



BOONFARK 6

Boonfark

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NUMBER SIX

Spring 1982

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the fanzine that's
bullish about fandom

ARTWORKS

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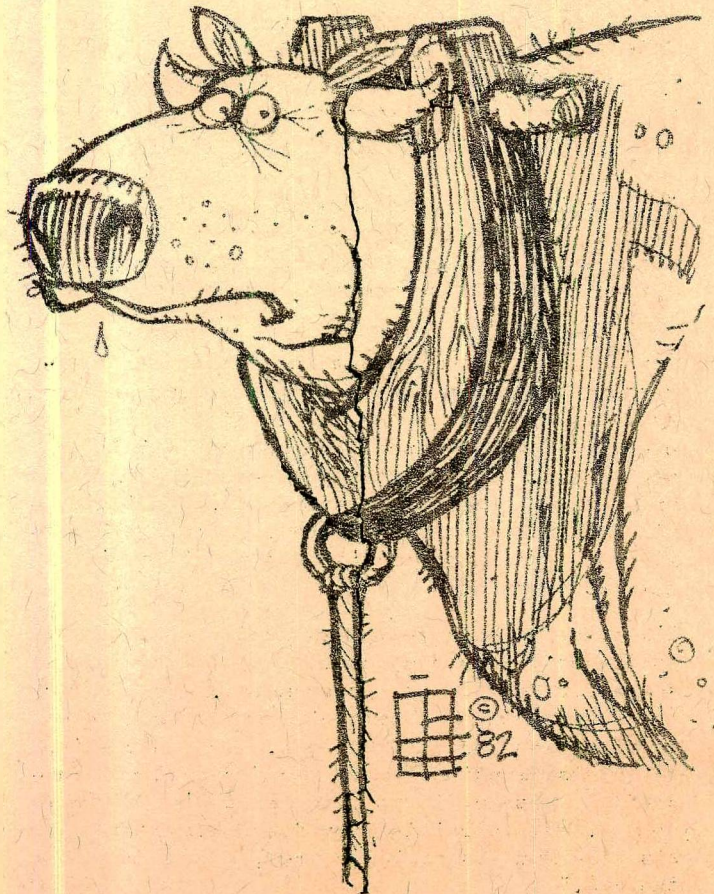
BOONFARK (formerly BIG BOVINES IN BONDAGE) Volume One, Number Six is published twice a year (at least) by DAN STEFFAN, 1010 N. Tuckahoe St., Falls Church, Virginia 22046 You can get this fanzine for 'the usual', *Old Fanzines*, Artwork, or the revolting amount of \$2.50 per copy. Contents (c) 1982 by Dan Steffan for the contributors

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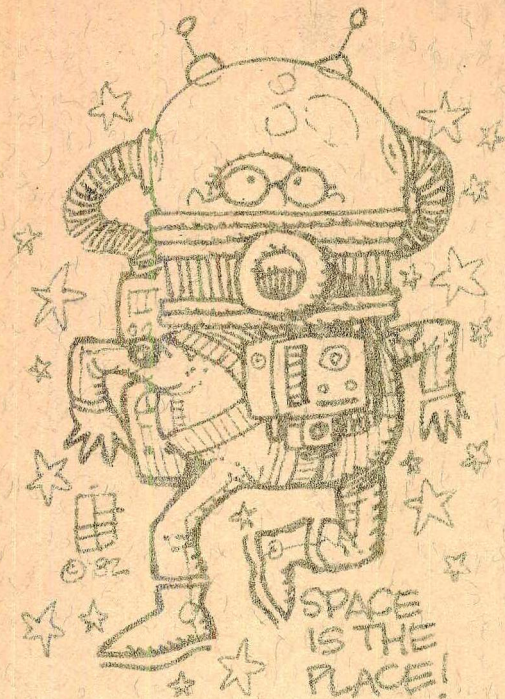
This issue is dedicated to Terry Carr for his advice and to Boyd Raeburn, because he's been sick.

Congratulations Smiffy!

GRANT CANFIELD for TAFF in 1983!



zen vaudeville



"The only thing that separates us from the animals is mindless superstition and pointless ritual." -- Latka Gravas

WELCOME TO PARTICIPATORY FANDOM: Ya know, -- I always say

"ya know" when I want to sound casual -- Fannish Fanzine Fandom ain't what it used to be. I'm not talking about the state of fanzines themselves; I'm talking about the stature of Fannish Fanzine Fandom.

I'm of the opinion that things are quite interesting in fanzines now, certainly more interesting than they were a couple of years ago when everybody, myself included, was complaining about them. Despite the apparent rise in number and quality of fanzines currently, Fannish Fanzine Fandom seems to have really began to deteriorate. At least that's what the 'other' fandoms are saying.

I'm thinking about examples like the current bad attitudes of Worldcon committees towards the scheduling of fannish programming. Or the fact that only the most commercial and sterile of fanzines get Hugo nominations. Or the ranking of Fannish Fanzine Fandom (or "traditional fandom") by Arthur Hlavaty, in AMERICA'S DISCORDIAN HERO 5, as a participatory fandom right up there with the fandoms of "Star Trek, Parkover, and the SCA."

The full quote from Hlavaty can be found on the

backcover of GAMBIT 55, and to reprint it again would be redundant, however, a few select lines are useful in helping to make this editorial's points, so: "I suggest that "traditional fandom" or fannish fanzine fandom, is such a participatory fandom, and that not knowing who Walt Willis is would be something like not knowing who Captain Kirk or Dyan Ardais is."

Arthur follows this sentence with a description of Willis as "a second-rate humorist comparable to Art Buchwald or Ron Goulart," which pissed me off royally. The early drafts of this editorial were pages of staunch defense of Willis's credentials and accomplishments, peppered with my own righteous indignation toward Hlavaty for having said something so dumb. Then I went on about the task of proving Arthur wrong about our fandom being a participatory fandom alongside the Trekkies and the Darkies, and attempted to show him that "traditional fandom" was in fact the mother-fandom, from which all these others grew.

But upon rereading, the essay seemed to be wrong. Everything I had said seemed to make sense and be correct, but it just wouldn't ring true when I went over it again and again. I tried rewrites, but discovered that I had said what I thought needed to be said in the original piece, and found myself unable to significantly change it. I was really frustrated. If I had made my points, why was I left with the niggling feeling that there was something missing or wrong with it?

So I took some advice from other writers, and put the editorial in a drawer for a while. It would delay the issue, but that seemed inevitable since I had hooked all of my editorial ideas into that one piece and seemed unable to break away from it. I did other things for a while, including considering an editorial of odds and ends that would enable me to publish. But my commitment to the editorial was stronger than that and I just gave myself time to think about it. After a couple of weeks I had calmed down and extracted the impacted editorial in an effort to get a new perspective. And fuck all if I didn't get it, too.

I reread the editorial, especially Arthur's quote, and realized right away what had been tripping me up. I had been so pissed about what he had said about Walt, and, by inference, his contributions to fandom, that I didn't realize that Arthur was actually making good sense about his other points concerning the fragmentation of modern fandoms.

We have become an anachronistic participatory fandom that is just one of many that run around fandom at-large. Sure, I had been right about my point that Fannish Fanzine Fandom is the mother-fandom, but so what? That doesn't give us some ghod given right to be Number One, does it? Just because our fandom knows who Walt is, and what he has done, is no reason to think that some Worldcon committee member, in fandom for five years or less, should have the slightest idea of who this guy is -- never mind having heard of HYPHEN or SLANT.

That is kind of a stinging indictment of fandom's ability to keep its accomplishments and history alive and viable to neofans. You can't argue about this

point -- all you have to do is ask anybody you know who is on a Worldcon committee (and who has discovered fandom in the 70s) who Charles Burbee is -- the blank look on their face alone will answer your question. Sure, the same person may grin knowingly when you say Bob Tucker's name, and maybe even utter a "smooth!", but you'll get a repeat of the same blank look if you mention Hoy Ping Pong. They don't know. It isn't necessarily that they don't want to know, but that nobody has ever bothered to tell them.

I know, from experience, that if you sit a person (doesn't matter if they're a fan or not) down in your favorite chair, tell them a little about Willis, and then give them your copy of WARHOON 28, they'll enjoy the hell out of it. I've seen it several times -- and those people never fail to appreciate Walt's skill as a humorist and observer, or Bergeron's beautiful packaging of same. What does this say about Fannish Fanzine Fandom's ability to maintain continuity with the rest of the fandoms?

We have taken to isolating ourselves from those other fandoms. Sure, they are for the most part offensive to be around -- they're either swinging their swords, zapping their blasters, or singing in your ear -- but that doesn't mean they want to be ignorant of fandom's history or even why I insult them at every opportunity. It's all a matter of cultural differences. We often think of them as coming from the wrong side of the fannish tracks, while they aren't really too sure of what we are. It is my definite impression that we know a lot more about them than they know about us. So it would seem to me that the real question confronting us is: Does Fannish Fanzine Fandom, or "traditional fandom" want or need to take the trouble to attempt informing the Great Unwashed Masses about itself? And, if so, are we ready to accept the circumstances that would probably accompany the swelling of the fannish ranks as a result of such an educational project?

I think the answers are: No and no.

I realized this when I came to terms with my anger at the Denvention committee -- who didn't seem to know who Walt or WARHOON were. I had absolutely no reason to be angry at those people, I decided. In fact, I should have been grateful. Their ignorance has allowed me to enjoy something that is almost a secret. Their ignorance also allowed me to feel like I am onto something special -- thereby making me special, too. At the time, I was mad because I saw something in Willis's work that was wonderful, and -- being an enthusiastic person who loves to expose talented people to wider audiences -- I was amazed that anyone could be in "fandom" and be unaware of the neat stuff that lay right under their noses. But I feel differently now -- I have seen the light!

With my new-found enlightenment, I now realize that the last thing I should have been doing was complaining about general fandom's ignorance

about Willis or Fannish Fanzine Fandom. This may sound selfish to some of you, but I now know full well that if general fandom did know about things like, say, this fanzine, I'd be stuck with the task of having to produce thousands of copies to send to all the Trufans. And that simple fact alone would probably prevent me from ever publishing again. Hell, it was the sheer numbers of people in fandom that drove a lot of people into the apas in the 70s, wasn't it? And even the apas have gotten bloated to the point, these days, that fans are retreating into genzine publishing to escape.

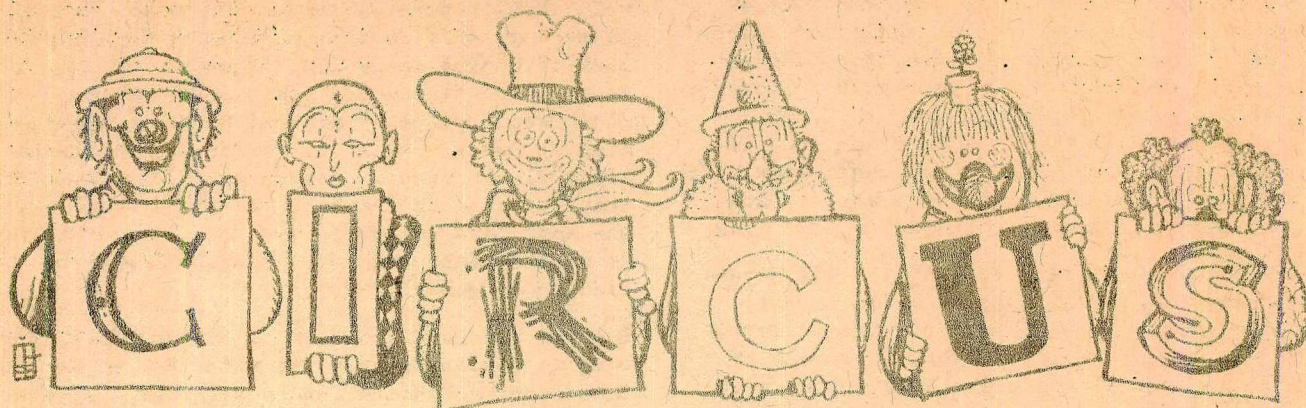
I think we should hold on to our anonymity for as long as possible. Because when the day does come that Fannish Fanzine Fandom has over a thousand active participants, it will probably lose one of its most important functions: Being an extended family. I believe that beyond a certain point fandom will have to become more like a mob, and when it does, fandom will probably cease to exist in terms that are recognizable today. As long as it is small, it is functional.

When fandom expands to accomodate The Hoard that we presently separate ourselves from, it will probably seem every bit as ridiculous to us as the SCA does now. But I think it is inevitable. So it makes sense to me that we should delay the process. We should stay elitist and be on our guard; making sure that those who would dilute our precious bodily fluids are kept at arm's length. While those who are immediately recognizable as the Classic Fannish Losers are ushered into the Inner Sanctum and taught the secret rituals of fanac.

But let's not ignore the need for some sort of educational attitude in fandom. Whether we want to inform The Hoard or not, we still need to inform ourselves. Let's face it, there are a lot of fannish fans out there who know nearly as little about fandom's history as The Hoard, and need the information to really get the feel of the traditions and stuff that go along with this folk art called fanzine publishing. Surely, Arthur Hlavaty wouldn't have said the dumb things about Willis that he did, if he was properly educated. I guess that's why this fanzine exists and functions like it does.

Despite evidence to the contrary, it was never my intention to publish a fanzine that is focused on fanhistory. I have, however, always intended to publish a fanzine about fans and when you have fans writing bits of autobiography, you're naturally going to be getting fanhistory at the same time. That is a fact that I acknowledge and embrace because, if for no other reason, that is the sort of fanwriting that has staying power. Nobody ever remembers a book review.

Nonetheless, you may remember the book review that makes up rich brown's column this issue. The book that rich reviews here is a fanhistory, or sorts, from one of those other participatory fandoms. If nothing else, you'll be interested in this book out of morbid curiosity, because, as you'll see, it



In the early fall of '74, I found myself leaning out of a door on the Ringling Bros. Circus train watching the miles accumulate between myself and my home in Portland, Oregon.

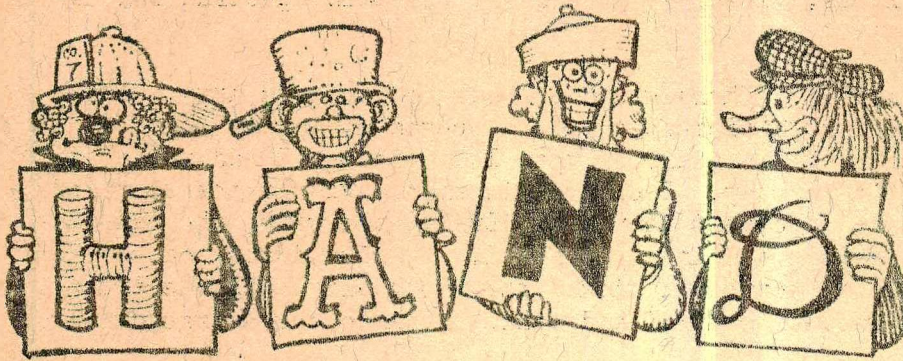
A couple of weeks earlier, I had returned home from a summer at a writer's workshop, my mind slopping over with literary ambitions. Then the Circus parked their gaudy train a few blocks from my house. The acrid smell of elephant shit activated my curiosity. I wandered down to the train and struck up a conversation with a tough middle-aged dwarf named Schwartz. The questions I asked were general ones about life with the Circus, but apparently he thought I was angling for a job. Finally he said, in a voice like a sarcastic moose: "Look kid, I don't have any more time. If you wanna job, git yer ass onna train -- we're pulling out in t'ree hours."

It hadn't occurred to me that I could join these people. Without hesitation I dashed home, threw all I owned into my '49 Chevy panel truck, drove it out to my brother's country home, left a note under the windshield wiper ("Bruce: have run off with the Circus. Watch this stuff for a while."), and climbed on the train. My initial thought was to travel with the Circus for a couple of months and clinicly observe how an isolated community of mixed nationalities and scrambled weirdnesses dealt with each other. Then I would go home and transform the experience into some sort of SF format, maybe an abandoned colony.

My job those first few months was the lowest, grimmest and griniest job on the show: the dreaded Train Crew. I was part of the crew responsible for general maintenance and upkeep of a mile-long train on which 250 people lived year-round. I did everything from changing brake-shoes to unstopping disgusting toilets to oiling wheels to putting locks on a hundred doors to scrubbing down the entire train with a case of Brillo pads to setting fire to the underbrush growing between the tracks in an effort at thawing out some frozen waterpipes. I worked virtually every waking minute, brutal, filthy manual labor, and never even saw the show.

It didn't take long for the glamor to wear off, but by then it was the beginning of winter, and we were in Chicago -- two-thirds of a continent from home. I had no money (my princely wage of \$92 a week -- before taxes -- went to survival), and the alternative to staying with the show was hitchhiking across the country in the snow. So I stuck it out. Ringling Bros. traveled up into Canada, then back down, all the way to Winter Quarters in Florida.

Once in Florida, with no shows and most of the performers on vacation, I found that the work, paradoxically, became much harder as the Circus refurbished its equipment for the coming season. But at least it was warm.



BY
STEVE
BROWN

Saturday, December 14, 1974 was sultry and quiet at nine in the morning. Both Circus trains were in the yard, parked side by side (there are two complete Ringling Bros. Circuses -- the Red and Blue Units -- who work alternating schedules). The ground was orangy-brown dust that clashed horribly with the painted Circus posters on the sides of the trains. My task that morning was to build a wall in the shop-car out of $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch plywood. I had made a slight error in computation, and found that I had to shave off about a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch from the side of the sheet of wood that lay across two sawhorses. I was using a Skilsaw, a hand-held saw with a circular blade.

As the cut I was making drew near the end of the board, the edge behind me slipped off the back sawhorse. It fell just as I was completing the cut. My left hand was on the board to steady it. My right hand flipped up with the board's motion, and I dropped the saw -- all in one continuous motion. I felt mildly peeved. The only actual sensation was an instantaneous flash of acetylene heat across the palm of my left hand, like rapidly passing your hand in front of an open furnace door.

I bent down to pick up the saw and noticed a few drops of blood on the ground. Hum. Must have nicked myself a little, I thought, and glanced at my left hand. As I lifted the hand up, the top half fell backward along a line stretching from the base of my thumb to the base of my little finger.

Time slowed to the point where I felt as if I could recite the complete works of Proust between one heartbeat and the next. The sight of the ends of my bones -- (they're far too white) -- poking through a red canyon -- (it can't be that deep) -- in my palm switched control of my body from the normally haphazard efforts of my mind to that of an icy computer with only one program: Survival. This was true shock, that odd state of consciousness where all normal reactions are damped, pain is non-existent, and adrenalin eliminates time altogether.

The computer made my right hand hold my left hand together and blanked out that initial vision until days later. I had nothing to do with this. I was deep inside my brain silently screaming. Options spun through my mind with the speed and precision of a disk drive. The computer effortlessly selected the option with highest priority: a tourniquet. My body walked up to a horrified bystander, who seemed to be in greater shock than I, and asked him for his belt with the studied casualness of someone selecting just the right banana from a bunch. He fumbled it out of his pants and gave it to me. The computer controlling my body whipped the belt around my bicep, looped it tight; the free end was in my mouth, a tug, the flow of blood slowed to a trickle: all in a quarter of the time it took to type this sentence. The options continued to spin. Deep inside I was drooling and running in aimless circles.

The only pain the computer would allow me to feel was a deep throb in my left arm, like a powerful low-voltage current down-shifted to about 200 rpm -- not

unlike grabbing onto the end of a jackhammer. There was also a wisp of white heat where my left palm should be. I felt both ends of the pain spectrum and nothing in between.

The next priority: hospital. There was one about four blocks away. The computer quickly plotted the most efficient route and began moving my legs. A pick-up truck drove by. Before I was aware of what I was doing, I had walked in front of the truck, forcing it to stop. I climbed in and convinced the startled driver that my errand was more important than his. During the ride, the computer relaxed control and the three-year old in me surfaced. I writhed and moaned around the end of the belt in my mouth and kicked the dashboard until the truck stopped. Then the computer resumed control and walked me into the emergency ward.

Now the computer is tiring. My adrenalin gland is just about empty. A quick check of all inputs: the tourniquet is still holding (my jaw is soar); no new blood is apparent in the red mass welding my hands together; the body appears to be functioning capably. Others are taking control of the situation. Maybe I can sleep for a while, it's been a rough morning. Events are losing their continuity, there is little relation anymore between cause and effect. I see a staccato series of unrelated images:

- hands, lots of hands
- a sensation of movement in unlikely directions
- I.V. hook-ups (must be glucose)
- tilting walls
- stainless steel tubing everywhere
- murmuring voices:
 - "Are you allergic to...?"
 - "Could you sign this...?"
 - "...next of kin...?"
 - "If he doesn't stop that breathing, he'll throw himself into tetanus shock..."

That last comment reawoke the computer. Breathing inputs are monitored. It is discovered that the body is breathing with huge, rapid gulps, constant hyperventilation. Not good. The computer leaves a lung-monitoring routine working and slumbers.

As I wait for Dame Pentathol to take over, images of various hooks flash through my mind (to me it was never in doubt that I would lose the hand): a flat black and silver hook for formal wear; a spread-fingered arrangement with pads that I could rock back and forth on a typewriter; a tool hook with detachable screwdriver, wrench, hammer, etc.; a hook that consisted of a soft, gelatin-filled pad for love-making; eating hooks; reading hooks; showering hooks -- they filled my mind in endless profusion until Dame P. kissed my brain and it was a different day and a different room.

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My eyes opened. A hospital room. My left arm seemed to be suspended from the ceiling. I looked up and felt the blood drain from my face. There was a cast on the end of my arm, and out of the cast were protruding four fingers and a thumb -- the last thing I expected to see. I lay back and reveled in the sensation of owning two hands. Then a doctor walked in.

