

# DESCANT



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Clarkes  
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Canada



# AS YOU WERE SAYING . . .

## MAILING COMMENTS by NORM

### Horizons: Harry Warner

About the Martin Bit, a Last Word from me: however much one may wish it were otherwise, it is now obvious that there will not be a "reinstatement by the officers with profuse apologies"; and the several petitions have shown pretty conclusively that the majority of FAPA just isn't interested in having Martin reinstated. Ever aware of the futility of flagellating expired equines, I rumble a grudging shiffuh, and resolve never to talk about Ed Martin again (well, hardly ever).

I don't know why it is, but that "old rule of thumb" you mention -- "one knows everything when young, doubts everything when mature, believes everything when growing old" -- seems to be popping up everywhere I go, lately. A new radio station, in Ottawa, redently began "testing," prior to its official opening; between segments of recorded "Good Music" (pap) some unctuous announcer would deliver homilies, and damn if that one, above, wasn't quoted at least once every hour. I'm getting pretty sick of that maxim, I tell you, although of course I believe it -- just as I seem to believe everything, lately.

Is there something terribly secret about "the full story of Russ Woodman's gafiation," that you mention it and then refrain from amplifying? It was "the one logical, satisfying reason for gafiating"? You mean he quit drinking?

"Some teachers start pupils on the scale exercises with the most accidentals"? But, Harry: accidentals are sharps and flats that are not in the scales.

Regardless of whether it's too late to invent a new means of signifying quasi-quotes, I wonder whether there is any standard fannish way of pronouncing "quasi": KWAWzee seems natural to me now (although some years ago, my pronunciation was KWAYzee), but I recently heard an awesomely learned person say KWAWzye, and I thought, "Gee, that must be Right." So then, after all these years, I looked it up in the dictionaries, and found that it's supposed to be KWAYzye. I have a large suspicion that that is the only pronunciation that fans don't use. Now I suppose about 64 Fapans will tell me that that's the way they've always pronounced it. I won't believe them.

Fine remarks on the utter meaninglessness of LP liner notes, but I don't envy you the job of gathering the quoted material. I'd thought of doing a similar sort of thing about the egregious writing on the jackets of jazz LPs (after Joe Pilati had struck out disappointingly -- in Log -- with what could have been a great short article), but I seem not to be able to read two sets of liner-notes in succession without going into either racking spasms of laughter or hours of misanthropic depression. Hey, Ted White, would you agree that Norman Grenz and Ozzie Cadena are two of the world's worst? (Next to Ornette Coleman, of course.)



Synapse: Jack Speer

As Walter said of your last two issues, "all but illegible" -- particularly, for some strange reason, in the even-numbered pages (in our copy, anyway). I say this not so much carpingly as regretfully. I can't understand how you, with all your years of fanning, can continue to produce such consistently eye-straining fanzines; if it is the case that these latest issues are so poorly reproduced because you are unfamiliar with mimeography, I sympathize and trust that things will improve as you grow more skilful with practice; but I don't know, because your dittoed fanzines, which you turned out for hundreds of years, were equally botched. Don't you care whether people are able to read what you've written (to use your own line on you). Don't come back by telling me that some Descants were pretty bad-looking; we know that, and when we decided that we just couldn't produce a fanzine of even passing legibility on our old broken Print-o-Matic, we farmed the production work out -- first to Phil Harrell and then to Paul Wyszowski, those Wizards Of The Mimeograph. Wishing you were the same.

I wonder how many fans are as enthusiastic about Fantasia as I am, and as you seem to be. I've seen a number of references to it, in fanzines, in the past year or so. It's a custom -- almost a ritual -- with me to see the film every time it comes to Ottawa; but it hasn't been around in the past seven or eight years, and I miss it. (I did see parts of it on the Walt Disney TV program, but, that way, it was No Good.)

"Liebscher went fruit in California": do you hold that homosexuals are culprits? I think that using the word "fruit" (when not in jest) is comparable to using the word "n-----"; I believe that, in most cases, a homosexual is no more responsible for his deviation than a Negro is for his color; and the scornful epithet, "fruit," is indicative of an intolerance I hadn't expected of Liberal you.

I can understand "faaanish," I suppose, but why do you write "fanish"? Is that your own custom, or is it an old, if neglected, fanhish practice?

I didn't say that "Gina's fingers hit the wrong'keys"; I said that hOf typing "stumbles" and "crawled" (or vice Versa) in the same sentence wa^i\*| a minor error, resulting from hasty stencilling. It was my writing "war" for "car" that I said was a slip of the finger. khod, this- is getting to be a boring topic/ ("Getting to be?") I also wrote (And Then I Wrote ...), in the last Descant, that Gina's Goof was "Quite enviously a minor.error ..."; gee, do you suppose I meant "enviously"?

Gosh, a whole page of creebing, grotching comments to you; your style-must be contagious. Oh well, I'll be wishy-washy for a moment, and say that I like yer ole fanzine, even though it does look as if you stencilled it with your foot.

