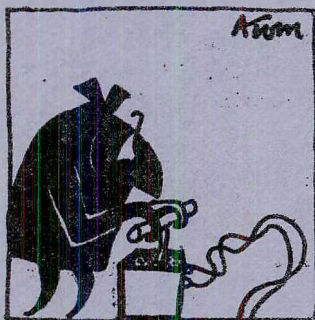
The piece has a somewhat deeper feel to it than the usual nostalgic chitterchatter, too, due to Greg's musings about why he put on such a cynical persona for his fanstuff then. It seems to tie in with something he said ten years later: "There are many ways to diminish yourself. Cynicism is the easiest of these."

rich brown's piece gives another example of the talent that, as Gary Doindorfer says, would have made him one of the living legends of fanwriting if his writing hadn't been so sporadic. (When's the next issue of BEARDMUTTERINGS coming out, rich?) ("August '81," says rich brown "When is the next INNUENDO?") His notion of alternative worlds of fandom is rill neat (though of course I wrote about much the same thing in a brandonization called "The Grunch and the Eggplant" c. 1960), and quite elegant. Alas, it violates the scientific law of parsimony, for the fact that the Willis joke about an ashtray didn't appear in "The Harp Stateside" even though many fans remember the story can be explained more mundanely by the hypothesis that that story was actually written up by some other fan who was there. Offhand I'd suggest checking Gregg Calkin's Chicon II report for it, or maybe the long report Richard Elsberry wrote (in OCESLA! and OPUS respectively, as I recall).

Allyn Cadogan never once asked me anything about fanhistory during the years she was in the Bay Area, or I'd've told her. I have the impression that during most of that time she hadn't yet discovered fannishness as such, being in her more neoish days more impressed by sf only; it's nice to see that she's come round to the true path.

The notion that the VOID Boys might have smoked dope during the Towner Hall days amuses me no end. Nah, of course we didn't -- can you imagine a bunch of dopefiends having the energy to publish all the fanzines we did in 1961-62? More likely we'd have skimmed through incoming letters from Seth Johnson and murmured, "Far out, man," then closed shop and gone off to indulge in the screaming munchies at the Cube Steak House. I smoked my first dope a couple of years later in the company of some jazz musicians on the way to a gig, and some years after that introduced Ted to the practice, as I recall. I'll leave it to him to recount the reaction he and his then-wife had....

Your "graphic story" version of TED starts off beautifully, and I look forward to future installments. Maybe this is the right approach to take for introducing today's fans to this fannish masterpiece, since so many of them seem to be unable to appreciate anything that doesn't have a lot of pichers. I note that you've even played to the HEAVY METAL audience by making the Spirit of Fandom fairy quite buxom, whereas I always pictured her as willowy, small-breasted. Oh well, autre temps, autre mammaries. I do look forward to your graphic versions





of "The Harp Stateside," "All Our Yesterdays," and "An Interview with Jerry Fournelle."

((I think there is a great deal of fannish potential in the Xerox machines currently available in some shops and offices. I would go back to xeroxing if I could afford the exorbitant prices they charge at copy shops or if I ever work someplace again where I could have free access. But that doesn't look likely in the near future. So we'll just have to live with boring ol' mimeo until circumstances change. I must admit that I have a fantasy of acquiring my own machine in the future (just like Harlan) and then I'd be able to use it any time I wanted to...but I'm not going to hold my breath waiting. Perhaps the addition of color mimeo work in the next issue or so will make ENF a little bit more like 'the good old days of Xerox....' :: I agree with you about rich brown's writing, and am glad to have him as a columnist. I just hope that his absence this issue doesn't result in making ENF less interesting. :: My version of TED ain't nothing when compared with my comic strip adaptation of the highlights of THE RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY....))

Chuck Harris 32 Lake Crescent Drayton Green Daventry Northants NN11 5E U.K.

There seems to be a great wave of nostalgia in fandom now, and it makes me think of Vinç Clarke -- the only English Trufan in any way comparable to the Wheels of IF -- who is largely overlooked and forgotten. Someday, I hope, somebody with more patience and dedication than I've got will search through the old heaps of 6th fandom, and do a proper appreciation of him. I don't think anybody has seen or heard of him for more than 20 years. From time to time I thought I recognized witty pieces in the NEW STATESMAN (a political weekly with a clever competition page), and Brian Burgess once told me he'd seen him in Trafalgar Square...but I doubt him.