We had a long talk. He seemed pretty pessimistic. He told me that what he

did to my hand (six hours of surgery, 350 stitches and some metal pins) was what he termed "cosmetic surgery." He said he did what he could, but the motor nerves and tendons had been scrambled by the circular action of the saw. It was his professional opinion that I would never again be able to so much as twitch my fingers. This was the hardest blow yet. Not only would I no longer have the use of my hand, but I wouldn't even have the opportunity to become the world's foremost authority on prosthetic hooks.

I remained in the hospital for two weeks, and went through a series of casts. During the period each cast was off, when my hand was exposed to the air (looking like a grotesque reject from Dr. Frankenstein's student days), the doctor would call in his colleagues to admire his handiwork (so to speak). I would have to sit there with my arm in the air for a half-hour while all the other doctors oohed and ahed over my doctor's embroidery techniques. I was surprised he didn't stitch his initials beneath my thumb.

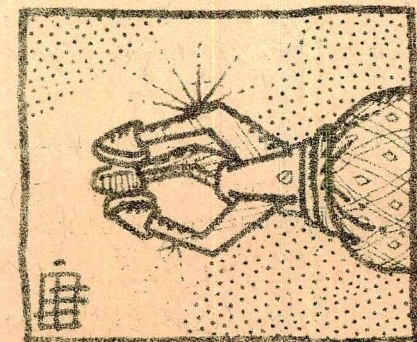
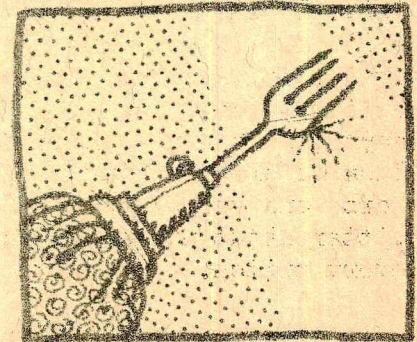
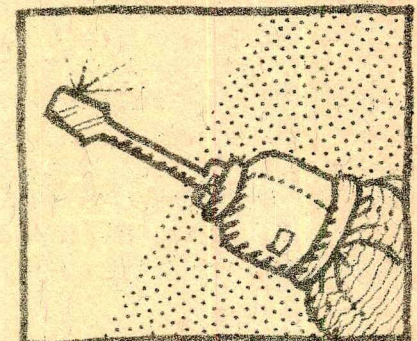
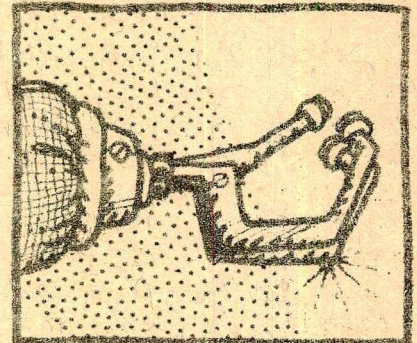
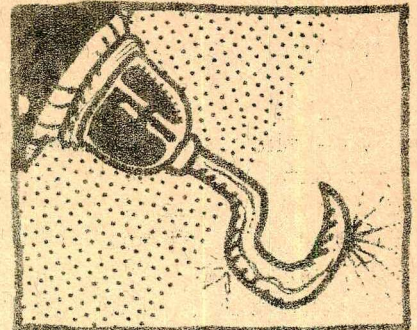
Some Circus people visited me on New Year's. Schwartzzy smuggled in several dozen tiny airplane bottles of vodka in his cavernous coat. They were only allowed an hour. During that time, they managed to get me stinking drunk, carried me to the bathroom where I threw up, cleaned me off, made me drink lots of water, and sobered me up before the nurse came back. A complete New Year's party in miniature.

After I got my final cast, I was released from the hospital. By this time the pain was something to be reckoned with. Imagine your hand "going to sleep" to the point of total incapacitation. Now imagine it "waking up." There is a brief stage in the process where the hand is so sensitive that the slightest touch will send you into screaming fits. Then imagine someone walking up and giving you a firm handshake. That's what it felt like all the time.

I soon learned that the pain was tolerable when I was walking or reading, but preferably both. So I began taking twelve-hour hikes up and down the beach with a book under my nose. I read Delany's Dhalgren straight through in two days.

Meanwhile, back at the Circus, my status was becoming embarrassing.

Everybody works on the Circus train. On pull-out night, the highest paid pampered superstars can be seen up to their knees in mud at four in the morning, lashing down wagons to the flatcars. There just wasn't anybody who wasn't doing something at any given time. Yet, I was under doctor's orders to do nothing physical for quite a long time. The show couldn't fire me, Workman's Compensation would frown on that (though the show did



try to talk me into quitting). Resigning and going home to nurse my wound never occurred to me. It isn't possible to join the Circus and casually observe. The show becomes part of you and vice versa. Even after four months, working the worst jobs, and with a crippling injury, quitting was the absolute last resort. It began to look as if I were going to be paid to ride the train around the country and do nothing.

Then I began lobbying for the job of Lighting Director. I knew they needed one -- they were negotiating for a pro from California. I believe the clincher argument was that, as Lighting Director, I wouldn't have to do much more than sit in a chair and speak into a microphone, directing fourteen stagehands running the big spotlights. I told the show that they could have me for half of what they were willing to pay the pro, and solve the problem of what to do with me at the same time. They relented and I spent the next two years as Lighting Director (but that's another story).

A peculiar sensation manifested itself about six months after the accident. My scar had healed enough so that I was no longer on the verge of passing out if I accidentally touched it, yet it was far from healed over. During this period, whenever I touched the scar, I would feel thousands of tiny dots of perception all over my hand. Small spots of heat, cold, wet, rough, smooth, furry, slick -- the entire tactile spectrum. These spots would blink on and off in bewildering profusion and endless combinations. Sensations merged and sparkled all over my hand. The sensory nerves, scrambled along the scar like random spaghetti, were struggling to work. This continued for another couple of months until the scar had healed completely.

All during that first year I had taken the doctor at his word. My left hand was a piece of senseless meat at the end of my arm. Then, about eight months after the accident, my index finger began to twitch. Over the next three months, all of my fingers slowly regained the power of movement. Soon I was able to wash myself, tie my shoelaces, and (major breakthrough) roll my own joints. I am typing this as fast as I ever could. I still have no sensation on the palm side of my hand, but I am used to it now.

A full year later, when the Circus train returned to Florida, the first thing I did was to hop off with a guitar and run all the way to that doctor's office. I was a little upset that he had told me I would never move my hand again, and I wanted to burst in on him (hopefully with a patient), and play him a little boogie. Now, I am thankful for what he told me. By expecting nothing, anything my hand can do for me is a gift for which I am profoundly grateful. Instead of expecting the best and settling for what I could get, I expected the worst and was gifted. Without this psychological process, I might have become bitter about my hand. As it is, I love every gnarled curve of it, and glory in every twitch.

What happened in the doctor's office? You should know better than that. That kind of melodramatic confrontation happens only in the movies. Out here in real life, there was a sign on his door: ON VACATION. I never saw him again.

-- Steve Brown

PSSST! HEY JOE, YOU GOT FANZINES? I'm looking for lots of old fanzines, but am particularly interested in: WARHOON (1-10), HYPHEN and SLANT (any issues), LIGHTHOUSE (1-5,8,&14), VOID (1-12,16,17,18,&21), XERO (1-9), and INNUENDO (1-10). Also any issues of: A BAS, COPS LA!, QUANDRY, and GRUE. I have limited trades available, and very limited back issues. Or I can be persuaded to pay hard cash for them. :: I'm also interested in Bode art.

What is this thing we call fandom?

'TOD' TEAM PODIE

AN
IRREGULAR
COLUMN

BY

RICH BROWN

This question has plagued many of you, I'm sure, as it has plagued all one of me -- despite my (and, no doubt, your) years of involvement in the microcosm. It may be one of those silly unanswerable philosophical questions, like "What is science fiction?" or "How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?" or "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" or even "What am I doing here when I could be out making a fortune manufacturing magnetic golfballs?"

The closest I've come to an answer is a paraphrase of the best response to that old "What is science fiction?" chestnut: Fandom is the thing I point to when I say, "That's fandom." While this definition may be open to argument when applied, it is unarguable in its present form -- unless you're being particularly obnoxious, which I trust you're not. Still, I'm convinced I could come up with a better one if I put my mind to it. But it would undoubtedly involve great effort and considerable thought; I try to avoid anything which requires either.

Nonetheless, there was a time when I wanted to be able to define fandom. It was a proud and lonely thing to be a fan, then; while I was an atheist when I stumbled into the microcosm, I'd come from a Fundamentalist background -- so, naturally, as soon as I became a convert to the Way, I wanted to proselytize. I wanted to Preach the Word to each person I met whom I thought might make a good fan. A simple definition of what the hell I was talking about, in that context, might have been useful.

It's not until I think about the two people I successfully "converted" to fandom without benefit of such a definition -- Paul Stanbery and Mike McQuown -- and recall the negative impressions they made, that I begin to wonder if perhaps my neofannish misconceptions may have been a contributing factor to their downfall. Of course, McQuown did things which alienated him from a number of people and probably got less than he deserved -- but Paul's reputation may have been the result of his taking my misinformed impressions about fandom to heart.



Such speculation is moot, however, since I only preach to the already converted these days. I think perhaps this is because I may have learned the error of my ways -- after all, who needs more people wandering around conventions in Spock ears, fawning over Jerry Pournelle and entertaining us all with their insights into Star Wars?

For what it may be worth, I believe fandom is comprised of about 400-500 people, no matter how many show up at cons in the hopes of seeing R2-D2, think the heart of the convention lies somewhere between the huckster's room and the program or believe fanzines should aspire to publish the best prozine rejects. I can wander past these people at cons, or read what they have chosen to call "fanzines," and still feel what a proud and, if not precisely lonely, at least individual thing it is to be a fan. And before you all rise up with your "Yes, but--"s I should add that the word "fan" is somewhat like the word "Megapei" in Roger Zelazny's Isle of the Dead. You may recall that there was a planet called Megapei, which had a continent called Megapei, which had a city called Megapei. In this definition of "fan," I'm only talking about the city.

It's a source of some amazement to me how often things we "need" come to us -- long after the need has disappeared. It's almost enough to make one believe there is a God in the Universe who does hear, and sometimes answer, our prayers -- albeit too late to do us any good. Anyway, something like this is what has happened here: Now that I no longer have a need for a definition of what fandom is -- it's that thing I point to when I say, "That's fandom!", remember? -- there is a book aimed at the unconverted which attempts to say what fandom is. It's a definition of a fandom I know of but barely believe exists -- and then only when I put my hands over both eyes and keep them closed real tight -- much less a fandom I care anything about. But what the hell.

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Dan was after me for a "Totem Poll" for BOONFARK. That's how all this comes about -- because Dan was after me to do my column and I told him that, while my columns for him had garnered more pure ego-boo than any dozen pieces I'd written before, still I felt the need for a new direction -- I didn't want to repeat myself. My dislike of redundancy, I said, was based on the fact that I really hated saying the same thing more than once.

Dan suggested I do a killer review. He set his pipe aside to hand me a copy of Fandom Is For the Young -- Or -- One Convention Too Many by Karen "K-nut" Flanery and Nana Grasmick (Vantage Press, \$8.95, 161pp) which Steve Brown had come across at the book store where he works. I opened the dust jacket to read the blurb. "Here," the blurb said, "is a delightful odyssey through the wacky, wonderful world created by fans -- a world of fan clubs, 'fanzines' (fan club magazines), and, of course, conventions. What's the point of being a fan? To celebrate life in the form of a TV show, a favorite performer, a special interest -- in the author's case, it's science fiction and fantasy -- and, most of all, to have fun." A few lines down: "It tells you -- in a witty, irreverent way -- what makes fans tick, how fanzines get published and conventions organized (or sometimes disorganized), and what celebrities the fans adore are 'really' like."

So much for a definition of fandom.

Chuckling, I turned to the forward. Karen took part of that space to say she couldn't write -- but then decided that yes, she could, too: "Not in the expected way. I have a free-association, rambling-rosie style which spins off the top of my head and this takes advantage of serendipity and chance of on-the-spot inspiration. See what I mean?" Yes, Karen, I do. I really do. Then Nana took the rest of the foreward to say she couldn't write either, at least not in the prolific, creative sense, because disorganized ideas didn't spew forth from her --

organization was her Thing, you see. But: "I can take Karen's ideas, seperate them, and make sense of them. I am primarily the builder. With me, the ideas take literary form, not by training, but rather by instinct. Where literary forms are broken, it is to emphasize the difference between our two writing styles." I'm sure it is, Nana.

Dan was looking at me expectantly. "Hey, right," I said, "a killer review. No problem. No problem at all."

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You may already know about vanity presses; however, being one of those kinds of people who rush in where even angels fear to tread, I'll tell you what I know without considering that I might be lecturing on The Names of the Nine Planets of the Solar System to a group of PhD candidates in astronomy.

Any slush-pile reader can tell you there must be hundreds, if not thousands, of aspiring writers. Some, after cranking out a million words or so, may learn something about the craft and begin to write consistently saleable material; others with the same apprenticeship may be able to make a sale or two but no more. The vast majority, however, will learn nothing; they would be better advised to consider careers in plumbing. But the vast majority of this vast majority would never take that advice, even should you make such a helpful suggestion; they will continue to write and submit what they write without ever stopping to realize just why their material is so universally rejected -- because they can't write. Of these, a substantial number will come to think (because of their numerous rejections) editors only buy material from their friends, or their own style breaks so many literary forms and traditions that editors are jealous of their talents.

Many of these unfortunates read the writer's magazines -- wherein they may find advertisements from the vanity press offering to publish their works. (Vantage Press, which published Fandom Is For the Very Young, is one of the largest.) There is a catch to the offer, of course, but one designed to take advantage of these writer's vanity (thus, the name): Vanity presses charge you to publish your book -- but offer upwards of twice the royalties. To the uninitiated (and untalented) who may believe they're the next Hemingway, Heinlein or Heyer -- and let's face it, they all do -- this can seem like a dream come true.

It happens like this: You've been rejected by 6,327 publishers but know your book, "Death Shall Have No Dominion," is the finest thing to come down the literary pike since Aristophanes wrote "The Birds," only of course those know-nothing, in-group, self-serving, quasi-literate Phillistines who call themselves editors aren't about to let you get published because you'd outsell Mickey Spillane, Stephen King and Harold Robbins combined. (If this were the case, these editors would be falling all over themselves to publish your works, but when you've been rejected 6,327 times, your injured pride lets you indulge in fantasies unhampered by even the most tenuous connection to reality.)

Then an ad in Writer's Disgust somewhat like the following catches your eye: "New authors! Tired of rejection? Let Bunkum Press publish your book! Send for Free Details!" You do, and a brochure is sent telling of the "success" of other authors who have used them. No prices are mentioned, but it's obvious you have to put money up front; still, the brochure points out how regular publishers can't afford to take chances on new authors, the break-even point being what it is, whereas if you really believe in your work and are willing to share the risk, they need not be bothered by such considerations. This implies they're taking a chance right along with you, but of course they're not since their charges guarantee a profit. And if you should produce a best-seller, or even make your money

back plus a profit, they can use your "success" to entice other would-be authors.

So you ship off "Death Shall Have No Dominion," all 947 pages of it -- and, surprise of surprises, here's a group of people who recognize you for the gleaming talent that you are. Why, they wouldn't even suggest you change so much as a comma (although if you feel the manuscript could be improved by its being copy-edited, that can be arranged for a modest fee). Just sign on the dotted line...

You peruse the contract: "...only \$12,500...publish 5,000 copies of first edition...publisher to retain only 7% of all movie rights..." Hey, what a deal! (It's my belief that few people have the necessary armor to protect themselves from visions of movie sales: their minds boggle trying to estimate how much Aristophanes must have gotten from Hitchcock...)

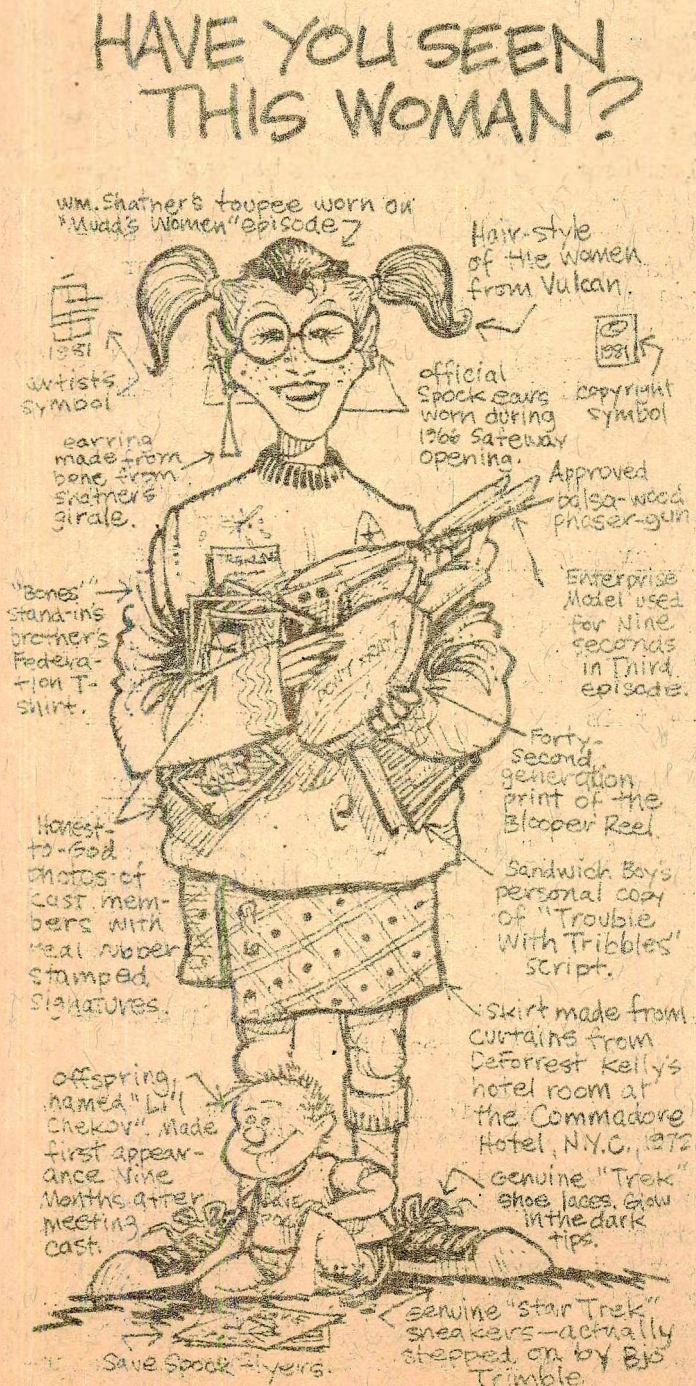
So enthusiastic correspondence is exchanged, contracts are signed, money changes hands...and, depending on how sophisticated they are, sometimes noises are made about "promoting" the book -- that is, they give you a list of places you can go locally to get people to buy advance copies. You may not realize it, but this is very important: They are contracted to publish 5,000 copies of your book. They are not contracted to bind 5,000 copies of your book. They will bind as many as can be presold, plus a few dozen for your personal use -- you can give them to reviewers or use them to fight off the occasional attack of wild wolverines. After that, if a substantial number of orders come in from bookstores, they might condescend to bind more -- but not unless. The wait on orders being what it is, under these circumstances, very few legitimate bookstores will bother to have anything to do with them.

I feel sorry for Karen and Nana. Like many other authors who have gone the vanity press route, they not only must face 'Killer Reviews' but the inevitable realization that they have wasted their money.

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The book did not take long to read. Of its 161 pages, 69 are full-page cartoons; there are also small cartoon chapter headings, two three-quarter-page cartoons, one blank page (for no apparent reason) and several chapters which end with a few lines on a page. Altogether, there might be as little as 10,000 or as much as 20,000 words of none-to-well written prose here.



I'm not sure which of the authors is responsible for the cartoons; the book may have said but I didn't write it down, they're not otherwise credited and I have absolutely no desire to force myself through another reading. The cartoon character developed verges on the cute; imagine a cottonball with eyes and a mouth (which together provide some expression), small hands and feet. Some ability is demonstrated whenever whoever it is draws people -- there's a cab driver in one who looks just like William Shatner. I'm not sure if it's supposed to look like William Shatner, or what the point would be of having it look like William Shatner, but it does look like William Shatner. Unfortunately, the majority of the cartoons illustrate the prose. Also unfortunately, the majority are obviously intended to be funny and aren't -- making them excruciatingly painful to behold. Examples: Four cottonball people running around stacks of paper shouting, "Find page one!" Or: Cottonball person sitting in front of typer, "in"-basket, "urgent" basket, "late" basket, etc., saying to itself: "Me? Join a fanclub?? It's for kids! Now, let me see, there are three I want to join next month..." Or: Cottonball person, sitting on commode with manuscript and pencil in hand, saying: "Now, how on Earth do you spell... Come to think of it, it's not on Earth..."

Not surprisingly, the writing makes the cartoons seem like the work of a William Rotsler or a Steve Stiles. It's so excruciatingly bad I found myself wondering if perhaps it could all be a joke. If it weren't for the fact that it is published by a vanity press, I wouldn't put it past someone like, say, Dick Lupoff, so much does it read like a satire. Really. As I read, I started marking places so I could cite examples of bad writing. I marked 21 pages -- more than a fifth of those on which there is prose -- as outstandingly bad. Some are bad because they are dumb, some because they're boring. Some are just poorly written. Some contain misinformation. And some are bad because they are dumb, boring, poorly written and contain misinformation. I could cite a minimum of 21 examples (because a few of the pages had more than one) -- but I'll be content with just this:

Hundreds of thousands of people in this world belong to and work in fan clubs.

Why?

In this world there is a little girl. She is mentally retarded. Though she had the capacity to develop and learn, there seemed to be no way to reach and motivate her into doing so. One day while she was watching TV, her mother noticed that she seemed to have more than her usual interest in what she was watching. The program was a popular science fiction series. Grasping at any hope, her mother engaged her in conversation about the show and found to her surprise that the child seemed to be quite taken with one of the characters, an alien.