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"While it was in his mouth?" -- GG  
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Phantasy Press: Dan McPhail

The trouble with your mailing comments is that they seem to be written for people outside of FAPA who have not seen the mailings -- things like "Marion Zimmer Bradley has left the windy reaches of the Lone Star State ..." and "In the good but all-too-short category was ..."; you might try the second-person approach, for more Togetherness or something, e.g., "Well, Marion, I see you've left the windy reaches of the Lone Star State ..."



Vandy: Juanita and Robert Coulson

Juanita: Okay, I guess maybe I am convinced that there is such a thing as perfect pitch, after all: Paul Wyszowski has told me, in his scientific way, that people who don't have perfect pitch -- great majority though they be -- have likely got something wrong with their brains. I've always suspected this, about myself, so maybe he's right (he hasn't got perfect pitch either).

Just in passing: I wish you would separate your comments to Gina and me: like, when I read you saying "Your comments on food echo my own," I don't know whether you mean mine or Gina's -- we've both talked about food, and we each have our own ideas about it. No put-down, but I think I would say "oog" at the sight of baby lima beans in butter and milk.

Perfume? Well, I myself like a little -- just a little -- touch of "Minuit a Fort Coulonge" on my left elbow, for those special occasions; for ordinary knocking about, it's "Essence d'Extra Old Stock" lingering tantalizingly on my breath; sometimes, though, these subtle scents are faintly overpowered by my supplementary aroma of "Chonques de Garlic de Hier Soir." In fact, as Gina sometimes puts it, practising to be a good bilingual Canadian, "On reeks comme la merde."

"The ape analysis was interesting. What did Apex think of it?" Why, it dissolved immediately, that's what. (Didn't it?)

Thanks for the comment on the Dogdiddle, but it wasn't a FAPazine; I guess I should have made that clear. Oh well, at least it didn't get any points in the Ego-boo Poll, as Potsherds In Gaza did (it wasn't a FAPazine either).

BT: Fascinating stuff about stagehandery; I wince with sympathy, though, for Waring's poor old musicians; but, actually, I suppose the musicians themselves didn't give much of a damn, but just wanted to get the ridiculous thing over with and get back on the bus and to their jugs (or whatever it is that a Fred Waring sideman might Use). And about the rock&roll band that followed Waring: you know, I think I've worked with them. Well, some guys very much like them, anyway. Yeah, I think Ronny Something was his name.

Buck: No, the novice drunk driver gains experience by careening around the highways, learning how to cope with all the other novices. When one becomes a mature, habitual drunk driver, one scorns such childish play: one goes in for more demanding sports such as leaving a suburban cocktail party by travelling 90 miles an hour down the laneway and seeing how many times one can turn left in succession without actually forgetting which way is up; it's a challenge, man. (I myself do not drive; that is because I am a Saint.)

How many readers have informed me (about the Dogdiddle) that I shouldn't make fun of anything that serious? Surprisingly (and rather disappointingly), none. Everybody said "Ahaaha" and "It puts things in Perspective"; it didn't, though. Aw hell: I'd been expecting quite a few Nut reactions, but the only one came from John Boardman, who sent me his fanzine.

Spinnaker Reach: elarcy

Hey there, Russell, I have a terrific idea! If one-shots are "no fun to read," (whether typo-corrected or not) why don't you just Not Read them? Of course that would deprive us all of the Fun of reading your interesting mailing comments on those one-shots that you so masochistically forced yourself to eyetrack; but what the hell.



Catch Trap; Marion Bradley

What is the Fantasy Amateur Press Society? One of those exclusive groups, I bet. What is the singular of "stencilae"?

You didn't like The Realist because "the humor is too bitter"? What kind of humor do you like: sweet, sour, salt, or brackish? And "the literary quality is nil"? Why, Terry Carr is a contributor (and so is Steve Stiles, but of course he is not very literary). And you think that Krassner's opinion of humanity is low. Well, is yours high? Mine isn't. The other night, while waiting for a bus, I saw a little girl struck down by a car on Aylmer's main street; I don't know what magic grapevine works on these occasions, but in thirty seconds half the town was on the scene, whooping, yelling, laughing, setting off fireworks, copping feels here and there, etc. I had to get on the bus before the party really got going, but I learned the next day that the little girl had lain on the street for forty-five minutes or so, before someone thought it might be a good idea to call an ambulance or something. But a good time was had by all.

The indifference mark ought to be adopted immediately by fans; it would be invaluable in mailing comments and the like.

What is this aversion to flat keys all you songwriters have? You say that you usually write music in the keys of A minor, D minor (okay, I'll grant you that one flat, but it's not exactly cricket, because you are able to sneak in that ole c-sharp and B natural sometimes) and -- oog -- E major. When I write songs, they are in B-flat, E-flat, F, or maybe once in a while G or C; well, that's my prejudice. You play autoharp? I wonder if Curt Janke will break up when he learns (right here) that we have a Union Musician listed in the Union Directory under "Autoharp"; I haven't played a gig with him yet (never even met him, in fact), but I suppose it's inevitable. I'm not putting down the autoharp, per se (I suppose they're great things to have around, for one's own amusement), but the idea of a Professional Autoharpist is just too much (like a Professional MusicalSaw-ist). (I might add that the loss of of "some brightness and clarity of feeling" in the piece that you had to transpose from A to G, was probably not objective, but has to do with your own vocal range.)