Personally I would love to see the final fabled draft of CONAN THE COINCURER -- the legend of the itinerant chiropodist who bestrode pre-history along with his mechanical monkey (the Clockwork Orang) and the long verse saga of Daniel Dare...

"Daniel Dare was a lone wolf fan to the ordinary pattern.  
He'd NOVA zines and DRES and a heap of Vargo Statten  
He'd 97 pocket books and knew the plot of each  
And all the astronautics lore that PICTURE POST could teach"

...six verses about how he discovered fandom...

"The White Horse bar had its door ajar so he thrust his way inside  
To be swallowed up in a teeming screaming steaming human tide  
There were fans to the right of him, fans to the left,  
And the whole lot volleyed and thundered,  
Whilst a GALAXY lay in a brown ale pool.  
-- Some clumsy clot had blundered."

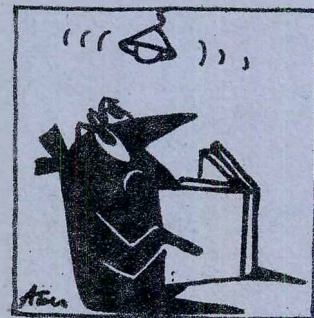
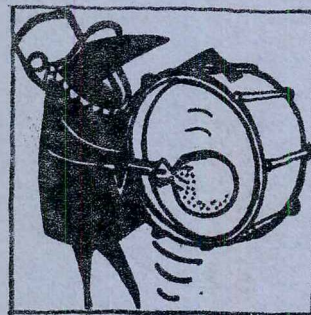
...two or three verses about the pub...

"Instead of Mars they talked of Marx  
Instead of Kudos, cheques.  
Whilst a mixed voice choir, around the fire  
Took a Rathional View of Sex,"

...and a lot more until the final disillusionment when Daniel turns pro.  
I can't even remember if it was ever finished or published, and I could be the only person who even remembers parts of it.

Or his Helpful Hints -- during the first London the London O published, a fact-sheet of helpful hints for visiting Americans -- little things like "bring some soft toilet paper, as much drink and tobacco as you can carry, don't trust the cab drivers...all that sort of thing. Vinç did his own helpful hint sheet which was very different; e.g.: "...English barbers are delighted to shave patron's armpits...in restaurants, if the waiter offers you a taste of your wine before filling your glass, always spit it out unobtrusively and tell him how good it is. The doors of the Gentlemen's Lavatories in England are usually marked by a small figure of a Scotsman wearing a kilt...."

And when he was with Walter Himself touring Ireland, I got two or three postcards every day; at the time I was infatuated with a Catholic girl (Rita Khroné -- a protégée of Bloch's) and was toying with the idea of becoming a Catholic instead of agnostic. By almost every mail I got picture cards of Irish churches along with inspiring messages like: "We burnt this church yesterday. We heard the clergy were asking for a raze so we gave them an illuminated address. Lead kindling light."





Some were Walt's, some were Vin's, but they effectively stopped me from applying for the next Papal vacancy.

The comic strip TED is a nice idea, but it will be a helluva project. It wouldn't surprise me if the Jay Lerner definitive musical opened at Radio City in the autumn -- with G M Carr playing Jophan.

About characterization though, I always thought that most of it was amalgams, and Jophan himself had a million facets. Like all good heroes he is a mirror for the reader. We are ALL Jophan, just as we are all James Bond or the Gray Mouser. From some angles he looks remarkably like Chuck Harris, from others Vin Clarke or Lech -- but most of all he looks like a little stick figure with a big nose and a beanio.

And Profan -- a bit like Tucker, a bit like Bloch, but most of all he seems like Eric Frank Russell.

I've always wished I had a hand in TED. It's a lovely sitisfying thing all the way to that final crescendo. "...And Jophan found that it was so," I wouldn't sell you my copy for a week's pay.