In the hope that it would be of interest to the child she contacted a fan club and received the current publication. Sitting down with the child she explained that this book was about the 'alien.' When she began to read to her from the book she was stopped. "No," the child said most emphatically, "I want to read it for myself."

Laboriously, word by painfully difficult word and day by day, this retarded child taught herself to read. After years of trying to motivate her and failing, it took an alien on a TV series to give her the incentive. For the first time she wanted to learn, and learn she did.

The author(s), perhaps out of fear their readers might not get the point of this anecdote, add a few paragraphs later: "The moral justification for fandom is obvious. It would be easy to fill volumes with examples of the moral reasons for it all. They are inescapable, and for us a vital factor in our involvement. But fandom is mostly fun."

Fandom is mostly fun; I'll buy that. Except when you've promised your editor a killer review, and nothing you can possibly say, no matter how cutting or devastating, could make the authors look as bad as merely quoting from their work. Depressing is what that is.

Who are these people? Where are they coming from? What are they saying about our little world, how are they explaining it and are they likely to accomplish anything, good or bad, by it?

I may not have definitive answers but let me at least address the questions.

I'd never heard of Karen "K-nut" Flanery or Nana Grasmick before this book was handed to me. Although they mention "fanzines," "science fiction fandom" and "science fiction conventions" throughout, it's not difficult for a fan (in the city definition of that word) to figure where they're coming from. The first clue is in the blurbs: The stuff about what "celebrities the fans adore are 'really' like" and when and where they collect their autographs. The second clue comes in the authors' dedication of their book to "He who was great at tripping the light fantastic -- which kept everyone in the dark in a most spectacular way -- Leonard Nimoy." Other clues point the same direction, but mundanes who read this -- fortunately I doubt there will be too many, but keep in mind that no less a fan than Charles Burbee didn't think 39 player pianos were too many, either -- are not going to be able to make these distinctions. Not that this bothers me overmuch.

As to how they go about explaining it, I should probably just say "badly" and leave it at that. You don't have to be the fastest gun in the west to realize Karen and Nana are plowboys and thus how unfair it would be to engage any real gunplay with them. Their approach is worth this space only because it is so outstandingly bad.

The first chapter of the book, when they're not making up maudlin stories about retarded children, is devoted to explaining how and why they got into fandom. They were, they say, mad housewives -- up to their ears in "diapers and dishes." They explain, in irrelevant detail, why this made them feel something was missing from their lives. They talk about how their washing machine gave up the ghost, how they led Brownie troops, how they did volunteer work for hospitals, how they even tried to watch soap operas, and how boring it all was. Then they explain how they became involved in the "fun" world of fandom -- how much fun it was to struggle with a mimeograph, lead a fan club, do volunteer work for conventions and watch a "favorite" sf series on TV. They manage to make it all sound every bit as enjoyable as struggling with a washing machine, leading a Brownie troop, doing volunteer work for a hospital and watching soap operas.

Having dispensed with this in the first 15 pages of the book (which includes five full-page "cartoons"), they begin recounting their adventures in club participation, fanzine publishing and convention attending. Roughly 95% of their anecdotes are without point, a slightly lower percentage abound in misinformation ("Some professionals write for fanzines under pseudonyms." -- perhaps true, but the majority write for fanzines under their own names) and all convey the impression that the authors, having said what they had to say in 15 pages, are desperate to fill their book with anything, however much it may display their lack of wit. It really makes you wonder when they speak about the "ease" with which they could fill a volume on the moral reasons for it all.

They are excruciatingly circumspect; while they speak of "celebrities" and bore you with anecdotes without point or humor about what they said and did at conventions, they never (except in their dedication) mention names. Trying to guess who these celebrities are provides the only fun of the book: I think I

recognize Gene Rodenberry, William Shatner and possibly Isaac Asimov, and if the lady fan who "has been in fandom for a very long time" and is "incredibly talented quite intelligent and ambitious...a published authoress and an artist of no little talent" who "because of her friendships with several industry professionals ...is able to contact many people in the movie and TV industry /to/ act as a go-between for the fans and the industry" is not Bjo Trimble, I would be very much surprised. Still, there's no way to verify my guesses -- yet I don't suppose I'd really care if there were.

If you're inclined to doubt what I say about their anecdotes, I could give a few examples. Not complete quotes -- I wouldn't put you through that again -- but let me offer two which I think are typical. One: Finding herself waiting in a long line to register at a convention, one of the authors decided to pass the time by seeing what she had in her purse. She listed 57 items, none of them remarkable; she added about 100 words to the book, however, which was all too obviously the intent of this anecdote. Two: Our heroines, after several years on the convention circuit, found themselves in a small hall away from the rest of the maddening crowds, among the "chosen ones" who were to be allowed the joy of an interview with "the one person most desired by all"(?) -- provided everyone agreed to specific terms of behavior: "Under no circumstances was anyone to stand, or in any way move from their assigned spot." You can imagine, can't you, how "the one committing this crime could expect instant death." Although Karen "had had the pleasure of meeting the man in person and privately" Nana had not. Yet when Nana was called upon to ask her question in the question-and-answer session, she "committed the sin!...she actually, and without a thought stood up. The entire room inhaled sharply with fear that the spell had been broken." However, we are told Nana is "still alive....and what really happened was a most delightful conversation between friends."

When you come right down to it, though, this last anecdote, however uninspired its telling, is rather illuminating although I suspect it says something about Trekkies which the author(s) did not intend.

Finally, there's the question of what, if anything, may be accomplished by this book. My answer: Nothing. At worst, someone could read it and come away with the impression that fandom was boring -- but as this would probably only result in one less costumed freak, it's really not too terrible to contemplate. Knowing how the vanity presses work, it seems unlikely the book will be read by more people than read this fanzine -- if that many.

And, looking on the bright side, it certainly shows fandom has nothing to fear from Martin Morse Wooster.

-- rich brown

"Mind if I store some meat in the rear of your unit?" -- HILL STREET BLUES 1981

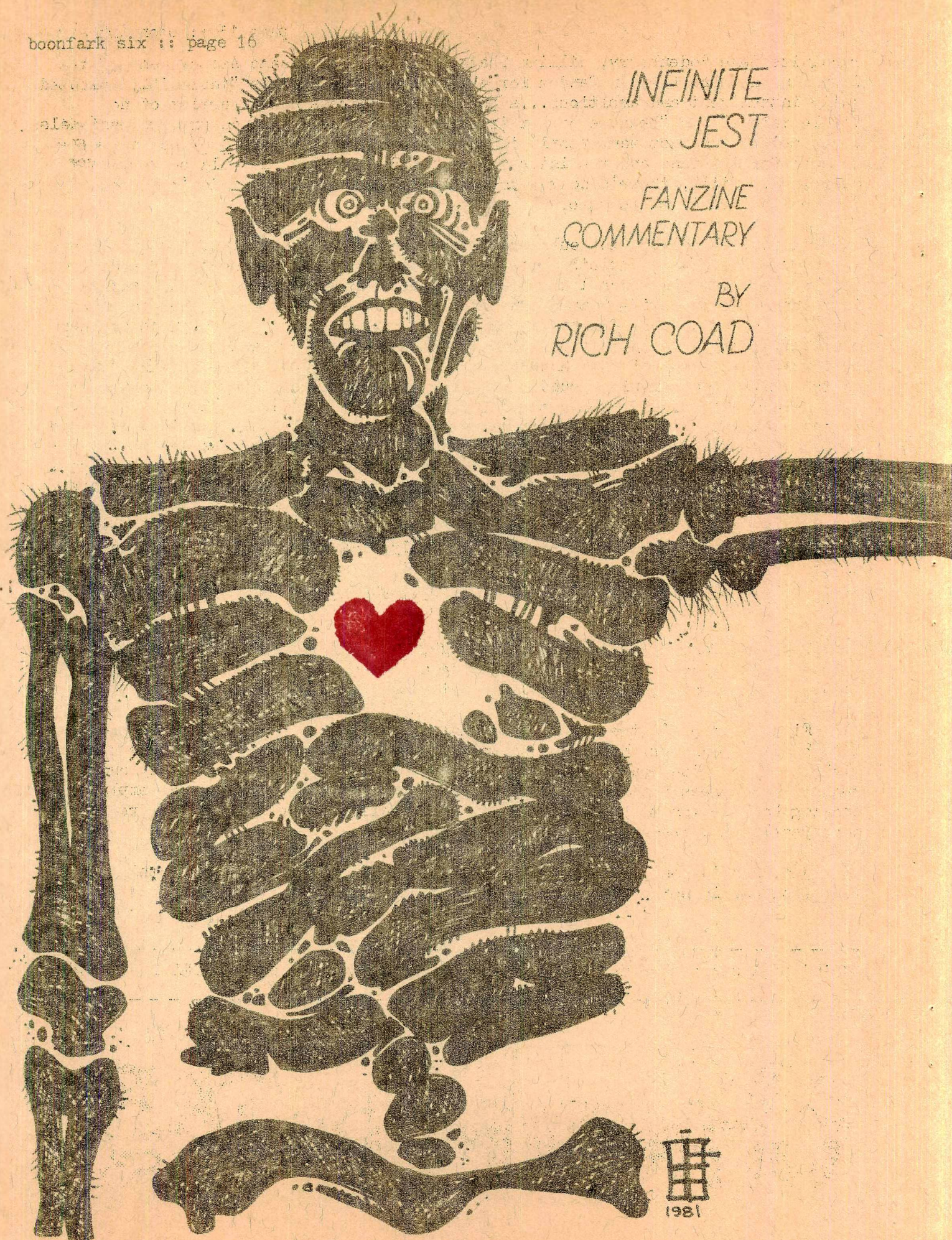
GRANT
CANFIELD

FOR
TAFF
in 1983

INFINITE JEST

FANZINE
COMMENTARY

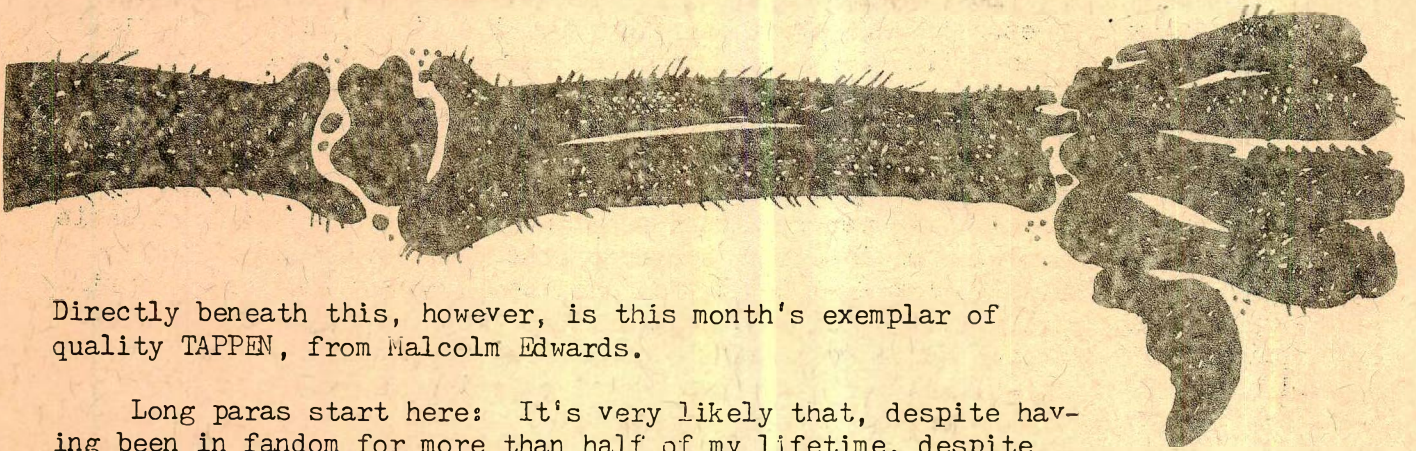
BY
RICH COAD



Ruby McFarland is not a fan. Ruby is a sweet young woman I work with; her fiance sings in a gospel group. At lunch today, Ruby McFarland asked me what was on the television. It was M*A*S*H. She also asked what I was reading. It was SCIENCE-FICTION FIVE-YEARLY. "A magazine put together by some friends of mine." I explained lamely. I hate trying to explain fanzines to someone who has never heard the term before.

Luckily, for me at any rate, those of you reading this column should know intuitively the difference between a fanzine and LOCUS or STARSHIP, even if you couldn't state the difference. Which leaves me conveniently free from tired old shibboleths to attack the new shibboleth of quality. What exactly is it that makes one zine good, vibrant, immediate and interesting while another is dull, remote, listless and enervating?

Ever since Dan asked me to write this column I've been stacking fanzines to the left of my typer; this pile is now about two inches thick and right on top is Weekly World News telling me that "Thousands of Americans have been...KIDNAPPED BY ALIENS And YOU could be next..." This, obviously is not a fanzine and won't be reviewed here, but it is worth every penny of the forty cents it costs.



Directly beneath this, however, is this month's exemplar of quality TAPPEN, from Malcolm Edwards.

Long paras start here: It's very likely that, despite having been in fandom for more than half of my lifetime, despite having produced several fine issues of the sercon BSFA journal VECTOR and a good personalzine called THE MAGIC PUDDING, despite being some kind of shaker and mover behind Seacon 79, and despite having been sci-fi editor for Gollancz, some of you may not have heard Malcolm's name. Seven years between fanzines is a very long time. TAPPEN should change that. Using the now familiar unillustrated British fanzine format, and the typical British mix of pulpit preaching and gutter anecdotalism, Malcolm has nevertheless fashioned that rarest of creatures (n.b. In writing avoid trite metaphors. --ed): the truly individual and personalized fanzine. It's difficult to attribute this individuality to any one aspect of the zine; unlike say, a Pickersgill zine, there is not the sense of an overwhelming strong personality giving an editorial direction to the zine. In his editorial Malcolm appears chatty, amiable, witty and, most of all, relaxed -- hardly the voice of a man constantly harassing contributors and insisting upon rewrites. This relaxed voice, the voice of a fellow sharing a few beers with some friends, remains whether Malcolm is reminiscing about his early days in fandom or adding his two cents worth to British fandoms newest bugaboo, politics in fandom. And it is this very tone that gives TAPPEN a self assurance that is all too often lacking in fanzines today; those who spend much of thier fannish writing in a defensive effort to justify, qualify and apologize for every little mistake made would do well to look at TAPPEN's direct assumption of worth: it's much easier to believe someone's good if they act like they believe it with no ifs ands or buts.

If there were no other reason to lavish praise upon TAPPEN, Chris Atkinson's two articles in the first two issues would provide reason enough. In his

editorial in the first issue Malcolm restates the dictum that "What is special about fanwriting is, of course, the personal element." A truism few would argue with. Chris, in her two articles here and one in STOP BREAKING DOWN, has extended that personal element to reach near the point of high art. Chris Atkinson is writing brilliantly and "Life With The Loonies" in TAPPEN 2 is one of the single best pieces of writing I've read anywhere (including books, magazines and newspapers) in the past year. What Chris has done is strip the personal element of fanwriting of all the easy caricatures, silly exaggerations and boring cliches that are generally found in even the best fanwriting. She writes reality as she sees it (a very different thing than writing realistically) and I can think of no higher praise.

It could seem to some readers, I suddenly realize, that I have gone on about TAPPEN at great length without ever actually listing the zine's contents. Well, I say to you, there are other reviewers around who will do that dull task. Here you will only get brief mentions, clues, not wholesale synopses. The rest of TAPPEN is filled with a couple of well written articles that are, however, slight. Chris Evans recalls the time he sucked a suppository for science and, in the second issue, Chris Priest tells about the intricacies of mail order book clubs and Darth Vader's feet. In just about any other fanzine either of these articles, by their sheer written skill, would be considered the outstanding piece for the issue; in TAPPEN, up against such stiff competition, they read exactly like what they are: embroidered drawing room anecdotes. Of course there is nothing bad about drawing room anecdotes, but this style is what most fanwriting consists of and it draws disproportionate amount of praise -- whole BNFships have been bestowed upon people who have never written substanceless articles are preferable to poorly written articles on important subjects (the kind we see all too often in DIAGONAL RELATIONSHIP, for example) I, for one, would rather see whole fanzines made up of truly carefully thought out, well-written articles and a bit less of the quick "A funny thing happened to me the other day" type. This, of course, would also kill fanzine fandom faster than postal rate increases but it is a goal we could all strive for a bit more consciously.

That leaves me with TAPPEN's round-robin column to discuss. Desert Island Discs, where a writer picks his or her eight favorite records of all time, leaves me with mixed feelings. On the one hand I have a very strong interest in rock n roll (play in a band, read many magazines, trade tapes with people, buy too many records for my budget) so I have an immediate interest in seeing what people pick and why; on the other hand I find myself agreeing with Chris Priest in DEADLOSS when he points out that without actually hearing the songs one really can't tell much. Greg Pickersgill (with whom I share a lot of tastes) in the first issue seemed to make fascinating reading while Colin Greenland (with whom I share virtually none) seemed deadly. This division by taste would seem to be inevitable, people will read about records they like but not those they hate. Unless Malcolm gets people to somehow combine their impressions of good records with a more universally interesting subject this column seems likely to become a piece of filler calling up comments of "I liked numbers 4 and 7 but the other songs all suck."

Finally, I have to mention Rob Hansen's excellent covers illustrating the zine's title (look it up) and the aftermath. Rob, despite a slight problem with human proportions, has become one of fandom's finest artists. His Marvel Comics rendering of fans make effective caricatures and his attention to detail always gives added depth to the illustrations. Along with an excellent sense of humor, and care of execution, Rob adds a sort of joie de vivre to any zine.

Having now spent almost two pages on a remarkably good fanzine, I wonder if I can do the same with a remarkably bad one. Like HOLIER THAN THOU 11, for example.

It amazes me, actually, as I look through it, that this could be the eleventh issue of a fanzine from a grown adult who has been in fandom for quite some time. Marty Cantor seems to equate editing with collecting, humor with pap and art with space filler.

Nowhere is the editing, or lack of it, more obvious in any zine than in the loc column. HTTP prints 23 locs, using twenty-five pages, and only twelve WAHFs. This seems to me to show either a lack of judgment or a laziness that is inexcusable. Long letter columns that ramble on interminably with little or no structure are about as interesting as Why You Got This checklists. It isn't that the printed letters are bad, it's just that they're not good. Most fall into that category of "I read with interest what A said and I just wanted to agree/disagree with him." These letters are just the type that a faned likes to get because they at least prove somebody is reading the fanzine. But, and it's a big but, unless the letter writer has something intrinsic interest to say in the body of the letter they're just not worth publishing. A good, well-edited letter column should read as well as the articles within the fanzine, if not better, and not merely comment on articles nobody remembers any more.

Ah, well, long, seemingly unedited letter columns are probably only my pet peeve. Enough other people print 'em for me to realize, or at least I should realize, that this particular foible is considered a plus by many. But there are other disturbing attributes to HTTP, not least the layout. This is done in imitation of the fancy genzine style of SPANISH INQUISITION or GRANFALLOON -- lots and lots of artwork throughout the zine, plenty of white space, a near professional printing quality. That is the ideal. What Marty ends up with is a sloppy hodgepodge of poor to middling artwork that seems to detract from the page rather than add to it. The artwork is obviously picked at random as the stencils are being typed and then it is written around in a manner that makes reading more difficult and cramps the artwork into an all together too crowded corner of the page. Hell, there's nothing wrong with laying out a fanzine as you type it up -- I do it myself -- but it should look at least like a little bit of thought has gone into what you're doing, otherwise you end up with debacles like running Taral's one-two combination cartoon on back to back pages instead of facing pages, where the effect would be much greater.

Okay, so much for a couple of the more technical aspects of fanzine editing. Now for the written part, which begins with the obligatory editorial. And obligatory is what HTTP's is; running to the stunning length of half a page in three whole paragraphs. Wow. Obviously Marty is really using his fanzine as a forum for communication, huh? And what does he tell us in this brilliant bit of prose? That he is fortunate to get material, that this material is funny, what this material is about, what their titles are, and that he doesn't want to carry dead wood on the mailing list much longer. All of which adds up to the worst type of editorial possible -- one that tells us nothing except that the editor likes the material contained herein (and if he didn't, why would he be publishing it?). This is actually doubly useless in HTTP since Marty leads off each article with a brief introduction, telling us how good the article is, that it is or isn't "humorous," and how he came to get it. This editorial is just sheer wasted space, done because it is expected, with nothing to say and no-one to say it to. If Marty had let his rigidly adhered to publishing schedule slide by, he might actually have come up with something to write about in the editorial; as it is he seems to think his readers care more about getting any HTTP every four months rather than a carefully done one every once in a while.

When one begins to read the articles, however, one wonders whether Marty's editorial was actually the product of sheer laziness. It's entirely likely that he felt the need to tell everyone several times that these articles were "humorous." It's the only way anyone could ever tell. These, taken as a lump, are

enough to make one give up on fandom; virtually every article is made up of a series of one line jokes that aren't funny. Here's what a random sampling provides:

"Thinking quickly, I passed out."

"See a penny; leave it lay
you'll regret it all the day.
(So take it, dingbat!)"