Your remark that you intend to give up xmas cards "next year" reminds me that I wanted to say to the various fans who sent us cards last xmas (and previous ones) that Gina and I send no cards, except to her immediate family in Alberta, and that nobody should feel slighted because he didn't get one from us. We send no xmas cards because we have Convictions, and a Tight Budget besides. So, merry xmas, Marion and those who are reading a mailing comment not addressed to them!

I guess that

Allerlei; Walter Breen

is c/w Catch Trap (which is c/w Day\*Star), so I guess it really shouldn't get the separate rubric that -- look! -- it did get.

Hah; I was going to say, "How clever of me! I know what Kim Chi is!" But you beat me to it, because you are so damned clever; anyway, I got it out of an old Around-The-World (disclaimer) Cookbook, quite by accident, which isn't so damned clever of me. Oh well, my IQ, though never measured, has been estimated to be about 43. (But that, of course, is when I'm sober.)

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She's a singer, Walter --BR?  
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Allerlei, cont'd

"Why, a 50% piece is silver color, of c." is a pretty Breenish comment.

"Please bring back DESCANT"? Twice you say it, even? Didn't you get the last one (#11)? If you didn't -- for whatever reason -- surely Marion did? Well, if you didn't get that issue, let me know; after all, we trade fanzines, don't we? (Hey, I never got the last couple of Fanacs; and I am dying to find out what's New in the fan world lately.)

You can't entirely shake yourself free of your Catholic background, huh? "Who'd want to go to Helen Bedd?" is the sort of joke that would go over real big, maybe, at a Catholic Youth Organization Communion Breakfast, but falls pretty flat in such an Urbane, Sophisticated group such as FAPA. I speak with all the authority of a former Catholic altarboy and (later) choir-member and (later still) Rebel Renegade Agnostic ("A fuzzy-minded atheist," according to my ex-Protestant wife, Georgina, former PAPA contributor).

Your mc to Chauvenet: "Your FANACs must have got lost in the post"; oh, come ON, Walter. The USPOD may be staffed with imbeciles, as you believe, but surely everyone's (my and Russell's) copies couldn't be "lost in the post"; why not just admit that you haven't mailed many Fanacs in the last eon or two?

Bee Over Two: Curtis bighod Janke

Brief comment here, I'm afraid, but mainly the brief comment is, like, "Hooray and yahoo and ahahaha and boy can that sumbidge write!" I'm referring, of course, to your magnificent slashing and maiming of the C#-is-higher-than-Db credo; great stuff. Ditto, with more roars, for your bit about Foque-music, etc. Gee, I wish you would make it in every mailing.

Sercon's Bane: F.M. Busby

But, Buz, I did too vote for Martin -- sort of. Don't you remember (sure you do)? I said in a letter to you, "Well, I'm not voting in the egoboo poll this year, not even for Ed Martin. However, if he were to get 32 votes, I'd certainly feel the Perfect Fool; so, if he does get 32 votes, add mine as the 33rd. Otherwise, include me out -- this year, anyway." I forgot, though, that Gina would have to vote, too; but, anyway, I did vote for Martin. Sort of.

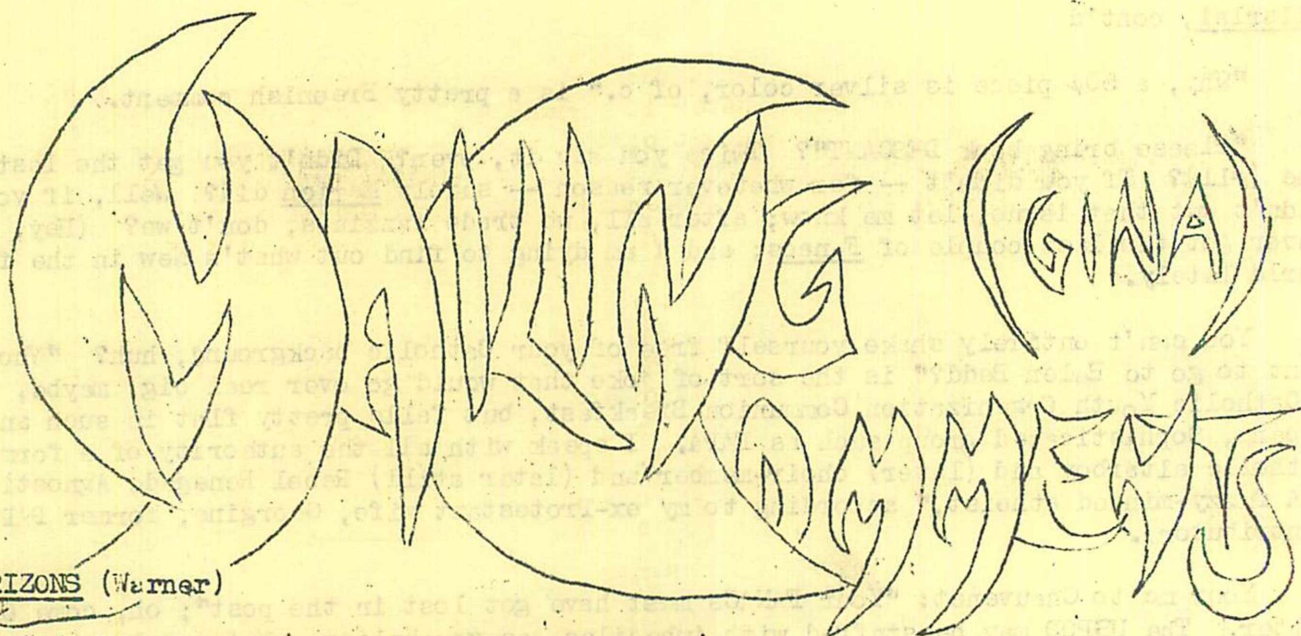
So you can't play "Getting Bill Evans to the train" any more; well, how do you like the Game of Getting Boyd Reeburn On The Train? It's a much more violent game, I understand.