I wanted to say something about Foglio too. Ghod knows if anyone is qualified to talk about claques, factions and vote buying it's me. I really showed them. Up there on my snow white charger, without even a Sancho Panza in the rear, I smote them hip and thigh. I found that -- rather to my surprise -- I was all sercon about TAFF and willing to fight for what I thought was right. So, I declared war; I wrote critical analysis; I published special fanzines; I screamed and I hollered, and nobody took the slightest bit of notice. Eventually I quit. I got rid of the Gestetner, the fanzines, the prozines, and the letters; jumped right back on my high horse and galloped off in all directions.

And twenty years later it still irks me. I was right, but I should have realized that fandom was never going to Rise Up. The most I could hope for was "Tsk, Chuck's off again." The Philistines and the sharpes are always with us. You can buy TAFF, you can buy Hugos, but in the end I don't think it matters. It would be nice to have a gold door stop, but it could never outweigh the acclaim of the 20 or 30 people who matter to you.

I hope.

((You're right about Vin, I know of him only by reputation and one or two written pieces. I suppose the place to start reading his stuff is in old MYPHENS -- but they are hard to come by -- where else did he appear? :: While I agree about the buying of Hugos, I still tend to believe that TAFF has some redeeming fannish value. While it isn't exactly free of political tomfoolery, it still manages to bring good people (like Peter Roberts and Dave Langford) to US cons, and I'm all in favor of that. We need to import as many interesting fans as we can...))

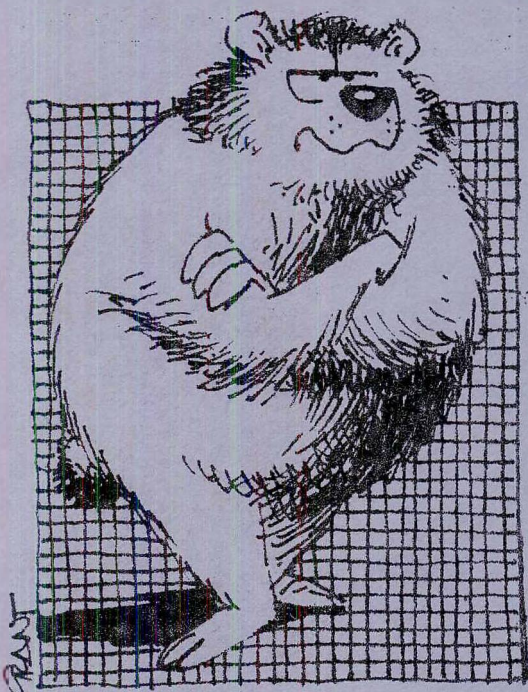
Greg Benford 1105 Skyline Dr. Laguna Beach, CA 92651

BOONFARK is a welcome antidote to a malady I've noticed that sweeps through the ranks of the fans-- turned-pro (for such are we old VOID Boys): post-LOCUS depression. This condition arises in the days following receipt of the latest LOCUS, filled with news of

huge advances given writers of star-spanning, cardboard trilogies, and enormous sales of fantasy series, and sub rights for forward-thinking, feminist novels of post-holocost survival. It is related to an earlier form, known as Toxic Speck Syndrome. The good thing about fandom is that excellence lasts. Preserving the good work of the past is a labor of love, done for the pleasure of it, a la Bergeron, and is completely unlike the publishing industry, wherein books are kept in print because (a) they're part of a series, or (b) the author has a hot new book coming out and ties the older properties to the current book, or (c) it's so forgettable, no one will realize it's been in print before unless they read the copyright page. (And how many people do you know who read the copyright?) So, as I say, it's refreshing to come home after a week in NYC amongst the movers and shakers and crowd-followers and find BOONFARK.

This is fully the best fnz I've seen since WARHOON 28. Ted's column was fine, engrossing memories, etc. (Have we turned into a nostalgia generation so soon? Gaaa.) I'm hoping Bergeron's resurgence will feed a series of good gonzines again.

Liked Bruce Townley's piece. Ah, to be young and coming into fandom, fresh -- i.e., for





for the first decade -- and unabashed.

Maybe we can cajole Terry Carr into publishing that last, great issue of INNUENDO we all have aging, moss-covered material in?