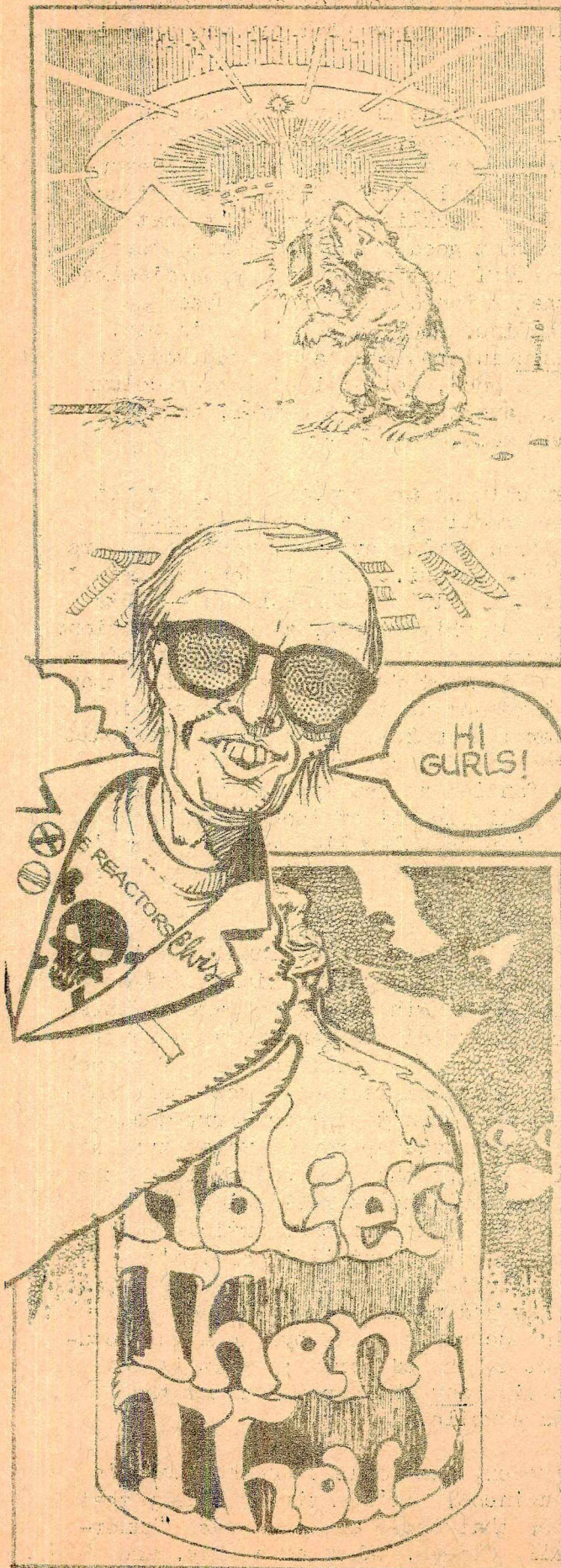
"SWIMMING: Untold eons ago our an-
cestors crawled out of the water.
Only a fool would get back in now."

"15. Does not smoke.

GL: Uh, I dunno...I never looked."

Those are from four different articles and set the tone for each of them. They hang together from bad joke to bad joke with no cumulative effect nor any sense of trying to entertain people with a fair degree of intelligence. I daresay anybody, reading through the entire zine, would find at least one joke in it they'd laugh at -- but it would be overwhelmed by all the others that were either obvious, hackneyed, stupid or just not funny. Strings of jokes just don't make good reading without an outer framework to keep the interest of the reader. There are a couple of articles that try to be a bit more intelligent but only Kev Smith's "How To Write Like Joseph Nicholas" is successful, and this is robbed of much of its impact by Marty's coy little introduction. I dunno, there are probably dozens of readers out there who found each and every little joke hilarious, but without taking the care necessary to make an article interesting and intelligent -- even without jokes -- things just tend to fall flat.

So now I'm left with the two serious articles in the zine. First up is Harry Andruschak's "The Comet Column." In this we are told that Halley's Comet is coming and NASA would like to explore it, in about a page. And that's it. The fact that NASA has decided to let Halley's fly by undisturbed isn't mentioned. The fact that a private foundation is trying to raise enough money to spur NASA into launching something isn't mentioned. Harry does mention the European, Japanese and the Russian probes, but still, he doesn't delve into the reasons why we should look at a comet very deeply. He gives no clues as to what science expects to find there. All of these things should be written



about if you're gonna write a column about astronomy and space exploration. Hell, I'd still find it dull, having read other magazines to find out what I want to know about this phenomena, but at the least Harry could cover his subject in some depth. This isn't an article, it's an introduction.

Finally there is Mike Glycer's fanzine review column. Mike is replacing Gary Deindorfer who used to provide terribly overwritten but interesting columns, as HTT's house reviewer. Of the four fanzines reviewed three are covered in a paragraph or two. Short paragraphs. This is the most typical way of reviewing fanzines -- distilling the contents into one easily swallowed paragraph and tacking on "recommended" or "not recommended" at the end. It is an approach that serves neofans very well as it lets them get an idea of what type of zine to expect before writing for it, but I doubt if that many of HTT's readers are neofans and these capsule reviews probably don't give them much information they haven't already gathered somewhere else. The one long review is a credible attempt at constructively criticizing someone's efforts (What? You don't believe in constructive criticism? What do you think this is?), the problem is with Glycer's choice of the article he wants to bring to our attention. Mike spends a bit of time explaining that he thinks this article (on shy fans and their inability to get laid) important as it forces a rethinking of what conventions are for, whether bright, socially unadjusted people grow up in fandom and such like. He then quotes a few passages from the article and slaps the writer's wrist for ducking into silliness, overwriting and ridiculousness. All well and good, but what is left out is a bloody reaction to the article. And even what the article says. Is the writer, or Glycer, or anybody, saying that there are an awful lot of shy fans who should be pitied and approached by the less shy? Or that people who go to conventions for the "sexual carnival" involved are destroying fandom? Or that one should get over shyness? Or what? And why, Mike, is this an important subject to be raised? Hell, in my younger, shyer days I'd have qualified as one of those homely male fans too shy to approach anyone female in anything less than a total drunken stupor, but once I got to know just one person at a con I found myself being introduced to more and more. If fandom is a sexual carnival for some people isn't that their business? If someone is going to cons only in the hope of getting laid, but not succeeding, why can't they just save their money and go to whorehouses? Anyway, to get back on track with my review; Mike's fanzine reviews could be good if only he'd spend a bit more time letting us know what he was referring to in his statements.

And so much for HOLIER THAN THOU, a fanzine that, by issue number eleven, should be much better than it is.

Finally, I have here a special "pre-publication" (no covers) copy of THE WRETCH TAKES TO WRITING 6 aka THEWRETCHTAKES TO THE ROAD. Now, it's no secret that Cheryl Cline is a good friend of mine and that I've consistently thought her zine to be one of the best around, so it might come as some little surprise that this review will be less than a whole hearted rave. Even though the zine has an article by me in it. The problem, one that Cheryl herself acknowledges, is that this isn't her fanzine. It's a several part collaboration involving Bill Breiding (ace guitarist), myself, and Cheryl. I provided a couple of articles people had sent for SPACE JUNK which I liked but wouldn't be using in the foreseeable future, Bill provided the contents he'd collected for two fanzines he was no longer going to do, and Cheryl provided labor and rubber stamps. The result, as you might imagine, is a fanzine with elements of several different styles, but little in the way of a total Weltanschauung. This being my short review, I'll just say that I'd recommend this fanzine, but not necessarily for the reasons you'll like it.

Okay, in reviewing three fanzines I'm obviously not going to come up with any nice and easy explanation of what makes a quality fanzine; one item, however,

MINAC

BY TED WHITE



I REMEMBER SEVENTH FANDOM: The cyclical nature of fandom has been oft-remarked upon of late, as has been the propensity of new fans to ignore what came before them as they set about reinventing fannish wheels.

Older fans stroke their beards and nod their heads wisely, having seen it all before, and occasionally they utter cryptic remarks, such as Richard Bergeron's "I am reminded of Willis's remark...on Seventh Fandom -- the one started by Harlan Ellison -- 'the real reason they died, it seems to me, was that like the mule they had neither pride of ancestry nor hope of posterity'" (in PONG #24).

There is only one reason to keep alive these tales and traditions concerning fandom's mistakes -- the 1939 Exclusion Act, the mid-forties Cosmic Circle led by Claude Degler, the early fifties fake Seventh Fandom, even the 1964 Boondoggle -- and that is to preserve them as cautionary tales of situations and events which no one would care to see repeated by tradition-ignorant fans bent on the instant recreation of fandom's adolescent errors.

Seventh Fandom offers us not only a cautionary tale of youthful mistakes -- once examined, it reveals precisely the kind of errors which can be made by energetic fen hell-bent on redefining fandom in their own images and willfully ignorant of both fandom's traditions and even its basic nature.

The story of Seventh Fandom is also the story of one of fandom's most flamboyant members, the adolescent Harlan Ellison. I had to consider that fact when I decided to write this column, because although Harlan and I were good friends about twenty years ago and I have never had any desire to trespass upon that friendship, we have had a couple of misunderstandings in recent years which involved some mutual touchiness, and there is a possibility that anything I might say about Harlan's involvement in Seventh Fandom could be construed as a resumption of that unpleasantness -- something I don't wish for.

But I shall be telling no tales out of school here; this column will concern itself solely with matters of public record. That record is to be found pri-

marily (although hardly exclusively) in the original incarnation of Richard Geis's PSYCHOTIC. I found the material in question in issues 10 (April, 1954), 14, and 15 (both undated). In #10 Norman G. Browne had an article entitled "And Where is 8th Fandom?"; in #14 Vernon McCain devoted an installment of his regular column, "The Padded Cell," to the topic of Seventh Fandom; and in #15 Harlan polished the whole topic off with his "7th Fandom Speaks," the piece in which he gave the fan-world that immortal phrase (still quoted today by fans as removed from the original scene as Malcolm Edwards), "The Mad Dogs have kneed us in the groin."

But let's back up a little. In 1939 Jack Speer first proposed his Theory of Fandoms, in which he proposed that fandom (then not more than ten years old) could be viewed historically as a sequence of eras, each of which could be numbered. It was then 2nd Fandom. In the early fifties Bob Silverberg updated Speer with a piece in QUANDRY in which he suggested that fandom had now reached Sixth Fandom.

Many years later, in SCIENCE-FICTION FIVE-YEARLY, I tried updating Silverberg. I look back on that attempt as misguided, and I'm sure Bob too had misgivings about the way his piece was interpreted and abused.

When fandom consisted of only a few hundred people, all of whom knew or knew of each other, this concept of Numbered Fandoms had some relevance. There was in fact a linear progression in the development and history of fandom, and one could point to definite and specific eras in which one fanzine or group of fans dominated and gave identity to that era. But to a large extent even then the "history" was written by the survivors. Fandom being an effective anarchy, there were always loose ends and counter-groups who did not fit neatly into any given era. These tended to be ignored by the authors of Numbered Fandom histories, despite their own claim to legitimacy.

Still, Silverberg's version took hold readily, probably because it described something with which most of his audience agreed. The dissidents -- the Ed Woods -- were ignored as loud-mouthed individuals who lusted vainly after the sour grapes.

Silverberg described the era in the late forties, apparently dominated by Art Rapp's SPACEWARP, as Fifth Fandom. There was no real argument there. He described the group which centered itself on QUANDRY, FANVARIETY/OPUS, and SLANT in the early fifties as Sixth Fandom. (In this he ignored the sercon faction of which Ed Wood was a part, which centered on fanzines of a bibliographic nature like FANTASY ADVERTISER, DESTINY, THE JOURNAL OF SF, and RHODOMAGNETIC DIGEST, which had its own parallel momentum and growth, but generated no comparable legends around itself save the Legend of Ed Wood Himself....)

Six "Fandoms" in about twenty years means an average lifespan per "Fandom" of two or three years. (The Theory of Numbered Fandoms included the concept of "inter-regnum periods" which might last a year or more during the transition from one fandom to the next.) This made sense when one considered the fact that few faneditors had the stamina to publish a monthly fanzine for more than two or three years, and for the most part each "Fandom" was centered around one specific fanzine (its "focal point") which appeared monthly or nearly so.

When Silverberg published his piece in QUANDRY the handwriting was already apparent on the wall: Lee Hoffman was losing interest in Q, restricting its circulation and cutting back its frequency. Within less than a year the fanzine would fold. Who, then, would follow Q? Where was Seventh Fandom?

Norman G. Browne: "...a few fans with nothing more intelligent to do started to play around with the idea. These self-styled Hari Seldons /a reference to Asimov's Foundation series/ jokingly foresaw the eventual break-up and dissolution of 6th Fandom and what they termed '7th Fandom' rising gloriously out of its ashes.

"From there, it snowballed. More and more fans became 'in the know.' More and more fans started talking about it and making allusions to '7th fandom.' The term became a fandom-wide password and we had such things as 7th fandom fanzines, 7th fandom fans, 7th fandom terminology and innovations; and even 7th fandom suites at conventions."

Who were these fans? Browne cites the following: Harlan Ellison, John L. Magnus, Jack Harness, Fred Chappell, Bob Peatrowsky, Don Cantin, Charles Wells, Dean A. Grennell, and Joel Nydahl. Few of these names will mean anything to modern fans. Ellison, of course, and perhaps Grennell (who became one of the fifties' biggest BNFs). The others, both the deserving and the undeserving, have faded into scant memories at best. John Magnus was in high school at the time, but by the end of the fifties was known for his VARIOSO, one of the better fanzines of the era. Jack Harness was 7th Fandom's most prolific artist; he remains active on a local level in LASFS today. Chappell and Cantin came and went quickly; Peatrowsky published two very decent fanzines in the fifties, MOTE and CONFAB (the latter devoted entirely to letters), before fading into gafia. Wells was a young Savannah fan who helped Lee Hoffman publish the final QUANDRY and remained active in fandom for another ten years or so. Joel Nydahl published the monthly VEGA, which turned into the fanzine of 1953 but went out with a bang with its first annish, giving rise to the phrase "Nydahl's Disease," which still has some currency today. (Joel was a prodigy, selling a story professionally at 14 and putting out VEGA at 15; one presumes he simply grew up.)

Here is Ellison on the genesis of "7th Fandom":

"Silverberg came out with his article, and shortly thereafter, when he mentioned a few names (one of them -- in fact the only one possibly extant today /1954!/ -- was Wells), Lee Hoffman's chum Charlie got in touch with me and said that we should make something out of it since Lee and Max Keasler /editor of FANVARIETY/OPUS/ and Hank Burwell and (at the time) /Gregg/ Calkins and (again, at the time) Shelby Vick and all the rest with the exception of Ian Macauley -- who was gafiating noisily in the New York vicinity -- were definitely out for the count. I was game and told him, okay, Charles, let's make up a self-evident, self-recognizing Seventh Fandom for all the Brighter Lights, and have us some fun.

"So, shortly before the 1953 Midwestcon /the last weekend in June/ I called the HEcon at my home in Cleveland. That was the first concrete evidence of Seventh Fandom. ... The people in attendance were Dave Ish, Karl Olsen, Norman Browne, Jack Harness, Bill Dignin, John L. Magnus, Sally Dunn, Ray Schaffer (for a short while) and myself." (In a footnote Ellison admits "there is a niggling thought at the back of my mind that there was someone else of importance that I've forgotten.")

"At the Midwestcon, after numerous bull-sessions at my place, and a fine time that I don't think has been excelled in a week-long wild-hair session anywhere, Seventh Fandom showed a concerted front at Indian Lake and everyone there knew that this was Seventh Fandom. And in that group there was none of the shame and ridicule and immaturity that showed up later. And showed up not through 7Fers, but through the pack of mad dogs and infuriated left-outers that clung to our heels." Thus was Seventh Fandom sprung upon the world. Ellison continues:

"After that riotous Convention in which all of 7F slept in two beds pushed together, with me in the middle (and waking up next morning, with my leg slipped down between the two beds, thinking someone had amputated it), things started rolling real fine.

"I began publishing the newsletter SEVENTH FANDOM which went for two issues, outlining what some members thought should be the practices of Seventh Fandom.

"For at that time there was no throat-ripping hatred or revulsion toward the idea of 7F. Everyone -- or nearly everyone -- thought the Hoffman Sixth was defunct. The tiny fraction that clung to the belief they would be back, who uttered their titmouse cries in half-secrecy, only lately have stood up on their hind feet to yell magaphonically that Sixth Fandom is still breathing. Hell, you say! Sixth is worse off than Seventh, and Seventh is nearly strangled!

"In that newsletter, sent to 25 persons, was a ballot, for members to be chosen, ideas on an APA, policies, goals, the works. And in return came dozens of anxious answers, from everyone concerned. That was the first NEWSLETTER. By the time word had gone out that 7F was springing up full-blown from the dust of Sixth, like Athena from the forehead of Zeus, more letters plugged in from fans all over the country, asking, nay, begging, to be let in.

"Let in what????

"They couldn't seem to realize that 7F wasn't a club /although only a paragraph earlier Harlan had mentioned "a ballot, for members to be chosen"/, it was a loose-knit group of people who had achieved something. It was a select group of fans who were after the brighter things in fandom. None of those initial 25 published a crudzine /history's judgment may be less kind than Harlan's, however/, and those whose mags weren't really good corrected themselves appreciably from contact with the glowing air of 7F till their mags were really top-grade. ...

"Still those fans, mostly West Coasters but a lot from all over the U.S., couldn't see that there wasn't any clique about being a Seventh Fandomer. It wasn't, as Peter Graham tried, a matter of sending me fifty cents and saying, 'Make me a Seventh Fandomer.' That was like a sinner walking up to the Archangel Peter, handing him a sawbuck and saying, 'Make me righteous,' or something." (Graham hotly disputed this allusion to himself in a subsequent issue of PSY, pointing out that the 50¢ was for a copy of Ellison's fat fanzine SFBULLETIN/DIMENSIONS, and the "Make me a Seventh Fandomer" line was a bit of sarcastic fanhumor which apparently had gone over Harlan's head.)

"Seventh Fandom," Harlan stated, "was a state of mind. It always was, it always has been, it always will be." In fact, as is obvious from Ellison's own description, "Seventh Fandom" was a small clique of friends, centered primarily in the Ohio-midwest with far-flung members no further away than the few hundred miles fans travelled in those days to conventions and none west of the Rockies or overseas. Unlike previous "Fandoms," it was not an era defined in retrospect by fanhistorians, but simply a self-pronounced movement. All together, "Seventh Fandom" actually lasted about nine months.

In his column Vernon McCain underscored this point:

"The only trouble is it is flatly impossible to toss up and tear down fandoms at will. ...as Bob Tucker pointed out, Fandoms (with a capital F) are groupings of people and events and (this seems to be generally overlooked) they are historical divisions. Numbered fandoms are nothing but a semantic method of dividing one historical period from another.

"The one point I tried hardest to make in the unpublished VEGA article /scheduled for the issue following the annish which never appeared/ was that Seventh Fandom would never accomplish anything of any worth as long as it was wrapped up in the idea of being Seventh Fandom and thus different from, and the successor to, Sixth Fandom. In fact, I pointed out that they could do much worse than to model themselves upon Sixth Fandom since it is generally regarded as second only to Second Fandom as the most memorable of the first six eras and had the advantage of lacking

the bitter feuding which was the chief activity of 2nd Fandom. /McCain is referring to the Moskowitz vs. The Futurians fracas which resulted in the First Exclusion Act, barring the Futurians from the first Worldcon./ Up until 7th Fandom each fandom had tended to be a bit more mature than the preceeding one...it was going through a normal growing process. But 7th Fandom pitch-forked us right back to the infancy of 1st Fandom and I felt the reason was the idea that 'We are the future...We are Seventh Fandom...We inherited the stage and have buried our predecessors...All we have to do to be famous is surpass those around us...Who is interested in the past?' whereas the idea during Sixth Fandom and, I presume, in preceeding ones, was to see if you could match and possibly surpass such /earlier/ zines as LE ZOMBIE and STAR-DUST and SPACEWAYS. We weren't trying to be better than each other...instead we treasured our heritage from early fandoms and what competition there was was in seeing who could best measure up to the challenge of the finest efforts of the past....

"Seventh Fandom broke with that tradition. As long as their efforts weren't too bad in comparison with the others around they were satisfied. Why not? They were Seventh Fandom!"

Remarking upon the self-pronouncement of Seventh Fandom, McCain points out, "Eighth Fandom is now being announced. How long before some unhappy neofan gets disgusted with Eighth Fandom and declares Ninth Fandom has arrived with the appearance of his new zine? And watch his best friend announce Tenth Fandom the next week. We'd soon have Fandoms popping out of the woodwork with all the frequency and lack of forethought currently devoted to the creation of brand new APA's for sole glory of the founder." (1953 saw the launching of two very short-lived apas, WAPA and 7APA; in 1954 Peter Vorzimer started The Cult, and in 1955 the British OHPA began, thus breaking the monopoly on fannish apas previously held by FAPA and SAPS. McCain's parathetical remark is unfortunately still valid today.)

Commenting on Norman Browne's article in PSY #10 (from which I quoted earlier), McCain has the following criticisms:

"Norman Browne's article is an excellent example of the lack of perspective that goes with trying to write your own history as you go. He cites activity and lack of same of various fans whom he apparently considers to be pivotal Seventh Fandom figures...such as Don Cantin. Who briefly...wrote a bit of crud for various fanzines...shouted 'I am a member of Seventh Fandom!'...produced a few issues of a very poor fanzine...and vanished from fandom, finding like so many of those who just come and go, that he actually wasn't a fannish type at all. The rest of the names on Browne's list aren't much more impressive. In the period from the Chicon /1952 Worldcon/ to the Philcon /1953 Worldcon/ only two new names of any importance shot to the fore, Harlan Ellison and Joel Nydahl. And it's beginning to look as if neither one of them will be more than minor figures in the history of Seventh Fandom when it's finally written ten or fifteen years from now by some future Speer. ...

"The past history of Fandoms shows that all the important members of a Fandom do not arise simultaneously. To pick several prominent Sixth Fandom names, for instance, Willis and Silverberg were holdovers from Fifth Fandom, Lee Hoffman appeared precisely as Sixth Fandom started as did also Max Keasler, while Gregg Galkins didn't become at all well known until more than a year after Sixth Fandom was flourishing."

McCain concluded with these thoughts:

"At any rate I think it would be wise to quit wasting time with ouija boards trying to deduce what fandom we exist in. As I pointed out in the /unpublished/ VEGA article only once before in fandom's history has there been much fuss made over what number Fandom we were in, or any ostentatious shaking off of past fandoms. And what group was that? Claude Degler's Cosmic Circle, no less, hardly the most

auspicious model to copy."