And The Rest Of You Guys:

Since we're playing the Game of Postmailsville (or "Hasty Hasty") yet once again, I am forced to finish off the mailing comments with this page, even though I'd like to have said a few more words to several people, particularly such as Andy Main (and I'm sorry, Andy, that I never got around to thanking you for Flunking Fink, or whatever it was called, that you sent so long ago; so thanks), Redd Boggs, Dick Eney, BJohn and... oh, probably a whole lot of others. Except you, you idiot! Well, the August mailing is already here, so it's time to get this Show Biz on the road. Hoping you are the same.

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Shiffuh, so to speak  
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HORIZONS (Warner)

Your article on schadenfreude was very good.

It would be a bit of schadenfreude on my part if I were to try to discourage you from going to Europe but I doubt that people are basically any nicer to each other there than they are in America. They're perhaps nice to tourists, who bring them money, and whom they may feel a traditional hospitality towards. But hospitality can be misleading. Some of the cruelist of peoples can be at the same time bound to certain rituals of hospitality. (Some outstanding examples would be American frontiersmen and American Indians, present-day American Southerners, Bedouins, etc)\* Such people would be very hospitable if you happened on them under such circumstances as to invoke their traditional rites of welcoming the stranger, offering him food, etc., but they could be maliciously cruel when encountered under what they considered to be hostile conditions, even to someone they'd made welcome just a short time before. I'm being extreme and it's not likely that in present-day Europe you're likely to be scalped, not literally anyway, but any hospitability you might experience as a visitor wouldn't necessarily reflect the people's daily behavior to each other and their behavior to you if you stopped being a visitor and became a resident.

As an example: I recently read some praise for New York policemen by a Canadian who had asked one for directions on a visit to NYC and had thereupon been personally guided to her destination and, because she was Canadian, was wished "Bienvenue". Are NY policeman like Car 54 characters? Really?

The story was ingenious, well done and, like others you've done, the penultimate in fan-fiction: it makes sense only to fans. Between this and the article on schadenfreude, you have next year's poll wrapped up.

Norm and I are intrigued by the john that "doesn't get touched by human hands" (how about other human parts? How are you prevented from touching it with hands if you really want to?) and which is "frost-proof" (why frost-proof? Is it outdoors?) and which arouses the ire of the Health Department.

\*(and fans?)

TARGET FAPA (They) - liked the Anthropophagos bit. TATOOED DRAGON (Rotsler) - Enjoyed.



B/2 (Dean Janke)

I enjoyed your comments on that Bonanza show. I don't ~~generally watch~~ that program but the preview in the paper intrigued me. I mentioned in a recent letter to Lichtman's zine (in the context of the current nicety of avoiding words like N-gr- and J-w) that I'd once caught a Bonanza tolerance show about an "Israelite". Sho nuff, on this latest tolerance show they have a character who is "a runaway slave" or a "famous opera singer" but never a N-gr-, nor even a P-rs-n -f C-l-r. Your whole bit was beautiful. I too noted the "ostentatious civility" with which those good Cartwright boys treated the Negro girl. Perhaps it was because they weren't quite sure if she was colored, which was understandable. While watching I tried to imagine how a lone Negro girl, with nobody to protect her but her poor snivalling Tom daddy, would actually have fared in that frontier town where people were rough and didn't cotton much to "ex-slaves". A possibly more realistic tolerance western was done on (I think) Rifleman concerning a Negro man who gets in trouble with a mob when he single-handedly tries to prevent the rape of an Indian girl by some drunken white men. (Featured Sammy Davis' gun-twirling.)