((You sound a little bitter about the publishing biz, Greg, but that isn't any surprise to someone like me who hangs out with writers (it makes me seem legitimately literate). Some of my writer friends are at a disadvantage never having been real fans before they began writing. They don't have your pleasant memories of VOID and the like; they don't have any alternative for writing for pleasure. At least you can do a fanarticle like the one I ran here last time in order to keep things in balance. I encourage you to do more of it -- and then send it to me. :: At a recent visit to TCarr's home I was asked to do some art for the editorial in the 'new' INNUENDO -- I have every reason to believe that it will come out shortly after Terry receives my artwork...real soon now.))

Bob Shaw 3 Braddyll Terrace Ulverton, Cumbria, U.K.

A wry note here regarding the vagaries of fan publishing.... When I got my second Hugo I conceived a grandiose notion of going all out to win a third one in a row, announcing that I was withdrawing from all future Hugo contests, and sitting back secure in the knowledge that I would never have to write again if I didn't feel like it. Accordingly, I pitched in and wrote some major articles in my very best style and mailed them out to major fanzines whose editors had been plaguing me for years to let them have MSS. Guess what happened next? Not one of the articles was ever published and as a result I don't think I'm even on the Hugo nominations list this year. It's things like that which soon sort out the trufans from the dabblers.

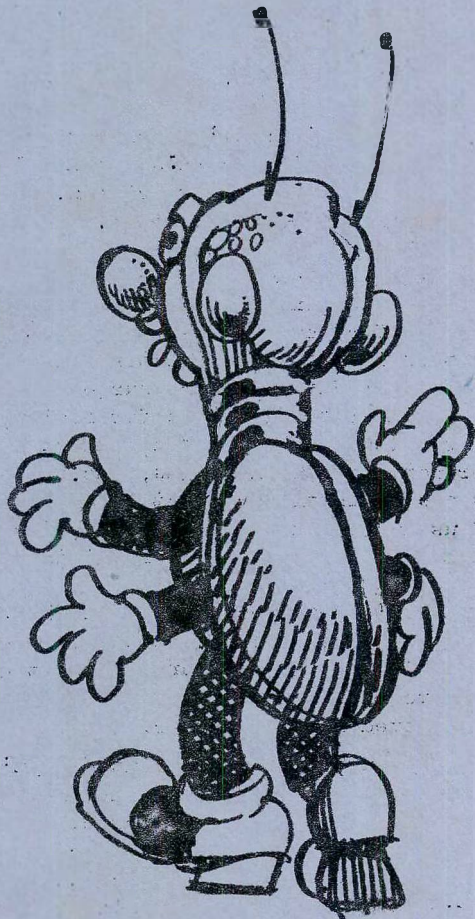
Anyway, I thought the comic strip treatment of TED was absolutely great. I feel honoured that you are prepared to put so much work and skill into something I thought up, and of course you have my permission to proceed with the job. Somehow your drawings caught the essence of the concept so well that even I got a slight lump in the throat when I saw Jophan getting ready to embark on his quest.

((I appreciate your comments on my version of TED, I couldn't have asked for any better.))

Rob Hansen 9A Greenleaf Rd. East Ham London E6 1DX (CoA)

The highlight of this issue was, without doubt, the first part of your epic adaptation of THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR. I say 'epic' because, strangely enough, sometime shortly after the Brighton Worldcon, the idea of doing TED in strip form occurred to me also and I did some drawings of what I felt certain characters should look like (only the Jophan cartoon still exists, I believe) and had the vague idea of talking Harry Bell into doing some character visualizations, though I know talking Harry into doing anything those days is fairly difficult. Anyway, this whole idea came to an abrupt end when I did a study of just how long any adaptation would likely be. Like I say, epic. However since it was something I always wanted to see adapted, and since you've done it so much better than I ever could have, I'm delighted, this episode is almost flawless.

At the Brighton Worldcon, in the small hotel I was staying in, a few of us were chatting and waiting for breakfast. We'd been there about ten minutes (since the place was understaffed because of illness, or something) when an American fan also staying there came down for breakfast. Within thirty seconds he was complaining at the top of his voice about having to wait to be served. The managers came out and tore a strip off him, which raised a chuckle among the assembled fans and labelled the American as an obnoxious prick. Sometime later this same American came into the fan room and got the normally placid Greg Pickersgill so annoyed that he shouted something along the lines of: "If you don't go away I'll punch you in the mouth!" Sometime later it was discovered that the American's name was Phil Foglio. Mr. Foglio is not highly thought of among a large sector of British fandom -- many of whom have never seen his artwork.