Alas, such common sense did not immediately prevail. Ellison's reaction in the next issue of PSY was this:

"I say this to your faces: McCain, you stink! /Lyle/ Kessler, you're a blood-hungry second-rater! Calkins, you're a guy who can't stand to see new faces prevail! Browne, you're a no-good saboteur from inside who'd knife your grandmother if you thought you could see her cooky jar!"

Ellison's version of the collapse of Seventh Fandom's brief moment of glory was that "Those who were too small to see that /7F was "a vital changing thing in which persons who made a name for themselves through honest-to-god hard work or through talent could be assimilated constantly"/ leaped as one. The articles from the Nothingfen started appearing. They were sensational -- if not well written -- and they screamed that 7F was done, through, washed up before it started. They screamed that there never was a Seventh Fandom (though I have two mailings to prove them the liars they were), that we were an interegnum abortion, that Sixth would return, that the blood was drained out of us." (Ellison apparently could not differentiate between Seventh Fandom as an historic era and as a very brief-lived apa, lasting "two mailings.") "And they screamed so long and so loud that they convinced fandom."

But, "Seventh Fandom is not dead! Alone amidst the dead bodies of fallen compatriots I say it: Seventh Fandom is not dead! ... For five months now I've held my peace now and said nothing while They have ranted and screamed and gibbered about 7F going down the drain.

"You know, it has been almost fanatical the way they have decried it all. As though 7F was a symbol, a thing which held nothing but evil for Them. Why so much knocking and yelling you pack of Mad Dogs? Why the fear of letting the child grow up? You say it was for fear of a horrible mutant, but was it fear of a Homo Superior? I wonder.

"Five months later I wonder good and loud.

"Everyone else, including Charlie and his uncle have had a swing at the problem. If it is a problem. Here was my swing. Now here is my counter-attack:

"7F will go on being. If only in the mind of one lone, lousy fan sitting and publishing his fanzine. Until the time when a true 8th Fandom emerges, not the cast-offs who say they are now, that has something new and of value to offer, one lousy fan will consider himself a Seventh Fandomer and his publication a Seventh Fandomailing. If need be I'll be that one lousy little fan. ...

"7F could have been a thing of laughter and joy and forward-striding for everyone, like the mammoth composite 7F fanzine that was to be issued, but the Mad Dogs have kneed us in the groin, they've rubbed dirt in our eyes and rabbit-punched their way to a first round decision.

"But we aren't to be downed quite that easily."

I have excerpted these quotes from pages of rhetoric -- "7th Fandom Speaks" was six pages long -- and I have only scraped the surface of Ellison's exhortatory. "Seventh Fandom still breathes, bloody and decimated though its ranks be. ... I'm ...sick of the back-stabbers and the hangers-on and the chicken-hearts who now come to feed off the corpse. ... I'm afraid the point of mere rebuttal has been reached and I sidestep into melodramatic rhetoric. If so, believe me when I say that it was done in the fire of battle." Here can be seen in less polished form the fire and spirit for which Harlan is still known today, almost thirty years later, as

well as the self-contradictions, self-pity, self-importance, and fundamental misunderstandings which still plague the man.

"7th Fandom Speaks" ends with this line: "I repeat it to you, Seventh Fandom is still alive, and damned if it won't speak loudly in the future." But in fact that was to be "Seventh Fandom's" last public squeak, its obituary in fact. Soon the phrase, "Mad Dogs have kneed us in the groin," was a catch-phrase, and Harlan a laughing-stock in fandom because of it.

A year later Harlan became a professional sf writer, and all too soon he would disavow fandom and fans as adolescent and unworthy of notice. It would be fairer to say that it was "Seventh Fandom" which had been adolescent, a teapet in a teapot, and an object lesson to us all.

--Ted White

(COAD continued from page 21:) stands out as an essential element of the quality zine -- a good, well-developed, and recognizable editorial personality. Without an editor willing to impress his or her desires and goals for the fanzine on the contributors the result will be inevitably flat and lifeless. More on this next column.

For now I want to throw in one more recommendation, and, in the grand tradition of TAPPEN and STOP BREAKING DOWN it's for a book. Montana Gothic by Dirck Von Sichel (Avon \$2.50) is a collection of eight related tales held together by a view of Montana as a malignant and sadistic place, bent on ruining anyone with the gall to try and live there. This is gothicism in the great American tradition of Melville, Hawthorne and Faulkner -- a truly disturbing picture of the great frontier and its effect on the mind's need for boundaries and definitions. Great book.

--Rich Coad

TAPPEN, Malcolm Edwards, 28 Duckett Rd.
London N4 1BD, U.K.

HOLIER THAN THOU, Marty Cantor, 5263
Riverton Ave.#1, N.Hollywood, CA 91601
WRETCHTAKESTOWRITING, Cheryl Cline, 1621
Detroit Ave.#23, Concord, CA 94520

(Available for the usual, or \$1.50 for HTT)

To The Dark Tower Came

A FOREWORD
TO THE
COMIC STRIP
VERSION OF
THE
ENCHANTED
DUPLICATOR

BY

Walt
Willis

On the bedside table of his guest room Forry Ackerman used to provide a copy of THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR, in lieu of a Gideon Bible.

This is a very exalted form of egoboo, achieved by few publications. It is however curiously in keeping with the unusual origins of the project.

The idea itself emerged quite suddenly and unexpectedly at a routine meeting of the nucleus of Irish Fandom -- Bob Shaw, James White, George Charters and myself -- at 170 Upper Newtonards Road, Belfast. (The original proof copy is buried in a time capsule underneath the cherry tree in the front garden.) We had been setting type and listening to a radio drama by local poet Louis McNeice based on the Byron line "Childe Harold to the dark tower came." This gave us the idea of a tower and a quest. The tower we had in mind was the one known as Scrabo, on a hill outside Newtonards in County Down. The idea of a moral allegory must of course have come from Pilgrim's Progress: none of us had read the book, but we were all familiar with it from English classes at school.

It is easy enough, then, to detect the apparent sources of inspiration. What was strange was the speed and force with which the idea took hold of us, in a few minutes of rapid exchange of thoughts. What was even stranger was how easy it was to write. Usually I'm a laborious sort of writer, continually revising, and having great difficulty in even getting started. But this time the first sentence seemed to write itself, and thereafter once the style was firmly set by the first sentence it was just a matter of writing down in that style what was forming in my mind. Possible problems resolved themselves before one came to them: new ideas arrived just before the need for them arose. Everything fitted; every word seemed unalterably right. I still remember a momentary doubt that "duplicator" might be wrong for American readers, followed by the realization that "The Magic Mimeograph" was just as good a name for it, gaining in alliteration what little it lost in euphony.

So I passed each chapter as it was written to George Charters for stenciling, never even considering the possibility it might have to be revised in the light of later developments in the story line. With monastic dedication George cut faultless stencils on his venerable typewriter, which I remember described itself in large gilt letters as a Standard Monarch Visible Writer. I think George told me once that there was one typo but I was never able to find it.

The duplicating gave no trouble, nor did the design and printing of the letterpress covers. The publication was advertised quietly in HYPHEN and thereafter sold steadily on reader reaction alone. So enthusiastic was this that people were paying inflated prices for secondhand copies while we still had stocks for sale. Altogether there can be few pieces of writing outside the scriptures which have been so successful and so influential with so little apparent human effort.

However before considering the possibility that some sort of fannish deity actually exists one might look at two other possible explanations. The first is that at that time Irish Fandom was a gestalt, a corporate entity capable of creativity transcending individual limitations. This makes it difficult to distribute credit in the tidy way people expect: to this day Bob Shaw and I are still exchanging letters in which he asks me for permission to use some idea or remark which he thinks may have been mine, and in which I reply that I always thought it was his. I am quite sure however that most of the ideas for TED, and in particular the vital concept expressed in the last line, came from Bob. As for the writing, I believe that on this occasion I was inspired by the gestalt into being able to write for once in my life in the same way Bob does, namely transcribing thoughts already clearly formed.

The other explanation of TED is that it was an Idea Whose Time Had Come. I think I first began to realize this when I had set up the type for the back cover. With a restraint quite uncharacteristic of Irish Fandom publications there were only a few words on the entire page, to the effect that so many copies had been printed and this was Number _____. Suddenly I felt the need for some sort of colophon and on the spur of the moment reached for the composing stick and set up the words: "A Serious Constructive Insurgent Publication."

You have to remember that at this time fandom was divided into what someone (Sturgeon, I think) categorized as Boosters and Knockers, constructive fans and insurgents. The archetypes were Ackerman and Laney, whom I thought of as the Gabriel and Lucifer of the LASFS heaven. The development of Irish Fandom from SLANT to HYPHEN had put us in an intermediate position, in which we could understand and appreciate both points of view, and it had become increasingly clear to me that there was a constructive element in insurgentism. The material they produced was of lasting interest and value because it was well written and dealt with human relationships rather than literary exegesis. What was needed was for insurgent fandom to realize its potential and set itself standards of excellence. Wasn't that what THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR was about?

Finally, it might be interesting to mention in connection with the current version, that at the time we considered and rejected the idea of including illustrations. We felt that we wanted every fan to identify himself with Jophan, and this might be more difficult if we gave him a likeness. Now of course that the idea of THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR is set in the fannish consciousness this argument does not apply; and I wonder if it might not have been overruled even then if we had been able to see what Dan can do.

-- Walt Willis

"Are you Glop or Leather?"

THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR has an odd history /regarding the billing of the authors/. I thought up the concept on my own, worked it out in some detail, including the name of the story and of the hero, then came to Walt with the package. He was delighted and agreed to publish it. The plan was that we would work closely together to write the narrative, but there was a very good summer that year and for a couple of months I became more interested in going out with my fiancée than in fanac. Walt was left to do the bulk of the writing on his own and he got a bit cross with me and, naturally enough I suppose, he published it with his name first in the credits.

When Ted White ran it as a serial in AMAZING he reversed the order of the names, mainly because I was the pro and he wanted to sell magazines, and a couple of subsequent publications in fandom followed his lead, possibly because I was still active and Walt wasn't. So even though I originated the work -- Walt was the one who made it a reality, and I don't mind his name appearing before mine.

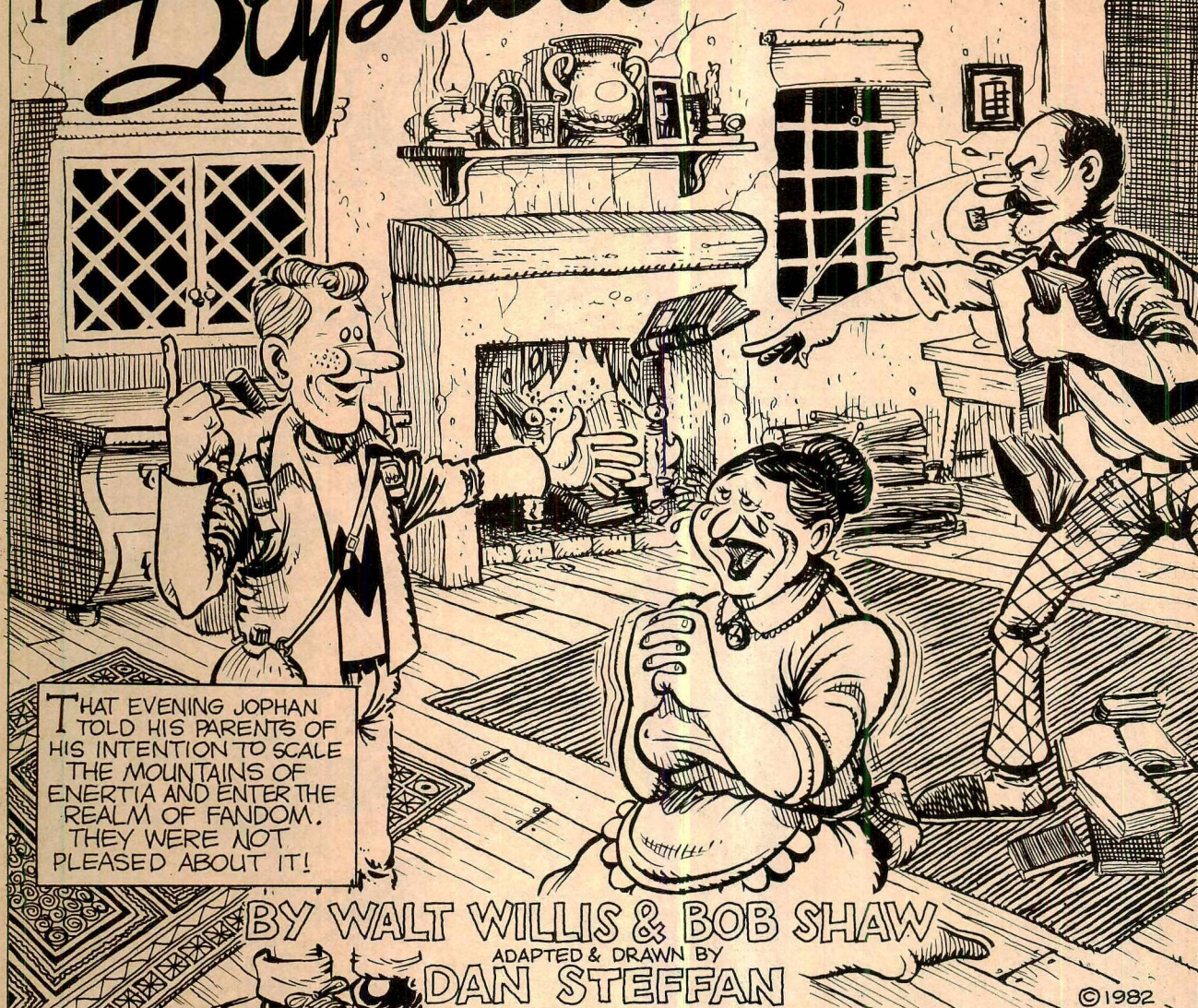
-- From a letter from Bob Shaw 7/13/81

In July I was a GoH for the first time, at Empiricon. Friday, I appeared on a panel on "Fandom -- What's It All About?" That turned out to be a question answerable with a smartass one-liner, or a Major Speech, but not much in between. We floundered for a while, and finally I said, "Fandom is about doing things spontaneously, like walking out." And walked out. --Arthur Hlavaty/AMERICAN DISCORDIAN HERO 5

Extra copies of the first chapter of my comic strip version of TED can be had from me for 45¢ each. Yes, the entire strip will be collected in book form. --djs

THE Enchanted Duplicator

chapter two:
JOPHAN STARTS
ON HIS
JOURNEY!



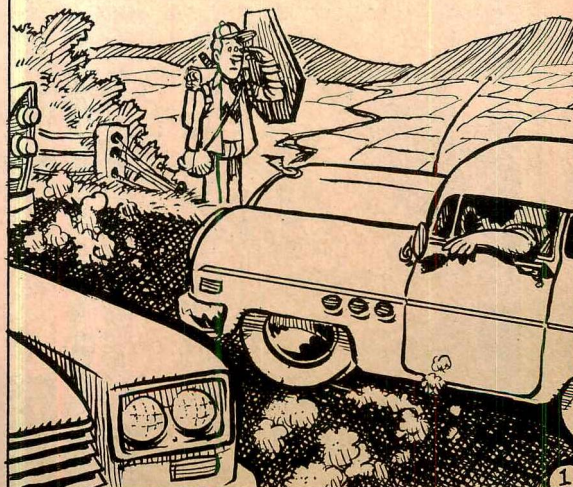
BUT DESPITE THEIR OBJECTIONS, JOPHAN SET OUT AT DAWN FOR THE MOUNTAINS.



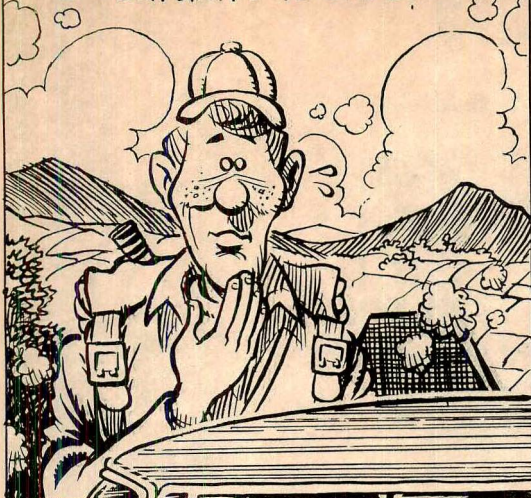
WITH ALL HIS POSSESSIONS ON HIS BACK JOPHAN TURNED A DEAF EAR TO THE PROTESTS OF HIS FRIENDS AND WENT ABOUT HIS QUEST.



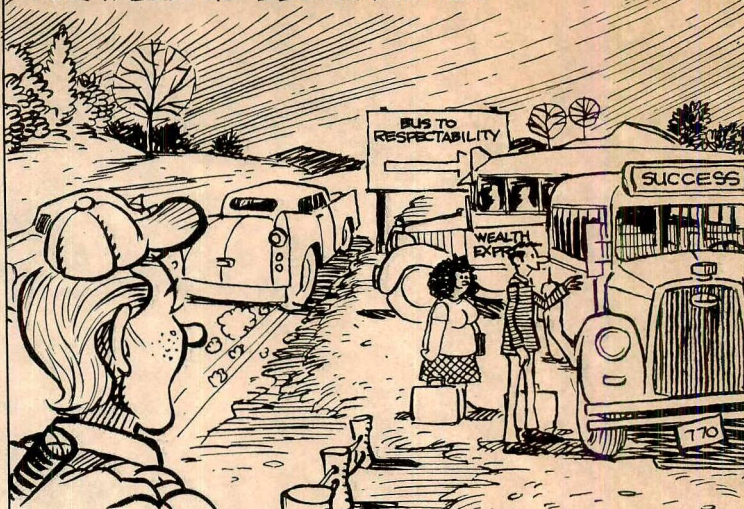
BY NOON HE ARRIVED AT THE BORDERS OF MUNDANE WHERE HE FOUND HIMSELF AT THE GREAT HIGHWAY THAT RAN TO THE CAPITAL CITY...



JOPHAN WAS CONFUSED BY THE TRAFFIC THAT ROARED ALONG THE ROAD AND STOOD ANXIOUSLY LOOKING FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO CROSS.



AS HE WAITED HE NOTICED OTHER TRAVELLERS BOARDING LUXURIOUS COACHES BOUND FOR FABULOUS DESTINATIONS...

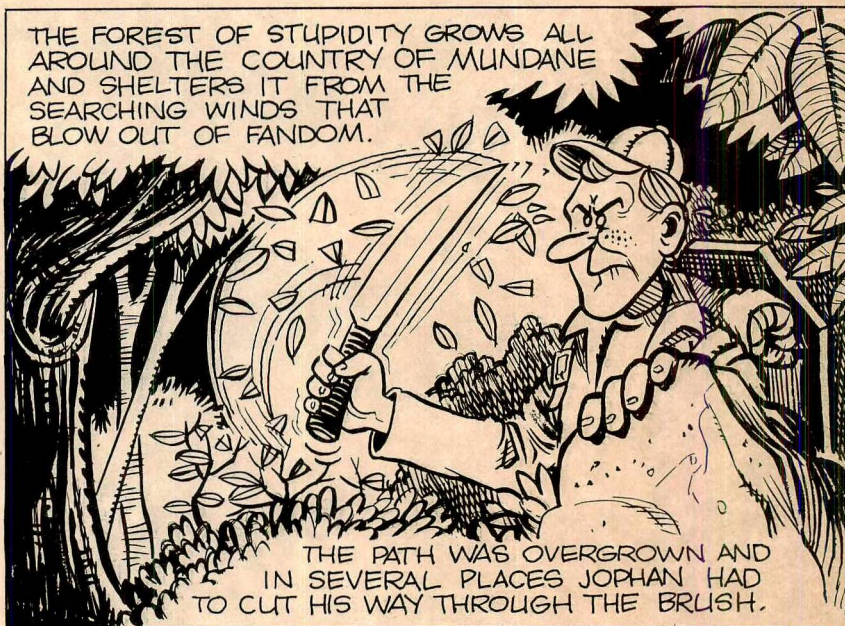


...BUT NONE SEEMED TO BE GOING TO FANDOM.

DURING A LULL IN THE TRAFFIC JOPHAN CROSSED THE ROAD AND TOOK THE NARROW PATH INTO THE FOREST OF STUPIDITY.

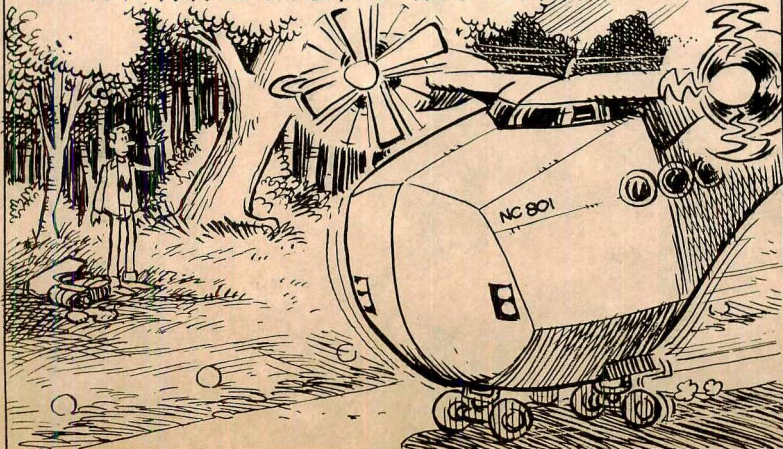


THE FOREST OF STUPIDITY GROWS ALL AROUND THE COUNTRY OF MUNDANE AND SHELTERS IT FROM THE SEARCHING WINDS THAT BLOW OUT OF FANDOM.