Reminds me of the day a friend (whose color I won't mention) pointed out that the listing in the tv guide and the blurbs on the air for the night's movie, the Jackie Robinson Story, advertised it as the exciting story of an ex-football player (?), an ex-resident of Los Angeles, and an ex-player for a Montreal baseball club, who made good in the big league. Not one word of why Robinson is famous, which of course is because

(censored)

Voting for Wallace because you're against too much central power is like voting for Hitler because you're against inflation. Anybody who votes for a man who talks with snickers about "Japanese Baptists and Chinese Presbyterians", and who says (I'm wildly quasi-quoting now) that just the other day a nice old Nigra minister shuffled into his office and said yassuh bawss you done mo fo mah people than King and Core and the Naacp put together--anybody, I say, who votes for that because he's afraid of too much central power has holes in his head. When you have a headache, do you reach for the strychnine? I fail to see how "too-strong" federal government under a moderate and apparently well-meaning man like Johnson is more terrifying than ANY kind of government under a yahoo like Wallace.

Also, anyone who votes for Goldwater because he's against too much federal power votes for someone who talks about equality and stuff in a much more sophisticated manner but who nevertheless states baldly that he's in favor of letting the southern states settle their racial problems any way they please without federal interference. "It may be wise or moral that Negro children go to school with white, but they certainly have no civil right to do so." He feels that states' rights, and states' freedom, are higher than morality and individual freedom. And now, after giving a great deal of thought to the civil rights bill, he has decided to vote against it. "It would abrogate people's God-given rights and force people to live under a police state." As my sister-in-law remarked, this stand makes sense only if Goldwater differentiates between people and Negroes.

SCATALOG (Wilson) -

About Sturgeon's double-sexed Venusians: The problem was intriguing, so I turned the full force of my dirty mind on the question and solved it quickly. If the sexual parts were on the front, male on left, female on right (or vice versa), wouldn't that work? Picture it and enjoy enjoy.



DAMBALLA (Hansen)

I remember too the embarrassment of having to sing alone in music class. We had to sing alone in order to be classified by range (at that age everybody in the class was an alto or soprano but the boys were called tenors to make them feel better and one or two even made baritone). Once classified, we were placed in the appropriate place in the choir, the choir consisting of the entire class regardless of ability. The teacher didn't try to weed out the sick sounds. Rather, she picked out the good ones, since they were fewer, and they were encouraged to try to influence by example their neighbors. I was neither a good nor a sick sound. I sang at first but I couldn't stick to my part when I heard other people singing other notes. Or at least I didn't think I was singing right, but I couldn't really be sure because I couldn't pick myself out of the general din. So I usually just mouthed. Especially at the competitive festivals.

The highest--in both range and prestige--rank of the choir was the descant, which I was never skillful enough to make, until now of course.

Music classes touched on various aspects of music. After choir singing we moved on to composition. We were each supposed to compose a little song and then, one sad morning, the teacher played them all for us. I hadn't the faintest idea of how to make up a tune (we had no piano at home and this class was really my first exposure to music), so I merely followed the rules--all the notes in the same key, except for an accidental thrown in to show I'd been in class that particular day\*, proper number of beats per measure, bar lines, time signature, clefs properly drawn on the right lines, stems turned down on high notes and up on low notes, clever use of two or three different-length rest-signs. Etc. I got my minimum marks for these details but the melody wasn't very catchy.

Did your professional dog-trainer train both you and your dog yet? Neither of you make puddles on the rug now?

\*whereas Harry was playing  
hooky.

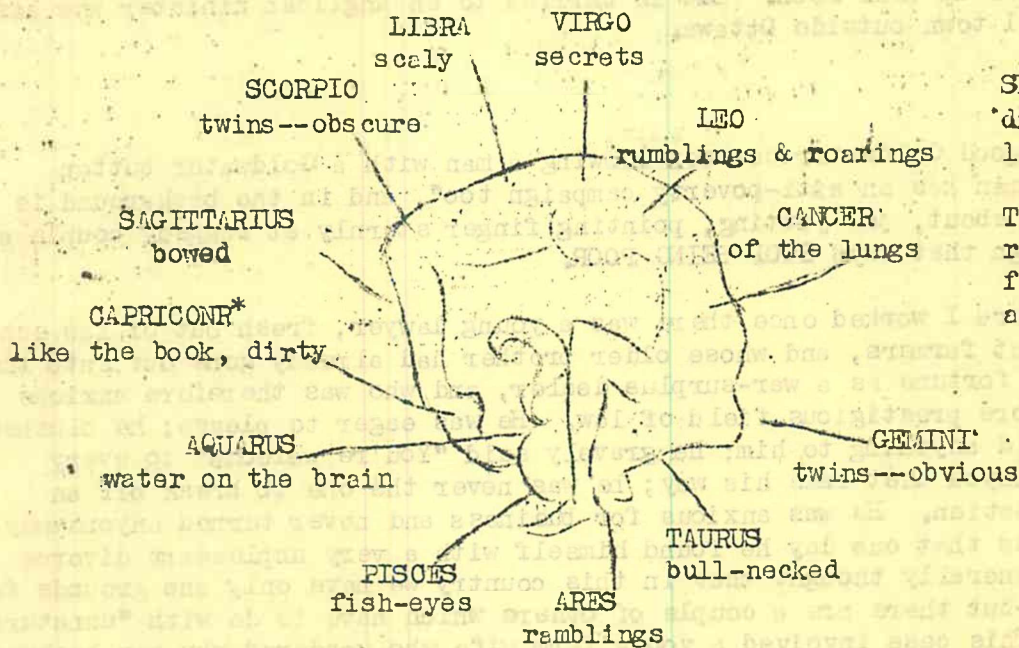
MELANGE (Trimbles)