((Although I consider the Foglio debacle to be a closed book, I still enjoy hearing delightful little stories like yours. It sounds to me as if he is doing his level best to keep his 'reputation' alive and kicking. :: I've heard from several artists about their own vague plans to do adaptations of TED, including: Jim Barker and Stu Shiffman. I just beat them to the punch.))

Walt Willis Strathclyde, 32 Warren Road Donaghadee Northern Ireland BT21 OPD

I still can't figure what happened to the last couple of months, I was going to comment on BOONFARK when it arrived, but as Terry Carr would say, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa, mean- as Rich Brown will tell you, forgive me big mother.

I hasten to tell you that your illuminated version of TED is just great, far better than sliced bread which always tastes limp to me, and I hope you carry it on and conclude with the same panache (which Rich Brown will tell you is an implement used in French fireplaces) as you started with. I can't think of anything very much to say by way of detail. The characters and locale are different, but yours are equally valid. I meant to say different from what I had imagined, but was distracted by the thought that while the locale I had in mind was a mediaval version of the town of Newtonards and the hill and Tower of Scrabo nearby, the character of Jophan in my mind looked like me as a young man. I suppose that's normal reader identification, but the interesting point is that I don't remember feeling like that before. It must mean that I as the author have ceased to exist and I am now just another reader. One very very tiny point, just to show how closely I'm attending. You show Jophan asleep in the cornfield, having been reading Starship Troopers. In fact the significance of the "cornfield" is that it was in the less sophisticated prozines like THRILLING WONDER STORIES and PLANET STORIES that fannish letter columns and fanzine reviews appeared, never in ASTOUNDING or the other up-market magazines. So to illustrate contact in the cornfield I suggest, say, STARTLING STORIES instead of Starship Troopers in any reprint of your version of TED. But that's a nitpick; it's very very good.

I found Rich Brown's Totem Pole ((in #3)) absolutely fascinating. Not only is it brilliantly and evocatively written, it tells me all sorts of things I didn't know at the time and remember wondering about. It is sort of satisfying to have these answers before you've forgotten what the questions were. Interesting too about Ted Johnstone loving Miriam Dyches, and he too silently and from afar. I understand that. I remember after I came back from America thinking that in my whole life I had only met three women whom I would like to marry, and how fortunate I was that Terry Carr had only married two of them. The last two sentences of this installment of Totem Pole convert it from an interesting memoir to a work of art.

BOONFARK 4 is a treasure-house. The margins of my copy are festooned with comment markers.

I'm grateful to Ted for reminding me of the maps. They were out-dated ordinance survey maps which had been cut up and supplied to other govt departments for scrap paper to be used for notes, phone messages, etc. I used them in fandom partly because I loved maps and partly as a shot in the argument Chuck Harris and I had in our handwritten correspondence about which of us had the most illegible handwriting. One of us had quoted the remark alleged to have been made by Napoleon on receiving a handwritten note from Marshal Ney; "Who has been mailing me maps?"

Ted's recollections of the 1962 Fund are perceptive, but he has no reason to reproach himself. Far from it. Neither Madeleine nor I would have missed the experience for anything.

Rich Brown's explanation of the ashtray joke is so much fun I will forebear explaining its provenance.

Loved Locke's letter.

((Your suggestion about Jophan's reading material has been taken into advisement and the correction will definitely be made in the reprinted version. Please, I encourage you to send along even your smallest nitpickings, I'm interested in doing the strip right -- and who could help me better than you? :: Part of doing TED right for me is giving it a basically 'real' background and setting. I figured that I'd do better with a sort of Early American setting -- rather than the one you describe -- because I know it instinctively and am able to add the little details that would be missing if I tried to render a background I knew only through books. Besides, it is really a story of the heart of a man -- not the place he lives.))