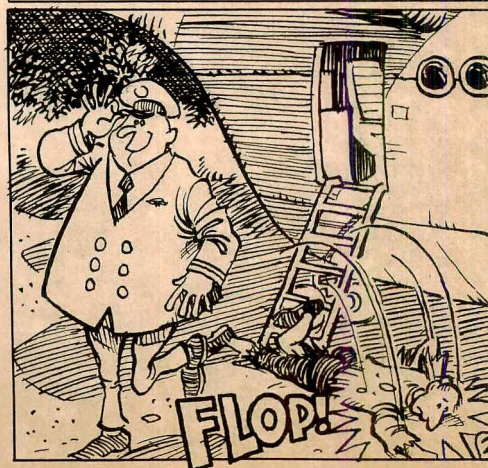


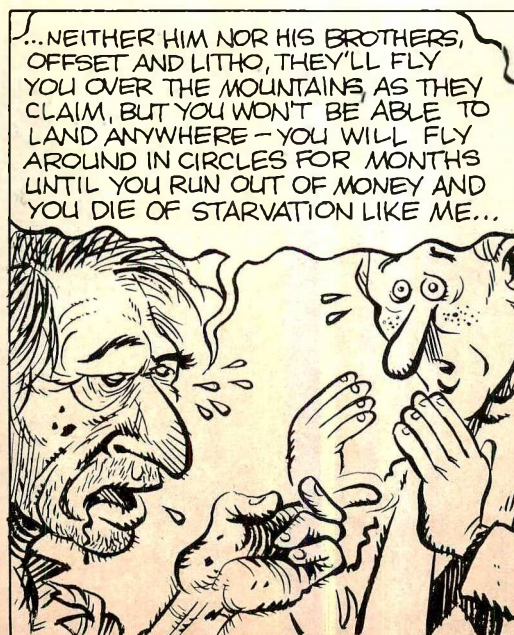
THE PATH WAS OVERGROWN AND IN SEVERAL PLACES JOPHAN HAD TO CUT HIS WAY THROUGH THE BRUSH.

THAT AFTERNOON JOPHAN REACHED A BEAUTIFUL CLEARING WHERE HE THOUGHT HE MIGHT REST — TO HIS SURPRISE THE CLEARING WAS ACTUALLY AN AERODROME AND HE WATCHED AS A SPARKLING SILVER FLYING MACHINE LANDED.

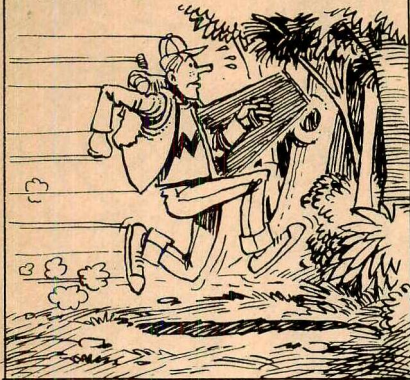


JOPHAN SAW THE PILOT AND HIS PASSENGER EXIT THE PLANE — THE PASSENGER FLOPPED MOTIONLESS TO THE GROUND, BUT THE PILOT CAME TOWARDS JOPHAN.

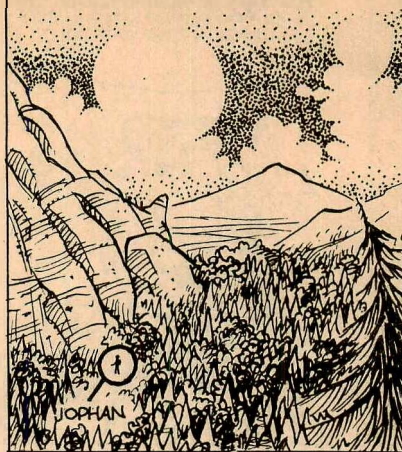




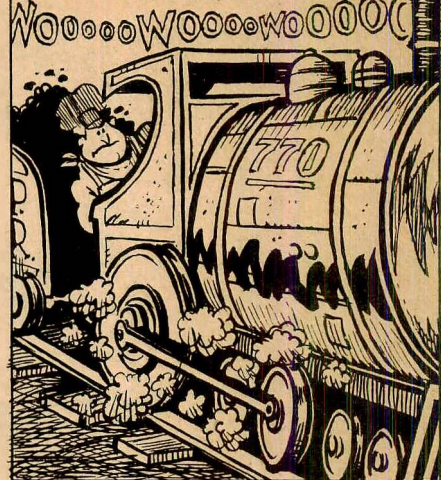
JOPHAN REALIZED THE PASSENGER WAS DEAD AND CON-SIGNED HIS SOUL TO HEAVEN AND PRAYED THE GREAT BNF ABOVE WOULD HAVE PITY ON HIM. NOTICING THAT THE PILOT HAD SLIPPED AWAY, JOPHAN RESUMED HIS JOURNEY THROUGH THE FOREST...



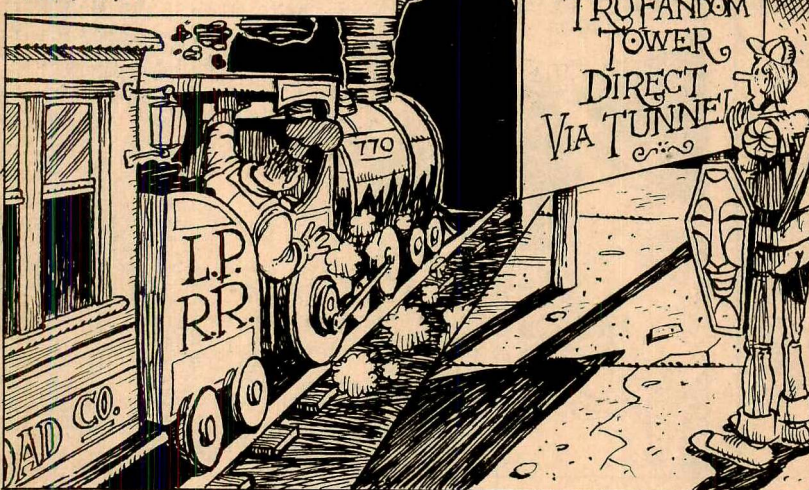
SOON THE TREES BEGAN TO THIN OUT AND THE GROUND TO RISE—JOPHAN KNEW HE HAD ARRIVED AT THE FOOT-HILLS OF THE MOUNTAINS OF ENERTIA.



AS HE PAUSED TO STRAP HIS BUNDLE MORE TIGHTLY ABOUT HIM, JOPHAN THOUGHT HE HEARD A TRAIN-WHISTLE NEARBY...

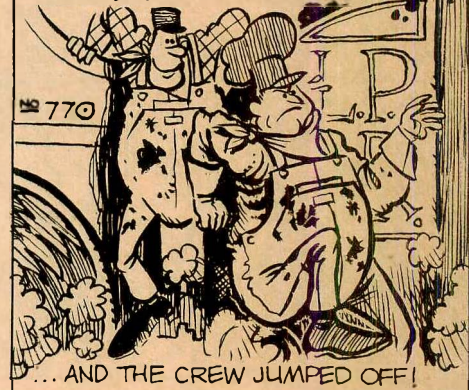


...HE WENT FORWARD CURIOUSLY AND SOON FOUND HIMSELF FACING A LARGE AND IMPOSING NOTICE.



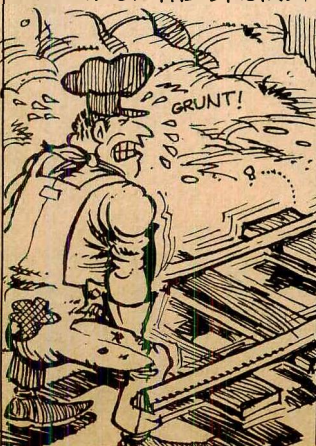
LETTERPRESS RAILROAD CO. MUNDANE TO TRUFANDOM TOWER, DIRECT VIA TUNNEL

HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR HIS EN-COUNTER WITH THE PASSENGER, JOPHAN WOULD HAVE BOARDED THE TRAIN, BUT INSTEAD HE STAYED WHERE HE WAS AND WATCHED THE TRAIN PULL OUT—IT HAD BARELY REACHED THE TUNNEL BEFORE IT SHUDDERED TO A STOP...

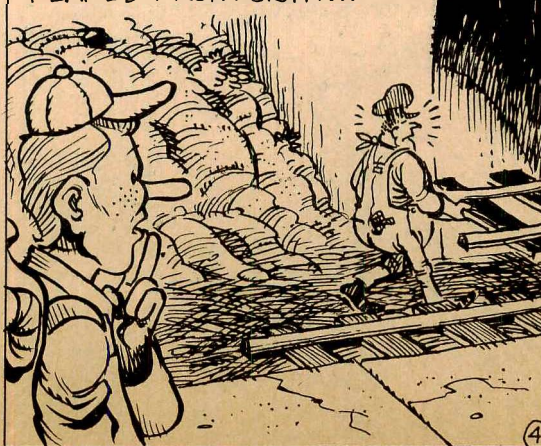


... AND THE CREW JUMPED OFF!

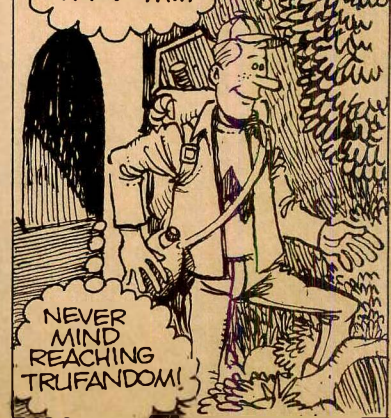
RUNNING TO THE BACK OF THE TRAIN THEY LABORIOUSLY LIFTED THE LAST SECTION OF TRACK AND CARRY IT INTO THE TUNNEL IN FRONT OF THE ENGINE



AS JOPHAN WATCHED, THEY AGAIN BOARDED THE TRAIN AND MOVED IT ANOTHER COUPLE OF YARDS INTO THE TUNNEL AND THEN REPEATED THE WHOLE PROCESS OVER AND OVER UNTIL THEY HAD DISAP-PEARED FROM SIGHT...

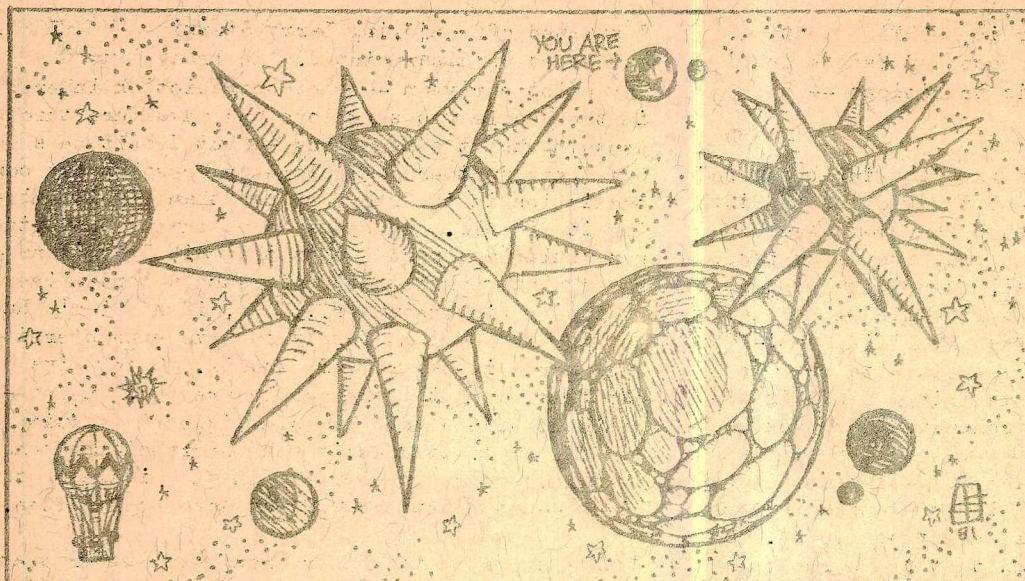


IT MAY BE A WONDER-FUL RAILROAD, BUT AT THAT RATE IT WILL TAKE YEARS TO REACH FANDOM...



NEVER MIND REACHING TRUFANDOM!

to be continued...



GROUP SAINT HOOD letters

Terry Carr 11037 Broadway Terrace
Oakland, California 94611

BOONFARK 5 is another good issue even though you used that damn microelite typer for so much of it. I always hated that; seems to me it was hard enough on the eyes even when we used nonstoparafing in VOID, and you don't even bother with that. Oh, I can read it without any great trouble, but I think it looks lousy. I've always been in favor of double-spacing between paragraphs even with pica type, because it gives a nice airy look to the page. The purpose of good layout and makeup, after all, is to invite reading, and microelite typing with no spaces between paragraphs hardly does that. Grumpf. (While I'm grumpfing, let me mention that I hated Grant's bacover cartoon: one of the oldest and corniest jokes in sf, it is. Only Grant's drawing of the characters makes it at all amusing.)

Larry Stark's story is very well done, but I have terribly mixed feelings about it. In the earlier portion, when he's skewering the costume-fans et al so neatly, it's very much to the point; but then Larry introduces a young woman who's evidently intelligent and with-it but turns out to be one of the worst sort of costume freaks ...and his protagonist thinks she's terrific. Migod. Sex fiend though I may be, I couldn't have gone to bed with her; I would've barfed all over her no doubt "firm, uptilted breasts." (Copyright 1941 by everybody.) Seems to me Larry started out with an excellent denunciation of most of what's wrong with presentday cons, then totally undermined it in the last half of the story. Perhaps we should view the protagonist as just another dummy who "follows his penis around conventions," to use Marta Randall's felicitous phrase, but there's nothing in the writing of the story to suggest this kind of irony.

I much prefer your own cartoon in Langford's conreport about the costume idiots who found the huckster room lousy because it had too

many books. Now that really says it all.

Speaking of Langford's piece, I loved it as much as I loved the first section in his own fanzine. He can write, he can. I liked Ted's piece too, and Ray's was okay. Speaking of him, he called me recently when I was out and left a message on the answering machine saying he was going to be on CREATURE FEATURE touting a project for a Tower to the Moon of Bheercans. I missed seeing it because we had a small party here for Carol's and my 20th anniversary, but I'd have loved to see it. Sometimes I think Ray is the only trufan among us: who else would resurrect a 25-year-old fannish joke for the masses? Personally, when I win my Nobel Prize for isolating the gene that produces Drekkies, I intend to speak up for my plan for a love camp in the Ozarks....

((You have some valid comments about this here microelite typeface, but I still believe it can be used effectively. To this end I am doing a little experimenting with the format of the items (like this lettercol) that are being typed with this typer. I have applied your double-spacing suggestion and also decided to convert to double columns in an effort to make it all more readable. But of course this is all redundant since you can see what I've done just by looking at the page. *sigh* I always overstate the obvious. :: For my money Dave Langford is the best goddamn fanwriter currently practicing the craft. I would publish items by Langford in every issue if I had the opportunity. (Hear that Dave... I said, HEAR THAT DAVE!) :: You and all the rest of fandom should be interested to hear that the fourth installment of Dave's TAFFreport will be appearing in WARHOON 30.))

Michael Dobson 1725 17th St. NW, Apt. 505
Washington, D.C. 20009

I enjoy the growing emphasis on fan history, or (more aptly) fan tradition. An emphasis on continuity and history for its own sake can become

tiresome, but it's clear in BOONFARK that you're dealing with the roots of fandom in order to keep alive basic traditions -- the spirit of fandom.

One wonders, however, if the "looking backward" to recapture and represent the glories of Sixth Fandom doesn't confirm that Fandom-As-We-Know-It really has died. Like you (and, I suppose, like virtually all of us), my original interest in fandom was to seek out like-minded people, people to help me grow past my rigid, anti-social high school self, people with whom to communicate about the same things I was interested in. Eric Mayer's comment, "I suppose, 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," is right on target. At least in my case, I found that the percentage of people I could really like, enjoy, and respect was not all that much higher in fandom than in the various mundane worlds in which I began to move.

Although my fannish involvement (never what one would call hyperactive) has waned steadily over the years, with small flurries of activity bracketing years of silence, I've found myself unwilling to sever my few remaining ties. I still think of myself as "a fan" deep down inside, oddly enough. Even though I never climbed to the top of the Tower of Trufandom, nor really operated the Magic Mimeograph (just Ed Smith's, which blew up), I still feel touched with the Wand of Contact -- a little bit of Trufaanishness is still one of the prime movers in my life. In spite of barbarian hordes, in spite of Star Trek, in spite of rampant fuggheadedness, fandom remains the home of my childhood spirit -- still magical.

In reality, however, fandom is the home of second- and third-raters, of pear shaped people, of people out of touch with the rest of the world... of people, in short, who can't dance.

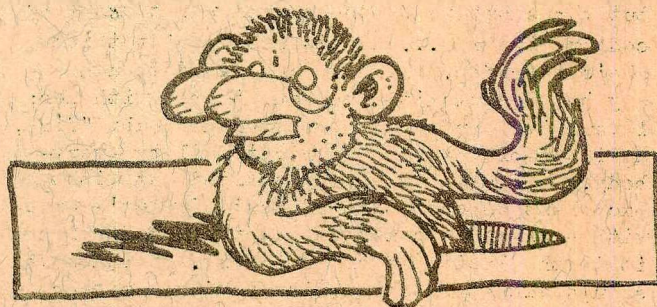
I haven't tried to resolve the contradiction.

The school year prior to my discovery of fandom (8th grade -- surely the low point of human existence) I suppose I typified the proto-fan. That was the year I told my classmates I was an alien visitor sent to earth to judge the human race. I worked out a whole story -- location of the planet, conditions, history... but what naturally resulted was a class of people calling me "Martian Dobson" for years, and years. Even now I encounter it -- my 10th anniversary high school reunion was held last year, and the newspaper article in The Decatur Daily (written by a classmate) featured me most prominently (although I wasn't in attendance) and (you guessed it) talked about me telling people I was "from Mars."

Even the N3F was a step up from Decatur, Alabama.

I started off enjoying Larry Stark's CON REPORT, but ended up disappointed. He brought up the key point early on -- the contradiction inherent in the people who seek love and adventure through dressing up at conventions -- but I felt he should have gone further to explore and resolve the contradiction in the story rather than simply embracing it himself. It seems to me that a thoughtful man would have more doubts than did Stark's narrator about participating in such a borderline schizophrenic encounter... Or, if he didn't have doubts, he would be likely to have encountered much worse in the way of results. Once we've established that these people are sad, and possibly disturbed (and he established that quite effectively), it doesn't make storytelling sense to switch gears so abruptly in the middle of the piece -- at least not without some explanation.

((Am I supposed to gather from your letter that you can dance, but are not from Mars? :: I think it is debateable whether 8th grade is really the low-point of human existence. For my money I would have to state that High School years are the low-point... at least for me. I guess that's because I was a late bloomer -- once I noticed girls (and they, me) I entered four to six years of sheer hell. Brrr, it sends chills up my spine to even think of those times. Thank Ghu I discovered fandom in my Sophomore year. :: Larry's CON REPORT has gotten some interesting comments -- though I must say that this page is being stencilled early in the production of this issue -- and they all have seemed to agree about the schizophrenic nature of the work. While I acknowledge that it is a story split into two parts, I still think they fit together well. Think of it as fiction that has been peppered with factual observations. While I admit that I was a little bothered by the ease with which the protagonist slipped into the costumery after all his snide remarks; I think it is still possible. After all, this is fandom and fans have been fucking each other since it all began. Just think of it as breeding between species. You're from Mars, and have a cosmic mind; just think of the old adage: "there but for the grace of god, go I."))



Jeff Schalles P.O. Box 319 Cathedral Station
New York, New York 10025

When BOONFARK 5 arrived and I realized that I had not read all of #4 yet, my eyes were opened. Fanzines have been my favorite thing in all the world to read ever since I found out about all of this

nonsense. Every fanzine that makes its way to me these days gets at least a quick look-through and the few good ones get read cover-to-cover. Several times. But so few decently crafted examples of the artform have come to me in the last few years that I have developed the indolent habit of reading these holy objects v-e-r-y s-l-o-w-l-y. In the case of BOONFARK 4, I was meandering my way through the letter column when #5 fell on my head. Damn it Dan, you've woken me up! There is obviously some greater form this awakening interfaces with to cause it to happen just as I get rified! Being unemployed is giving me the chance to once again develop the habit of loeing every fanzine I get. I have read and loed a dozen lesser fanzines since I got this issue, just to warm up for this moment.

I do not object at all to your Lilac paper choice this issue. The text paper just sort of steps back out of the way after a while, and in decent light shouldn't give anyone cataracts. I am looking forward to your evolving, somewhat garish, experiment. Cover art, front and back, is just fine. I am not sure I agree with the distribution of interior illos, however. The lettercolumn is disconcerting, particularly when played against the paucity of illos and large blocks of type in the first twenty pages of this fifty page production. The best art in the fanzine, slightly underinked in my copy, is Steve Stiles's heading for Larry Stark's "Con Report." The Atom's are very nice also, but I get the impression you are holding back a lot of the best in your file for future block-busting issues. Do you have many Lovenstein illos left? How about a Lovenstein anthology?

Even though Ted's intro to Larry's piece prepared me with the prerequisite knowledge that it was fiction, I still enjoyed the conceit that it was a true tale, and further, that similar adventures lay in store for me at cons-to-come. I enjoyed it tremendously. It is a milestone in the tradition of erotic fannish romance, which gives me another idea for an anthology.

((Did I really wake you up? Hell, I hadn't even noticed that you had fallen asleep. Perhaps you need to inspect your alarm clock... :: I'm not really holding anything back from my artfiles, in fact, I tend to think that it is starting to look thin and in need of fattening up. Despite that, I did all the illos this issue because I thought it would make for a pleasant change. Next issue will return to the multi-artist approach. :: I have a couple of Lovenstein illos left, but I am trying to space them out, so that they will last longer. Doug was one of the late-sixties whiz-kids and a damn good cartoonist, it is a shame that he gafiated. However, I believe Doug is still living in the same part of Ohio, perhaps you should track him down and do that anthology -- ghu knows I'm not up to it -- but it sounds swell for you...))