Perhaps I'm getting middle-aged (shfu) but I seem to be reminiscing about my childhood lately. However I reminisce not with nostalgia but still with dismay, so I guess I'm not middle-aged yet. Anyway, your bit on names reminded me of a school-teacher named Dr. Miller who one day, during what was supposed to be a sort-of-party just before Xmas holidays, had a little game of making up riddles out of the students' names and we had to guess. What he did for mine was something quite simple, like "feminine version of a king's name." But for The Other Georgina he made up a more elaborate one:- "First part--something you say to a horse. Second part--a musical instrument. Third part--shortest word in the English language." (Gee-organ-a) Well, yes, he was stretching.

The Other Georgina was the bane of my existence that year. She was beautiful, well-groomed, well-dressed, could dance, sing, play piano, did well at track and gym and baseball. She could draw and paint and sew. She got excellent marks. She was popular with girls, boys and teachers. With the male teachers, she flirted outrageously. I won't describe what I was like; it's enough to say that except for marks I wasn't even on the racetrack. And my lacks seemed conspicuous enough to me without having someone with the same, not-very-common, name showing me up so spectacularly.

It was relayed to me by a friend (?) that, in a math class she attended but I didn't, Dr. Miller made some sort of invidious comparison before the class about the two Georginas. I instantly hated him. I gloated when shortly afterwards Dr. Miller was publicly tortured to a state of scarlet sputtering by a boy who had very nearly perfected





SELF PORTRAIT,  
'drawn while  
looking in mirror.

This is just a  
rough idea. I've  
forgotten the  
actual labels.

\*never mind, J.S.

the art of teacher-baiting. What he had against Miller I don't know, but he stood up one day, with innocent face and fragile figure, apparently as yet untouched by the puberty that was ravishing the rest of us, and made an inquiry about some silly thing Miller had on his bulletin board, right between WHAT IT'LL BE LIKE ON THE MOON and SEX LIFE OF THE GLADIOLI, namely a zodiac chart, with a woman in it, similar to the one pictured above. What he wanted to know was what those "secrets" were. He refused to be brushed off. Miller, backed into a corner, finally admitted that "They have to do with the differences between men and women." "I don't understand," said the boy, who understood perfectly well and who lacked only the practical experience, "I wish you would explain," and the class squirmed in horrified glee.

I wonder what became of The Other Georgina. We went to different high schools and I lost track of her. She probably went on to as glorious an adult life as she had childhood, but perhaps not. In high school I attended classes with a girl who reminded me very much of Georgina tho she, thank god, was named Pat. She had all the attributes of Georgina and was even more vivacious, and her flirtings with the male teachers--perhaps because this was several years later and most of us girls except guess who were beginning to look pretty good--had even more success. The chemistry teacher, who also put on the school plays, gave her a special seat right in front of his desk where he could chat with her before starting classes, and while the rest of us were writing up "experiments" during classes, and he gave her the lead part in the school play. (I resented all this because of course I had terrible crushes on all those old fossles.) Rumor had it that Pat's biggest number in the play, a song and dance bit, was just terribly sexy. (It turned out to be innocently appropriate to the peasant-blouse and drindl she wore for it ((it was a "Swiss" play, full of holes)).) I met Pat uptown the other day, these many miles and years away from our old high school. That sweet precocious body in the sweaters of yesteryear was now matronly; she was still vivacious, but 30 years of laughing and cute grimacing had left her face lined and startlingly old-looking. Her hair was gray and a blizzard raged therein. She wore a bright pink dress, pink hat with veil, fuchsia



gloves and she had a square of cardboard pinned to one ample breast, for she was with a group of labelled church ladies. We chatted for a few minutes, declaring that we must look each other up real soon. She is married to an Anglican minister who has a church in a small town outside Ottawa.

#### JESUS BUG (Main)

I saw a good Goldwater cartoon showing a man with a Goldwater button saying, "See, our man has an anti-poverty campaign too", and in the background is Goldwater stalking about, jaw jutting, pointing finger sternly at raggedy couple and holding aloft a sign that says STOP BEING POOR.

In a law office where I worked once there was a young lawyer, fresh out of law school, the son of immigrant farmers, and whose older brother had already gone out into the world and made his fortune as a war-surplus dealer, and who was therefore anxious to make good in the more prestigious field of law. He was eager to please; he blushed whenever anyone said anything to him; he gravely said "You're welcome" to every little routine thankyou that came his way; he was never the one to break off an exchange or conversation. He was anxious for business and never turned anyone away. Thus it came to pass that one day he found himself with a very unpleasant divorce case. Now it is generally thought that in this country we have only one grounds for divorce--adultery--but there are a couple of others which have to do with "unnatural" sexual behavior. This case involved a young farm wife who wondered why her husband was so long at the barn. She went out to see, and discovered him betraying her with a cow. He was hanging by his hands from a rafter. Wowee. I don't know how divorce cases are handled before the court, but I've imagined, with a touch of schadenfreude perhaps, that this poor blushing boy, after suffering through the details from the distraught wife, and dictating same to his steno (not me!--I stumbled on this while doing the filing), then had to read all this stuff aloud from the divorce petition for the edification of the court.