I ALSO HEARD FROM: Avedon Carol, Dave Langford, Bob Stewart (who claims creatorship for the Greg Benford caricature: "The reason the drawing was so simple is that I had no idea of what Benford looked like..."), William Gibson, Jim Barker, Harry Bell, Robert Lichtman, Gregg Calkins, Victoria Vayne, Artie Romero, Mike Ward, Larry Stark, Bob Leman, Bill Rotsler, Boyd Raeburn, Ron Salomon, Ray Nelson, Allyn Cadogan, Richard Bergeron, Mary Picasso (who is really Ray Nelson in a clever plastic disguise), Eugene Caldwell, Mike Glicksohn, Dave Locke, the amazing Bruce Townley, Steve Stiles, Malcolm Edwards, Terry Hughes, Lee Hoffman, Michael Dobson, Dick Lupoff, Jerry Jacks, Mike McInerney, and Ross Chamberlain. THANKS; Y'ALL --djs.



--Continued from page 15--

had not left already, and found a semi-comfortable piece of wall to sit against. There were two or three dead bodies embalmed on the couches, one with his head so resolutely swathed in a jacket I wondered what might really be underneath.

It was a long wait, and in desperate boredom I picked up a copy of the first fanzine I had found at the con. It was mimeographed, in two wildly out-of-register colors. The editorial grumpily shrieked for a renaissance of a truly Canadian literary industry, and the pretentious reviews and stories that followed appeared all to have been written by eleven-year-olds. Copies were in a rack of free fliers, and after trying to read a few pages I skulked back and tried to slip my copy back into the stacks so no one would notice.

Despite the seriousness of my project, I could feel my eyelids dragging themselves shut at ten, when the registration office opened and fans began lining up for single-day memberships. In mid-battle against their final closure, I suddenly heard a voice call "Why, fancy meeting you here! And fancy is precisely the right word, isn't it?" and I snapped awake to find Bhob leering eloquently down at me.

"Oh, hi Bhob! I -- uh, -- Well, I decided my article wouldn't have the ring of authenticity unless I found out how it felt for myself." I shocked myself with the glibness of the lie.

"Oh, and how did they feel? Stick around while I register, and tell me all!"

But, just a moment later, I glimpsed an unmistakeable flood of red, red hair scooting briskly down the hallway with a suitcase and two shopping bags efficiently strapped to a small wheeled carry-all. I bounced up and sprinted after, catching her just as she was telling a waiting taxi she wanted to go to Logan Airport.

"And would you leave without a farewell, countess?" I said. She hadn't come down in costume, but her simple suit was in excellent taste. She was a bit taller than me in heels, but what surprised me most when her puzzled face turned toward me were the cat's-eye glasses framing those green crystal eyes.

"Were you referring to me?" she said, in a cool tone.

"Oh, come on now Amy, or Gwennith or Miss Carstairs or Countess, or whatever the hell you want to call yourself. You're beautiful, fascinating, and unforgettable a woman, and I just have to know how I can get in touch with you again. I can't bear to have it just end this way. Please?"

"I'm sorry," she said, "I'm not in the habit of giving my address to everyone who asks for it." And she entered the door the cabbie held and it closed after her. She settled herself, and opened a book on her lap as if dismissing me totally.

"At least answer me one simple question before you disappear forever," I said, through the open window of the cab. "Will I be able to find you at next year's Worldcon in Denver?"

At that she looked up at me for a second, and then that gorgeous face blossomed in the warmest, most direct smile I think I have ever seen. "Yes!" she breathed, and her cab started and was gone.