Anders Bellis Vanadisvagen 13, 113 46
Stockholm SWEDEN

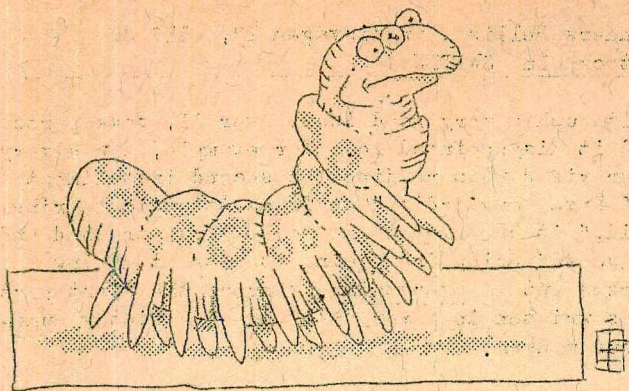
Although a very good issue overall, some parts of it disappointed me. For example, I was very surprised when reading the second installment of Dave Langford's "The Trans-Atlantic Hearing Aid," it appeared to me to be very strained and also suffering from vain attempts at making jokes out of everything, whereas the first part was written in a very relaxed and quietly humorous manner.

I feel, when reading this report, that practically none of the events described are presented in anything even resembling an honest manner. Dave is exaggerating and changing everything in order to make it funny -- to the point where it becomes very hard to enjoy what he has written. He doesn't convey any real feelings or thoughts to the reader. He doesn't give the impression of having experienced anything worth telling about, but merely describes fragments of different events in a shadowy and strained way.

My favorite trip-report (no, I haven't yet read THE HARP STATESIDE) is John Berry's THE GOON GOES WEST from 1959. In this epic report you find something which at least I have not found in the others I have read; utter sincerity and honesty, and an amazing amount of thoughts and feelings about everything John experienced. This, I think, is much more valuable than strained humor in every sentence; especially considering that John Berry managed to be very witty in spite of sincerely telling his readers the truth about how he felt and what he thought during the entire journey. Actually he was not even afraid of chronicling how he more or less double-crossed another faned in order to obtain a Bloch manuscript.

Dave Langford's report is everything that John Berry's is not, unfortunately.

((Hmmm, I couldn't disagree with you more about Dave's report. I think you are making a mistake by trying to compare these two reports -- after all, Berry's was written over twenty years ago. Certainly American worldcons are very different now, and I thought Dave's piece reflected that difference. I've read Berry's report too, and found it to be quite linear in approach and construction. Dave's bit has been a reflection of the chaos and confusion that he was presented with during his visit to this country. Your confusion about his feelings may have something to do with Dave's attempt to communicate his confusion to you. Nor do I feel that the humor was strained, I thought it was easy-going and effective. If I hadn't thought so, I would have sent that deaf-boy packing. But as it is, I think the Langford report is the best and funniest in years -- only Peter Roberts' TAFT report has surpassed it. Too bad Peter never completed it, I'd love to read the ending...))



Paul Skelton 25 Bowland Close, Offerton
Stockport, Cheshire SK2 5NW UNITED KINGDOM

Ted's introduction almost put me off Larry Stark's piece. I left it 'til last, which was lucky because it was so good the rest of the zine would have suffered having to follow it. It's a good thing our royal family isn't prone to male-female twins (pg 12) or they'd probably spend all their time "twarting" at "midnight" too. Besides, I thought "spiteful plotting" referred to Jaqueline Lichtenberg's writing technique.

"Snap." Well, nearly "snap." July '81 marks my 10th Anniversary of publishing. The first issue of HELL (co-published with Brian Robinson) being dated July 1971. Of course, I've only managed about 40 issues of various zines in those ten years, but what the hell.

Kent Moomaw: Every time I read his name I mentally associate it with the Bullwinkle cartoons. Fuck knows why.

((1971 was a good year for a lot of things, including new fans like us. Do you think we'll be around in another ten years?))

Gary Deindorfer 447 Bellevue Avenue #9-B
Trenton, New Jersey 08618

Enigmatic Bergeron cover. I'm not sure what it means or who it refers to (Pinky Lee?) but it sure sounds deep.

Larry Stark's story seems to have that same strongly FIAWOL feeling about it that I remember from Stark fiction in the past, but it's a good FIAWOL feeling. It's a FIAWOL feeling that I am secretly addicted to but hesitate to admit publicly that I like, though I have just admitted it publicly here. (Unless this part or even the whole letter is mercifully wahfed.) ((Nope.))

The characterization in the story is rich, fully fleshed. Not quite fully fleshed, come to think of it, because the girl is kind of ethereal and dreamlike, exactly as she's meant to be, since it isn't clear until the end of the story whether she's even real or not.

Fiction about fandom is usually satirical or parodistic -- humorously intended, anyway. Serious fanish fiction is a rare bird, and Larry Stark has always been one of its best practitioners. Good to see him active again, at least to the extent of this story and his piece in the PONG Annish. He really brings back feelings of old days for this particular Nostalgia Wimp.

Ted covers some of his own psychodrama here, and interestingly. Yet somehow I can't think of anything else to say about it, except it is well written and seems emotionally honest, for the most part.

Ray Nelson's article is mildly interesting. I couldn't really get with this. Maybe because "Turn Off the Sky" didn't strike me as the fantastic literary creation Ray seems to have convinced himself that it was.

Wild how Ray used to know all those beats, some of whom became famous as Hell. Too bad Ray never attained such heights of fame. Then, today, there'd be an oral biography out entitled RAY'S BOOK filled with reminiscences about Ray by Burroughs, Ginsberg, Corso, etc. But then, Ray is a survivor. He's been through all those wild times and heavy changes and come out the far side in one piece with all of his wits still with him, witty and wise. He made it, and Kerouac didn't, not to mention many others who didn't. Ray is quite a fellow. I noticed that he hasn't contributed any recent letters to PONG on fanish paleontology lately. He's always interesting, no matter what he writes about. Well, almost. This particular article didn't zap my brain that much.

The Terry Carr anecdote at the end of the article is true and funny as hell. I like it better than the article itself.

Langford writes funny. I have read the first installments of the Langford trip saga now, the third one being in the new NABU. That's why I ought to write to Bergeron and request the forthcoming copy of WARMOON ((#30)) with still another installment.

As usual with Dave's writing, he manages many piquant, scorchingly pungent turns of phrase. Some of the turns of phrase are almost as piquant as my own "piquant, scorchingly pungent turns of phrase."

The preceding paragraph is my attempt at what I think of as rich brown-type subtle, ingrown, self referential fan humor. I didn't do it as well as rich does, though. Nobody does. Rich brown humor is inimitable. Maybe that's why I miss his not having a column installment in this latest BOONFARK. I hope he has one in the next issue, something devilishly complex, subtle and rich brown-like that I can coo and aah at and try to imitate and fail and in general be jealous of. Because rich brown more than anybody

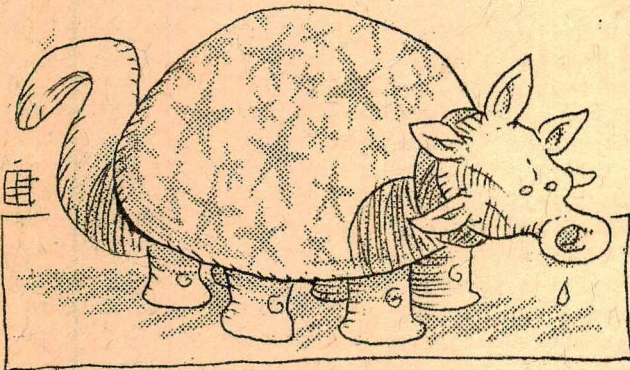
else writes the kind of article I'd like to be able to write, and can't.

Reminds me: Dave Langford conveys a certain ingenuousness in his TAFF report as though the U.S. is something he can't believe.

The news about Pete Graham seems to fit one of my scenarios for him. In a way, you know, his dry, cutting wit made the three other VOID boys seem like Mickey Mouse by comparison.

Terry Carr on why the VOID Bhoys didn't smoke dope is funny. Also, it reminds me that I should have remembered that I knew on the basis of numerous visits to Ted's place in Brooklyn that there was no dope use going on, and that was after the Towner Hall days, Dumb me.

((I hope you are pleased with rich's column this time. I know I am. rich is definitely one of my fave fanwriters -- he has the ability to find amusement in almost anything, and cynical ol' me really treasures a spirit like that of Mr. Brown. Plus, the faneditor in me definitely doesn't mind having such a good writer in my zine. I hope it is a long time before he misses another issue. :: As for Langford's disbelief concerning the U.S.; can you really blame him? I mean, look at who our president is.....))



Vinç Clarke 16 Wendover Way, Welling
Kent DA16 2BN UNITED KINGDOM

I can now sympathise with some fellow-feeling for those bewildered protagonists of THE SLEEPER WAKES, THREE THOUSAND YEARS, THE LONG LOUD SILENCE etc. as they stumble around rubbing their bedsores and wondering what the hell's happened. When one Awakens in the Future, at least into Fandom after twenty years' absence, there are a certain number of changes. You can't fool me with this fanzine with cartoons by Atom and letters from Bloch and Willis and young Lee Hoffman....

It's flattering and frightening to find that one is a mistily remembered Ancient One from the Golden Age...at least, in BOONFARK and PONG. Just a moment while I adjust this mummy wrapping and unroll a clean stretch of papyrus...

Suffering as I am from Future Shock, plus mental indigestion after reading in quick succession BNFs 4 and 5, plus about 347 PONGs, this LoC -- a useful acronym we should have invented in the fifties -- may be a little incoherent. The trouble with reading successive issues of a fanzine is that you make copious notes, then find in the next issue Harry Warner and Ted White or some other perceptive fan has expressed your exact response -- only better. But I'm determined to say a few ill-judged words about 6th/Fifties fandom, which was a Way Of Life for me for the whole decade.

Amongst the thousands of words on 6th Fandom that I've read in the past 2/3 weeks, some of the most interesting have been by Taral Wayne MacDonald in BOONFARK 5, page 38:

"It was small and incestuous and mythologised itself. Fandom today tries to mythologise 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."

Well, yes, incest always has been an exclusive group interest, but we know what Taral means. Prior to the fifties, fanwriting was mostly (yes, I've some VOMS) about science-fiction, its cause and cure, or the external political scene, or philosophy, or the arts. Or, with a bow towards Damon Knight and the Futurians, internal political upheavals. But after that decade there came a significant addition to the standard menu. Why? Here's some personal experience.

I was a teenager in the thirties, neurotically shy, solitary; I found my first actual sf magazine in 1936. From then until 1947 I met no other reader or fan. By that time, service in WW2 had eliminated a good deal of the shyness, and I overheard a group in a central London bookshop talking sf authors, so I introduced myself....

That long period of solitary enthusiasm for sf, a sort of ugly duckling in a world of mundane ostriches, eventually fostered an intense desire to know the other feathered freaks who had an interest like mine. I believe that the same impulse, the craving for self-expression after the communicative blackout of the war years, created the right atmosphere for the birth of fifties fandom. Read the autobiographical snippets in fanzines of the era, and you'll find a recurring theme; after isolation, mental, physical or both, many of us entered fandom as if it were a long-lost family. Just as Chuck Harris quoted a bit by me in BNF 5, let me quote some Harrisana from HYPHEN 12 (and if this be incest, make the most of it...):

"He's been reading sf for years, but has only just discovered us people lurking in the background...Arthur (Thomson) had been searching for

fandom for a long time. He hadn't been aware of this search, he was just conscious that something was missing -- like a femme fan after her first convention."

So, like a family, we gossiped about the others. We told funny stories and life stories and deplored anyone leaving the 'family,' whether it was for reasons of Gafia or Fafia or...mutter it... 'turning pro' and losing contact. There were, naturally, family feuds. A fuss was made of babies...neofans. All this wasn't new... Harry Turner's ZENITH on this side of the Atlantic did it in the early 40s...but the sheer quantity was new, as were the mutual points of reference between US and UK fans. With the wheels of IF poised nicely in between.

But Time stumbled on, and it seems something went wrong. I was Fafia in 1960, but even then there were clouds on the horizon, no bigger than a neofan's beanie, but there. As I see it, the media hauling on one rope and the intellectuals chanting "let's-make-sf-respectable-and-we-might-as-well-call-it-speculative-fiction" hauling another pulled sf out of the closet and into the public consciousness. Your next door neighbor was a sci-fi fan...he watched STAR TREK. And a guy at the office was a real enthusiast, he had seen STAR WARS three times. There wasn't much need for the escape-hatch of Fandom and the oldsters with their history and private jokes and typewriters with the well-worn letter 'I's.

Well, it's a hypothesis, anyway. Personally, I don't believe that my type of fandom, the mythturbating, incestuous, sublimating, FIAWOL-type fandom, will ever have the plug pulled on it. There will always be the non-conformists, the misfits, the humorists with a sense of history, the geographically-isolated, the guy who believes that 6000 at one Convention is 5,500 too many, who'll find a fandom with types like Willis and Bloch and Warner and all of us, even if it's by seance.

There the defence rests, but I'll add a few historical notes, not entirely irrelevant to the contents of recent BOONFARKs. Just recently, I've been in correspondence with a collector/agent/ex-pro editor (yes, all one man). He wrote: "Yours is the only reference to Brunner and his early work that (I can find) after searching through scores and scores of '50s fanzines, and instead of recording the first novels of someone who became and is one of the most important sf writers in the world, you cock it up with a Willis pun! Now we'll never know!"

Yes, mea culpa and all that. Willis Changed My Life! When coming into fandom in the late 40s, I had a lot of missionary zeal about finding potential UK fans, and I turned out sands of sericon stuff. But SLANT, QUANDRY, personal correspondence with the Belfast Bhoys and, later,

Chuck Harris, changed me into a follower of the WAW wit and wisdom -- the extract above refers to a '52 Con Report -- 'tho' I never quite lost the missionary spirit. Now I wanted to change British Fandom into a sort of super-Belfast model. It seemed so unfair that WAW should unearth so much talent in an area the size of part of London. You won't, therefore, see much of me in the US zines of the fifties, but the British ditto are embarrassingly full of "Vinç" (an abbreviation coined by James White, after DEMOLISHED MAN). A lot of us, who appreciated intelligence and humor, tried to follow Walt's examples, and we had a lot of fun; we created in British Fandom a many-headed monster by the late fifties which, like Stephen Leacock's horseman 'dashed off in all directions,' some of it not too pleasing but at least it was alive and yelling; in 1948 only about 4 of us were able and willing to write an account of the solitary UK convention of that year. By direct example and by our imitation, WAW had a mighty influence, and I think it perfectly reasonable -- in fact, inevitable -- that he should have this massive tribute paid to him in WARHOON 28.

After spending a few hundred words commenting on one teeny paragraph I shall have to do some severe self-editing.

Liked your autobiographical editorial; "extreme poverty...is a major stumbling block for a fanzine publisher..." Oh yes, oh yes -- if it isn't the money, it's the time. UK Fandom was so generally poor in the fifties we used to exchange hints on where to get the cheapest paper, stencils, ink. I even made, at a machine shop where I worked, an extra long arm for a stapler (to stretch to the middle of a 13" sheet lengthways). Larry Stark's CON REPORT is as smooth and interesting piece of fan fiction as I've ever read...the blending of fact and fantasy very nice indeed, tho' I'm surprised he didn't create the fantasy book title. Being able to remember details of the heroine without remembering the book title strikes a false note. First-person writing definitely called for and beautifully executed.

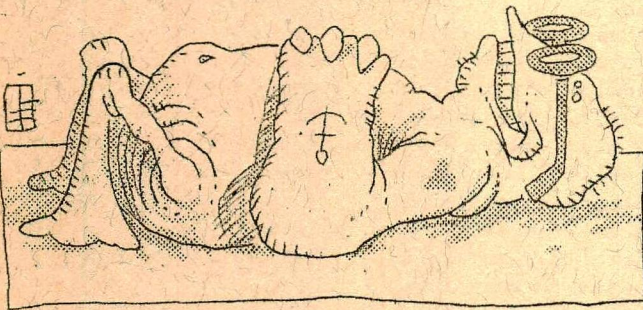
Ted White's MINAC was very interesting -- the sort of stuff I could read for ever, and remarkably detailed... either a damn good memory or an excellent filing system. Ray Nelson's article was quite astonishing; trains in vacuum-tubes are fairly old sf -- even about the time Ray was poking about with magnets. Arthur Clarke's RESCUE PARTY (1946) had his E.T.'s trapped in a subway in a vacuum beneath the ocean on a 1000 mph train, but cunningly doesn't give the method of propulsion; if Ray was the first to combine this with magnetic propulsion -- what is now called the linear motor -- he's to be congratulated.

I'm reading bits of Dave Langford's TAFF trip all over, it seems. It's so painstakingly written that I'm wondering how on earth he managed to

keep notes; I'm also thinking that if I were to card-file all the names mentioned I'd probably get a good overall picture of 1980 fandom. Very good, and especially liked the echo from POGO: "We have met the BNF and he is us!"

And letters: Gary Deindorfer's perceptions on WAW, and your reply were perfect. It must be disconcerting, to say the least, for him to be reading what sounds like a lot of premature obituary notices, though, and I wouldn't like to add anything to my remarks on his influence above, and the fact that he is a very modest man.

((One of the real joys of publishing a fanzine like BNF is the receipt of letter, like yours, from recently re-awakened fen. If Chuch Harris hadn't wondered out loud about you last issue, I doubt very much whether Malcolm Edwards would have thought to send me your address, enabling me to send you my fanzines to assist in your re-entry into fandom. There are many of us out here who herald your return... :: As in your youth, the circumstances that create modern fannish fans has a lot to do with the discovery of a sense of family and acceptance. I know that my circumstances were similar to your own, and I went through it twenty years later. :: I am fascinated by your assessment of current day fandom's problems. You are very nearly dead on target with your thoughts on the new 'Respectable and Media Wise' branches of fandom. It just goes to prove that television really is a great corrupter of culture. The proof is in the fact that fanzine fandom seems to be only slightly larger now than it was at the time of your gafiation in 1960. Which brings to mind the old axiom: "The more things change, the more they stay the same!"))



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You're slightly in error in your editorial: "Our Man In Fandom" by Lin Carter appeared in IF, not GALAXY. I wouldn't say Lin "made up" the facts he presented in his column, but he was truer to his own impression of things than a factual description of them, and he occasionally did make factual errors (the most noticable at the time was that he gave the wrong box number in the address for NyCon3 -- fortunately, it was obvious to the PO and we received all the mis-addressed mail, which was considerable: several

hundred, in fact. It made it easy to tell who was writing in response to Lin's column, and it was obvious that he was reaching a lot of people with that column...). Most prozine editors are contemptuous of fan columns in their magazines, more's the pity. We owe your interest in fandom to Lin's column in IF in the sixties (then the only such column being published), and a number of current-day fans owe their presence in fandom to "The Club House" in AMAZING in the seventies.

Ray Nelson remarks in passing that his "Turn Off The Sky" was, "though nominated for a Hugo, ...removed from the ballot for reasons that remain unclear to this day." In fact, the reasons are not at all unclear, and do no credit at all to the committee which put on the 1964 Worldcon.

I don't have Howard DeVore's handy booklet of Hugo nominees and winners available as I write this, so I can't list the other nominees, but I know -- because a committee member told me specifically -- that Ray's story was indeed nominated in its category (novella? novelette?) that year, placing fourth in total number of nominating votes.

Unfortunately, 1964 was the Year of the Boondoggle, and Ray's story was an innocent victim of the politics of the Boondoggle. The Boondoggle, you'll recall, involved the decision to exclude a notable fan of the era from the Worldcon, a decision which was augmented, early that year, with the circulation of various slanders and libels against the fan in question by the con committee in a quasi-fanzine with a circulation of over 100. The ensuing uproar divided fandom unequally, with most fans opposing the exclusion on several grounds, ranging from a dislike for the committee's tactical strategies (which were hardly calculated to win friends) to a belief that the committee's basic assessment of the fan in question was in error. Over and above this rose a specter of fannish McCarthyism, of exclusionary policies vs. liberal support for the fannish ethic of live-and-let-live. Any number of prominent fans and pros took what amounted to ideological stands against the exclusion, irrespective of their personal feelings toward the fan who had been excluded.

Among those opposed to the exclusion were people like myself, Avram Davidson (then editor of F&SF) and Ray Nelson. Avram boycotted the convention, refusing to leave the hotel lobby or enter the convention area. Ray took out an ad in F&SF (a small ad among the classified ads in the back, if I recall correctly) urging readers to boycott the convention.

This, then, was the situation when the nominating ballots came in and were counted. I suspect that the committee felt that should Ray actually be announced a Hugo winner for his story he might cause a scene of some sort which would embarrass the committee. (Not that the committee itself

didn't do plenty to embarrass itself, both before and during the convention.) The committee was by then very paranoid about its actions and the reaction which was occurring. (I believe at least two of the principal committee members were undergoing emotional breakdowns during this period. I don't see this as a result of the Boondoggle, but rather as the real cause of it.) Thus it was easy for them to concoct scenarios in which various of their avowed enemies wrecked havoc upon the convention in revenge against them. It was not possible to keep F&SF off the ballot -- too few prozines were nominated -- but it was but the work of the moment to knock "Turn Off The Sky" off the ballot and substitute in its place a story which had in fact received less nominations. There! That will teach Ray Nelson!

I don't actually know the reasoning the committee used to justify its action, but the action itself is not in doubt. Ray was denied his honestly-deserved right to have his story considered for a Hugo on the final ballot by fiat of the 1964 worldcon committee. (Would it have won? My private suspicion is that it would not -- that it would have placed second or third at best. I base this suspicion in part on the fact that it received less nominating votes than at least three of the other stories which were placed on the ballot. But that makes the committee's action no less dishonest.)