He survived to fight another day, however. Soon he was off to police court with some sordid matter. We asked him on his return how he'd made out and he said, "Justice has triumphed and I'm going to appeal."

#### SCHNAPPS (Spear)

Thank you for the little mailing comment to Jenny, which she enjoyed.

Oh all right, mea culpa, I confused my tenses. I originally drafted that piece in the past tense, but when I copied it onto stencil it occurred to me that it would be more "immediate" to transpose it into the present tense. I goofed a few verbs, caught some of them with corflu and let a few get by just to make you happy. Let me know my score this issue, won't you?

I don't remember the Breen article you mention but your DEMOCRACY IS NOT SO DUMB (tho the title makes me cringe) was good, sensible, worthwhile...in short, I agree with it.

Yes, I can see how unemployment stabilizes prices, the way famine stabilizes population. But surely there are better ways. (You coolly refrained from endorsing or condemning unemployment as a means of stabilizing prices.)



Now Jack in your hundreds of years of reading fanzines surely you've now and again come across a boy pinup or two. How about those pictures of naked men stretching skyward (standing on their tipsytosies so's their ankles would look thinner) and holding up ziggyzaggies or rocketships at arm's length. Or all those men in the provocative skintight spacesuits, mit boots and all. That's old stuff. What fanzinessreally need now is pinups of....well forget it. (I was just going to say "turtles and horsies".)

If FIRE WARDENS OF OUTER SPACE (as Boyd once saw it listed) isn't, god help us, the worst sf film in the world, I'll have confirmation soon. To fill up summer air time when no one but me is watching, a local station is putting on SF Theatre, which is going to show a number of the worst sf films. To get the series to last all summer would use up all the halfway decent films quickly, but it's not likely they have any of that kind at all. (Who says we don't have good films on Canadian tv anyway?) The first one is to be about a criminal with a radioactive brain. The second is about a man being attacked by giant crabs. Yes. Well and that is to be followed by TEENAGERS FROM OUTER SPACE.

#### KARUNA (Ellerns)

Bill: How now sirrah. I've read the odd issue, so to speak, of F&SF and it has been crud for a long long time, even when White was doing jazz criticism & had no part of it. Even if White were solely responsible, what's with your unrestrained frothing? Somehow it sounds as if it must be something more personal and closer to your heart than the fate of F&SF.

Jayne: I'm interested in ~~food/faddism~~ nutrition. I seldom get colds or other infections, I cope with a ten-room house (quiet Boyd), a garden, two small children, a half-day job, and I nursed my babies, but, I admit, I do get a bit tired now and then.

I'm not really being sarcastic. I do try to pay some attention to nutrition--like making whole-grain porridges or muffins for breakfast instead of eating cornflakes, and so on.

(As an aside--the results you mention as showing up in test animals sound like what you might expect if the irradiated food were radioactive itself. If it were irradiated I can see how its nutritive value might be partly destroyed, but unless it were left with radiation of its own it shouldn't cause that sort of damage. On the other hand--and I don't know anything about biochemistry--possibly the irradiated food has damaged basic units--amino acids or whatever, which it would be broken down to but not beyond in digestion--which would be incorporated into the animal eating the food. By gar, I think I'll write our F&D department.)

I'm wondering where you get all the information on milk. It sounds authoritative, but before I begin worrying I'd like to know about the sources and the credentials of the sources. But assuming your information is right on this one point, that the fat in the milk is required for efficient assimilation of calcium:- My kids get powdered skim milk because of the great difference in price between it and bottled milk, but they get butter as well, separately. Does that make up for the lack of cream?



VANDY (Coulsons)

If Bruce is already sounding out words from phonetics, he should be reading very soon (taking into account summer diversions).

In the past few years I've read in various places that children should be taught to read between the ages of 3 and 5. Children of this age are learning a great deal about their society and environment through spoken language and are capable of learning even more through written language. This is the age when they are most eager to learn and are wide open to whatever is offered them. By the time they're six, most of their personality traits are set. It is better to encourage their natural interest in learning at 4, when it may then last a lifetime, than discourage it at 4 and try to instill it at 6 when a lot of children have already passed that first early receptiveness.