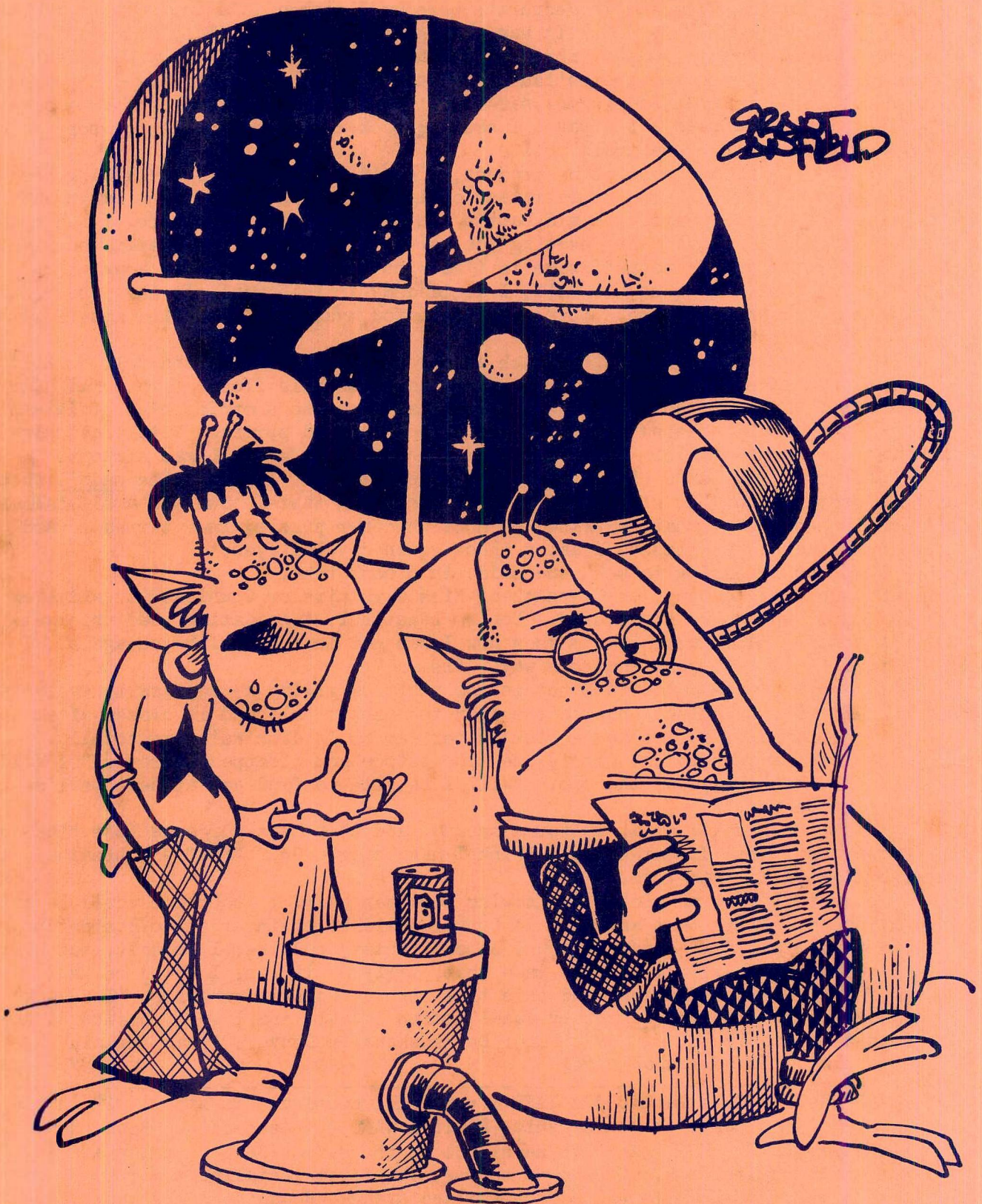
And there I was, no closer to knowing her than ever. I doubted I would be able to convince my editor that anything in Denver would be of interest to Bostonians, but I'd find a way. We know the sound of one fantasy fucking, I thought, but what is the sound of two...? I already knew that, silly as it was, I would be in Denver for the next World-con, and this time with advance information. The book in Amy Carstairs' lap was Jurgen by James Branch Cabell, and I well remembered how Jurgen did the manly thing. Over Labor Day weekend in Denver, I was certain Jurgen would do it more than once!

--Larry Stark 1981

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LAST PAGE STUFF: Dave Langford's TAFF report will continue "in late 1981" in the pages of Ian & Janice Maule's NABU (5 Beaconsfield Road, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 3HY). As Dave says: "Be on the safe side -- cut Ian and Janice off your mailing list now..." And of course, the first installment popped up in Langford's own TWLL-DDU #19 (22 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, Berks, RG2 7PW, U.K.) U.K. ), it costs a dollar, but it goes to Taff. :: Most of the electro-stencils were done by Sheila Bulak. :: The mailing labels are done by my wife, Lynn. :: Overseas mailing provided by the unknowing bosses of Rich Brown. :: See you in '82!  
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"The scalp is the front lawn of your face!"  
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"Can I borrow the keys to the saucer tonight, Dad?"