Terry Carr is quite correct about the absence of dope smoked at Towner Hall. In addition to his (entirely valid) point that we'd never have gotten all those fanzines out (VOID was monthly, after all; and we also got out quarterly issues of LIGHTHOUSE and NULL-F for FAPA and HOBGOBLIN for SAPS, as well as the occasional Cult and CRAPzine), there is the fact that Towner Hall was a quasi-public shop -- a former restaurant with its own street-door which was never locked as long as someone was there. You may recall there was much paranoia about dope in those days, and I seriously doubt, even had we been smoking it then, that we'd have done so in Towner Hall itself. Much safer in more private quarters.

I was first offered the opportunity to smoke the stuff in the fall of 1959, by Bill Rickhardt, the same fellow who had turned me on to peyote half a year or so earlier (when I was still living in Baltimore and he stayed with us for a month or two). He was back in New York for a few days and came up to our apartment to tell us that he'd run into someone in Washington Square Park who'd laid a joint on him. Did we want to try some?

I was dubious. Peyote was at least legal and lacked the bad image which had been given pot by the anti-drug crusaders. In my ignorance I looked upon pot as something not far removed from heroin -- both were a part of the more sordid and destructive side of jazz. Further, I'd never learned to inhale, back when I'd played with cigarettes as a kid. Both Sylvia and I tried a

puff or two but neither of us knew how to smoke it and neither of us got anything from it except what our imaginations supplied.

I had a number of further opportunities to try the stuff in the next several years. It was occasionally smoked at FiSTFA meetings as early as 1964, and I knew that several of my friends were smoking it more or less regularly by then. But I clung to the notion that I "couldn't inhale," and thus couldn't smoke the stuff.

The first con where there was much of it around (although hardly in an obvious fashion) was the 1967 NyCon; by 1968 it was all over fandom.

Terry and Carol Carr turned me (and my second wife, Robin) on in 1968. I think it was more Robin's idea than mine. Terry and Carol had made it obvious to us that if we wanted to try it, they'd help out ("The first time's free!"), and somewhere along the line Robin set it up with them. We went over to their apartment for an evening (which I think included dinner) and after a certain point Carol got out the dope, a pipe, and the various other utensils.

They pre-programmed us: Terry had told me, either earlier that night or a few days beforehand (drugs have destroyed my memory!) that pot was an incredible aphrodisiac. "The first thing you'll want to do, once you're stoned, is to screw," he told us. And, "You can use our guest room, if you want."

Neither of us had ever learned to inhale, so Carol began patiently teaching us how to draw in the smoke into our lungs without choking and coughing. She must have wasted an enormous quantity of dope on us in the process, but -- and this is the important thing -- she did teach us how to do it. Half an hour or so after our lessons had started, Robin stood up from the sofa on which we'd been sitting, and exclaimed, "Oh wow! It's completely different up here! Oh, Ted, you've got to try it! Come on, stand up!" I did, and it was at that moment that we both realized how stoned we were. Holding onto each other and exclaiming over the most mundane things to each other, we hastily made our way into the Carr's guest room and its bed and proceeded to make love.

It wasn't easy. We were continually distracted by each other and by our own whirling thoughts and reactions. Time distension was very noticeable -- more so that it ever has been again -- and we'd keep breaking off from what we were doing to remark on such things to each other. I found that I enjoyed the act of sex more, but was so unfocussed that it was difficult to reach orgasm. That was probably a healthy change.

Afterwards we struggled back into our clothes and returned to the livingroom and the Carrs, where Terry and I talked all about the Neat Things (like time distension) which came of being stoned, and we all had a Good Time. That marked a pro-

found turning point in my life, and in my attitude toward drugs (which had been, despite my experiences with tripping, a fairly puritanical anti-drug attitude until then), although I didn't smoke any more pot for several more months thereafter.

The worldcon that year was flooded with little white capsules (sold for 50¢ or so) which were represented to be THC. I took several in the belief that they were, but of course they weren't. (They were actually PCP.)

So it goes.

((Your recollections concerning "TOTS" disappearance from the 1964 Hugo ballot are very interesting. As much as it may repel me, I am fascinated by the sorted history of fandom's politics. It seems to me that people's worst emotional defects come to light when trying to be political, and when those politics are combined with power games -- Look Out! Too bad Ray's art had to be fucked over by somebody else's interpretation of a bad political decision -- that committee has, even today, much to be ashamed of. :: Thanks, as well, for your drug-use autobiography. With this kind of information at my disposal I should be able to extract all kinds of favors from you. Let me see... You really don't want that fanzine collection anymore, do you? Or all those IFs that are piled all over the living room... I'm sure we can come to a compromise.))

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I'm definitely in two minds about "Con Report". It's certainly well written and there are good insights into the current nature of problems with conventions but on the other hand I can't say I actually enjoyed it. I kept having to remind myself that it was fiction, not something to argue with in my loc. And after a while I found myself flipping pages to see how much more of it there was to go. All of which tends to demonstrate that I just don't get off on fiction in fanzines, even if it's faan fiction, unless it's exaggerated and humorous in style. My loss, though; I'm sure others appreciated both the writing and the content.

It's a good thing that my contributions to fandom have been considerably less in number and significance than those of Ted White because I'd never be able to document any aspect of my fannish career the way he does in his personal fanhistory columns. I have trouble remembering what I did when and where and with whom; I'd certainly not be able to quote letters which bore on my development as a fan. Perhaps that's one reason I enjoy reading Ted's columns. Another certainly is that he must rank as one of the most influential of fans and most of us are interested in glimpsing the backgrounds of the great and near-great we've come into contact with. (I find myself wondering: do you suppose Ted is so well organized that he

actually has copies on file of his major fanzine contributions? I know I don't -- except for my own fanzines -- even though there are articles and columns I'm quite proud of. And haven't seen in a decade or so.)

I continue to enjoy the Langford TAFF report even if this section lacks the hilarity of Dave's best writing. His observations of North American fans and fandom and society are a joy to read and his descriptions are frequently painfully accurate. I fully expect this completed report to rank as one of the finest TAFF reports ever produced. Now where the hell is the next installment? ((NABU 11 and WARNOON 30.))

Tara! makes a good point about the nature of fan history: just how much of it is reality and how much fantasy. I have some first hand knowledge on this matter since I travelled to Australia with the same group of fans as Bob Tucker and I shared a room with him in England as well. Now Bob tells a lot of amusing stories about those trips and he tells them quite often and I know that quite a few of them simply didn't happen the way Bob says they did. But he tells them well and they're probably funnier than what actually did occur so they'll probably become a part of the fanhistory of the 70s. When I think about that it definitely makes me wonder how much we "know" about our past actually happened. Just because something is written up in a fanzine doesn't guarantee its accuracy or reliability especially when you consider what fannish memories of con parties can be like!

I think it's definitely a good thing for new fans to be exposed to the fanwriting of the past (but not on the basis of it representing a Golden Age that has never been equalled) if only because it might encourage some of them to try and duplicate it. I'm not suggesting that today's fanwriters should try to emulate the style or the content of fannish writing of previous generations but just as many artists first learn their craft by copying their favorite comic book artists so it would not be a bad thing for would-be writers to try learning to write by studying past masters at the art. And many people lack the confidence to simply develop an individual style out of sheer inspiration. Just as those comic copiers frequently become fine fan-artists, so could new fanwriters emerge from those who initially base their material on things they've admired from old fanzines.

Malcolm Edwards to the contrary, ((in GAMBIT 55)) I enjoyed the letter column greatly even if it did ramble somewhat at times. Particularly enjoyable were TCarr and Chuck Harris although the largest chuckle in the issue was provided by Rob Hansen's description of Greg Pickersgill as "normally placid." I love humor of the absurd!

((Your suggestion that Ted has complete and organized files of his fan-stuff was one of the funniest things I've read in a long time. There are times when I think that the only thing that Ted has on file is chaos -- things like last issues Benford letters were stumbled upon and lead to the article.

I really think that one of Ted's greatest talents is that he knows a good deal when he sees one; the fact that he was smart enough to recognize that those letters held the makings of a fanarticle is proof of this. I am, however, in the process of sorting and organizing Ted's massive fanzine collection, and when that's done I expect some stunning fan articles to come from it. If nothing else, the sorting has been an education for me. :: The history of fandom is the history of individuals and the stories written by or about them should reflect their personalities. If fanhistories were all told in dull, dry terms, I don't think anyone would give a shit. But the history of Sixth Fandom is not only about people like Willis and Hoffman -- it's about their writing and publishing and how they managed to create a personality for fandom at large which still managed to be their own personal history and personality. And Tucker, I doubt very much he would be as highly thought of or even remembered, if he'd been a colorless, book-worm type. He was (and is) a great character who has contributed his personality and wit to our culture. So it doesn't bother me in the least that he might distort reality a bit -- I'm sure in every case it is, as you said, better than the truth. :: I have nothing but agreement with your thoughts about fanwriting. Certainly when you draw the parallel with artist's influences and their copying of same, it makes sense. In fact, I've been told by a number of writers that they recommend actually copying some of the prose of writers they want to emulate in an effort to learn the vocabulary. Sort of like walking a mile in another man's shoes. I should apply to fan-stuff too.))

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What really disappointed me the most about BNF #5, I think, was the two longest parts of the issue: the lettercolumn and Larry Stark's story. Now I like long lettercolumns, but in this one I think you printed too much. It just went on and on, and it sounded more and more convoluted and turned-back-on-itself as it went along. It could have used a lot of pruning, just printing the high points -- which doesn't mean all of the letters should have been short. (I don't agree with Malcolm Edwards's comments on lettercolumns in his review of BNF in GAMBIT; I just don't think this lettercolumn works.) At the same time, I envy you the quantity and quality of response you got to the last issue. It's all stuff I'd enjoy getting and reading; it just isn't all stuff I want to see in print.

I'd have to reread Larry's story to criticize it with any justice, and if I wait until I've reread it I'll never finish this letter. It seemed very, very long for a fairly light-weight point. I didn't feel that I really knew the viewpoint character by the end of the

story, and I certainly didn't believe or understand the costume-freak he got involved with. It seemed like pure fantasy. The initial parts, the straight con-report section, seemed more lively than the later, heavily-fictionalized parts; I liked the little exchanges between the protagonist and Bob Stewart (or the character named Bob). When the story got into the fantasy world of Amy Carstairs, I don't think Larry captured the essential brittleness and thorough-going staginess of the costume fantasists. He didn't present it with any irony; he told it straight, with nothing but the protagonist's doubts and "everyday" mindset to contrast to the fantasy game. I dunno. I didn't believe in the characters. Larry was obviously attempting something serious, but it didn't come off.

It was the middle three articles that made the issue. Ted's "Minac" carries BNF's theme (which you know is one I approve of and am interested in) of reflections on VOID and Towner Hall; I would have liked some sort of summing-up or musing at the end rather than a sort of cliffhanger of chronology, but that's my only criticism. Ray Nelson's piece is fascinating to me especially because I remember "Turn Off the Sky"; it was in one of the first issues of F&SF I ever read, and it hit me like a bombshell. I was barely into my teens at the time, and it played on all my adolescent yearnings for freedom from convention and outrageousness. I have no idea how it would read to me now, but I remember it fondly, and I'm glad that Ray does too.

Langford's trip report installment makes sense of the following parts, which had seemed a bit disjointed when I read them before reading this bit. His description of "looking for fannishness in the wrong places" is exactly what I would be afraid of happening to a visiting Briton at anything as huge and chaotic as Noreascon; hell, I have felt that way often enough myself.

((I'm in total agreement with you about what makes up a good lettercolumn, and I try quite hard to be discriminating about what I do and don't print. Hell, you'd be surprised to find out just how much I really did cut from last issue's letters. The average letter was 5 pages long. There is some disagreement, however, among your fellow readers about that lettercolumn; Dick Bergeron, for instance, thought it was one of the best lettercolumns he'd read since the days of Sixth Fandom. Who is right? :: There continues to be a lot of disagreement about Larry's "Con Report". Do you think that he made a bad judgement in selecting the costume-type as one of his lead characters? It occurs to me that this story might be getting less than its due because nearly all fannish fans dispise the people who run around made up as their fave sf characters -- are these people too unsympathetic to be easily identified with?))

IAHF: Dick Bergeron, Bill Rotsler, Bob Lichtman, Rick Sneary, Brian Earl Brown, Darrell Schweitzer, Sam Wagar, Lee Hoffman, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Dave Langford, Malcolm Edwards, Jay Kinney, Harry Andruschak, Mike Horvat, Eric Mayer, Bob Bloch, and others.

-continued from pg. 3-

offers a unique look into the soul of The Hoard. This is not the first in a new series.

Ted White's "Minac" column this issue is about Harlan Ellison's Seventh Fandom. Using the actual quotes from Harlan and his sparing partners -- found in early issues of Dick Geis's PSYCHOTIC -- Ted attempts to fill in the blank spaces in modern fan's minds concerning what really happened and why Harlan said, "The Mad Dogs have kneed us in the groin." This is not personal journalism -- because, as Ted is the first to point out, he wasn't involved in what happened -- but is, instead, a shot at a seriously researched fan history. It is pertinent to today's fandom as an example of what can happen if you wave your flag too stridently -- without considering the effect it might have. If nothing else, it teaches us not to trumpet our own talents too loudly, but to leave it for others to do.

I'm hoping for sane responses from people like Harlan and Geis, who were involved, and are able to give us further thoughts and background about this fannish movement that is still remembered and talked about twenty-five years later. Feuding is not encouraged.

To further round out the spectrum of fannish ideas and standards, I am introducing this issue a new columnist, Rich Coad, who will be writing regularly for BOONFARK about fanzines in the specific and the abstract. Rich's own fanzine, SPACE JUNK, is a certified recommended fanzine, and Rich promises a new issue Real Soon Now. You can send your fanzine to Rich for review and trade for SPACE JUNK at: 251 Ashbury Street #4, San Francisco, CA. 94117.

I will note here that Rich's reviews were done in November 1981 -- back when we both thought this issue would be out in January -- and are a little, but only slightly, dated. Since the column was written, the twelfth issue of HOLIER THAN THOU has put in an appearance, though we're all still waiting for TAPPEN 4. I have promised Rich that in the future, if I should again hold up his column, making it seem obsolete, that he can smash his guitar -- Pete Townsend-style -- over my head and extinguish cigarettes in my ears. He has agreed to this gleefully -- totally unsuspecting of my true masocistic nature -- and I expect that we should have some fun in future issues.

Yes, that is a drawing of Rich on page 20 of his column. Though to be perfectly honest, I have touched him up a bit to make him presentable. After all, this is a family magazine.

THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR section returns this issue. Hopefully you'll be glad to see the second chapter of my comic strip version of T.E.D., which so many of you missed in #5. Preceding this chapter are some hen-scratchings from some old wanker named, Willis. Despite

his advanced age and the length of his inseam, Walt has some interesting thoughts about the fannish allegory he wrote with Bob Shaw nearly thirty years ago. Originally penned for a different version of T.E.D. that was never published, Walt passed it on to me to be included in my project. Rather than wait for the years it will take to publish the entire strip, I am offering it her for two reasons: I can't stand the thought of unpublished Willis laying around, and I want to be able to say -- when I'm old and grey -- that I published him in my fanzine. Ego always wins out.

Speaking of the years it will take to publish the entire T.E.D.... I have decided to step up my production of chapters. Since the drawing of a chapter takes considerable time (during which I produce nothing for money) I have decided to take on some collaborators. My plan is to continue to letter and pencil each chapter myself, and then send them out to other fanartists who I feel could handle the task of inking them. This will cut my time in half and allow me to produce 3 or 4 chapters a year. Chief among my collaborators is Grant Canfield, who has enthusiastically agreed to ink a couple of chapters. I have asked several other prominent fanartists to join in the fun, as well, but am still waiting to hear from them. I will continue to ink them myself as well, but this new help will enable chapters to begin appearing in other fanzines besides ENF. Write if you're interested in publishing a chapter in your zine.

Lastly, though you'll find it the first item in the issue, is a piece of autobiography from local critic and aging hippie, Steve Brown. Every word of his piece is true, I know, I've seen the scar. Steve will be writing more about the circus in future issues, proving that this fanzine does not have a total fixation with fanhistory.

PLUGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Jeanne Gomoll, taking a break from the work she does for the Serious fanzine, AURORA, has produced a volume that should be owned by every fannish fan with any interest in history. In cooperation with the 1982 WisCon, at which Terry Carr was a GoH, Jeanne has published a book/pamphlet edition of Carl Brandon's "The Cacher of the Rye."

Brandon produced this satire of Salinger's famous book, "The Catcher in the Rye," in 1956 and 1957. It helped establish and then solidify his reputation as one of fandom's best writers. At the peak of his popularity, Brandon was revealed to be a hoax, perpetrated by Terry Carr and his Bay Area fan circle (Dave Rike, Pete Graham, Boob Stewart, and later, Ron Ellick).

This satire is interesting, well-written, and of no small fannish import, but Terry's lengthy introduction to the volume is really the more powerful of the two pieces presented. In it, Terry goes into great detail about Brandon's creation, and also about the attitudes held by he and his collaborators at the time, and about 50s fandom, which had

welcomed Carl with open arms. In a way, it is a chronicling of a time when fans and fandom were more innocent and naive, and open to such things as Brandonizations and even hoaxes.

This introduction is a powerful example of personal journalism of the sort that is only available in fandom. It is a delightful bit of fannish autobiography by a man who has long been one of the top practitioners of the form. It is, by Terry's own admission, the longest sustained piece of fannish writing he has done in almost twenty years. Need I say more?

Also included in this beautifully designed volume are illustrations by Steve Stiles and a complete index to the writings of Carl Brandon. Jeanne Gomoll has done a tremendous job with this book and deserves all the support we can give her. Order your copy from Jeanne at: Obsessive Press, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701. They cost \$7.00 (including postage) each and there are autographed copies by both Terry and Carl, for as long as they last.

I also want to remind you that you can still get copies of WARHOON 28, for \$25.00 each, from Richard Bergeron, P.O. Box 5989, Old San Juan, Puerto Rico 00905. Dick is also publishing regular genzine issues of WRHN again, and I recommend it to you highly. So, don't delay -- get yours now.

Also of interest to dirty-minded fans -- though not really fannish in nature -- is the ninth issue of the underground comic, BIZARRE SEX. While BS is of interest regularly because it publishes comics by Steve Stiles and Yours Truly, this issue is especially great -- even though it doesn't feature anything by Steve and me. #9 is a book-length comic novel by Minnesota fan artist, Reed Waller, called: Omaha, the Cat Dancer. And it is incredible. This comic is probably the most innovative book published since the early days of Robert Crumb. It is overflowing with sex, nudity, sex, corruption, sex, and emotions. Waller's talent is sparkling, and beautiful -- and this book is that and more. I recommend it highly, as Reed is destined for great things. And, I want to be able to say, "I knew him when..." Get your copy at your local 'headshop' or send \$2.00 to: Kitchen Sink, 2 Swamp Road, Princeton, WI 54968. Tell 'em Danny boy sent ya. (While you're at it, order any of the 4 issues of DOPE COMIX -- for the same price -- which all feature comics by the editor of this fanzine. You'll enjoy them.)

Now, to put all of this other shit into perspective, here is a list of records that have been bought, listened to, and enjoyed during the production of this issue. (In no particular order): HOMOSAPIEN by Pete Shelley, ENGLISH SETTLEMENT by XTC, THE NAME OF THIS BAND IS TALKING HEADS (2-record, live) by T. Heads, TALK TALK by The Psychodelic Furs, THE TOM TOM CLUB by the Tom-Tom Club, THIS IS THE ICE AGE by Martha and the Muffins, JOBS FOR AMERICA by R. Chappelle and A. Harrison, DISCIPLINE by King

Crimson, MESOPOTAMIA by the B-52s, ISMISMS (known as SNACK ATTACK in the US) by Godley and Creme, THE ORIGINAL SIN by Cowboys International, MENINBLACK by the Stranglers, CONTENTS UNDER PRESSURE by Roy Loney and the Phantom Movers, and many more. Try any of these and you'll be, at the least, entertained. At best, you'll be dazzled.

Next issue should have more music stuff in it as an attempt to widen the spectrum of things being discussed. Since music is a large part of my interest outside of fandom, it seems like a natural.

NEXT ISSUE: Coming up in August will be an issue of BNF that will celebrate Lee Hoffman's GoHship at the Chicon. Featured will be an article by LeeH about the Art of Accumulation. While it wasn't written in connection with the convention, it seems appropriate to publish it in the issue destined for the Worldcon -- after all, a Fan GoH needs to be visible, right? LeeH? YooHoo, LeeH....

Also appearing next issue, besides the regular columnists (hear that bhoys, start writing now), will be pieces by Eric Mayer, Jim Benford, and maybe: Gary Deindorfer, Gary Hubbard, Bob Shaw, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Dave Locke, Steve Stiles, Teresa Nielsen Hayden, Lou Stathis, Bill Rotsler, and bouncing Bruce Townley -- all of whom have promised articles Real Soon Now. (And now that I have committed your names to stencil, there's no backing out.)

Another chapter of my comic strip version of T.E.B. will appear, as well as a portfolio of drawings from a very successful three-way jam between Jay Kinney, Grant Canfield and myself, along with some commentary about the trials and tribulations of jamming. There may also be, providing there is space, another portfolio, this one will be full of pictures of pigs by the above mentioned Grant Canfield.

#7 will probably be the biggest issue of BOONFARK ever -- which seems only fitting. After all, the seventh issue of a fanzine is always the biggest, isn't it? Well?

BOONFARK #8: A return to the sane approach to fan publishing. (Providing I'm still sane after doing #7.)

LASTLY, let me add some people-type facts: The mailing list and labels are managed by my wife, Lynn. The light electrostencils are by Linda Bushyager, while the dark ones are by the Graham Letter Service. Rich brown handles the overseas mailing through his unsuspecting place of employment. The micro-elite typer is Ted White's, as are the lettering guides and other stencilling equipment. The mimeography is his too. Official Pest is Dick Bergeron, who also inspired the rubber stamps. The misspellings in rich brown's column are dedicated to John D. Berry. And me, I'm your announcer.

--dan steffan 5/1/82