Well, this stuff impressed me. However, I didn't know how to go about teaching Jenny. It turned out that all I needed to do was coach a little bit from the sidelines. During her second winter she whiled away the snowy days looking at magazines and catalogues, asking the names of various things, including letters. It seemed as reasonable to tell her the names of T-shapes as of giraffe-shapes. During her third winter, between reluctant forays into the blizzards, she did a lot of drawing, as much of letters as of other things--letters after all are easy. During her fourth winter she kept occupied for several months with toys, Laurie, drawing, painting, pasting, cutting out, etc., but in the doldrums of January she was clearly bored. She demanded to be read to a lot, and after I extricated myself she would sit around peering at her books and reciting word-for-word the stories she knew by heart. It seemed the right time to let her in on the secret of phonetics. I told her what a couple of letters sounded like and how they fitted together into words. The information seemed to annoy her and I stopped. At the time the way she reacted seemed to indicate that she wasn't ready to learn yet, but I know better now. Since then I've noticed frequently that when I tell her something that requires an effort on her part to assimilate and use, she shouts NO! and tells me she doesn't want to hear any more about it. In a day or two when she's had time to absorb and adjust, she'll spout back at me whatever it was, in good humor. So with phonetics. A day or two later she asked me about a few more letters, and began slowly to sound words out but so disjointedly that she couldn't hear the word in the sounds. Pih. Ih. Guh. A few days later it came out piiiuhhhghuuuhhhh. And then, suddenly, with a jump, she was reading everything. It was embarrassing for a while in the grocery. She would creep along the aisles, gazing at the cans, and then suddenly shriek, "PEAS! BEANS! CORN!" and laugh uproariously. This was about six weeks after I broached the subject of phonetics to her.

At first I worried about the vagaries of English spelling. I wondered about investigating some of the elaborate ways of learning to read, with colors and substitute alphabets. I worried that her poor little child-mind would get confused. True, Jenny would be puzzled by "shoe" or "night" but on my say-so she would swallow them whole--resisting at first, perhaps. She welcomed all the rules, unreliable though they proved to be. She made her own observations, which she would offer up as conversation. Walking with me to the corner for the mail, she would say brightly, "e and ee and i and ie and ey and ea and sometimes y all sound like ä," and give a little skip. Conscientiously she avoided pronouncing "gh"s and when I explained that "spaghetti" was an Italian word and it was all right to pronounce the "gh", she adopted the little maverick as a special pet.



That stage is behind her now. She doesn't talk about rules or the various ways "o" is spelled and what not. She tackles strange words with assurance, having, it seems, absorbed not only those inconsistent rules but the more reliable general feel of the spelling system, which does have a certain cohesion even if it can't be too neatly pinned down by definite rules. Our mutual problem now is the meaning of the words she reads.

Next year in kindergarten she'll be taking "Pre-printing" and "Pre-reading".

Jenny reads her own Humpty-Dumpties now. I too got a couple of Jack and Jills and found them beyond her at 4 though she might enjoy some of the simpler stories in them now. (In each of the 3 issues of J&J I looked at there was a sympathetic story about a 'Mexican'. Perhaps this is for southwestern audiences and 'Mexican' is really meant. Maybe it's for New Yorkers and refers to Puerto-Ricans who are of low-caste at the moment and it's probably not polite to use the term P-R. It is no doubt significant and reprehensible that neither HD nor J&J ever has a story about the largest and most disturbing American minority, the

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STORIES

BY JENNY CLARKE

#### THE DUCK AND THE LION

one day a duck flew along the field when a loud voice sound abov him he wnet to see how it was when he came ther he saw a lion in the jungl. the lion ate the duck found a drink of water so he drank it and went back to sleep.

#### THE TOURIST AND THE HEN

one day a hungry tourist found a little bit of winer so he ate it all then he walked away. soon a hen and her little chickens came in the woods then they pecked at the ground to find worms for they'er breakfitas. then they went away to they'er nest and ate them all and they were happy for the rest of they'er lives.

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I didn't make any spelling corrections. She wrote another complete story, about THE GEESE AND THE JIRAF but I seem to have misplaced it. She started a few others, including one called THE X AND THE Y and a rather racy one entitled THE POORSIE AND THE BUM.

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The following reprint is from a mellowier period of fapa. Remember the nice, relatively tasteful, disputes we indulged in back then? Waiting list indeed. We don't have to worry about it now because we can just pare it down to size by eliminating all the truly undesirables. Then we can start on the membership. We can throw out all the grotchers and botchers, neurotics and psychotics, dumbheads, sex-fiends, hermits, bachelors, livers-in-sin, rich bastards, embezzling paupers, squares and hippies, pome-writers, indexers, foreigners, pros, wobbhies, socialists, Brichers, beards, folkniks, bores, slobs, deadwood, smart-asses, know-it-alls and know-nothings, suers and suees, punk-kids, middle-agers (those over 40 ahaha), punsters, pundits, drunks, dope-takers (I'm choosing these at random from the roster). Throw these all out, I say, and who do you have left? Not even me.



ANKUS (Pelz) . . .

This isn't it. Next  
item is. Sorry- Paul.

I have this magic gold-plated corn-cob.

Who am I? Well, I'm Jim and that's Greg. Or maybe it's the other way around. Anyway, we're 16-year-old twin brothers, and it's up to us to save the world.

First off I should explain that we're not men as you might have thought. No, actually we're Hoogs (not to be confused with Geeks). In our nether-nether world there are a few men around but most people are Hoogs or Yobbers or Poos or, most horrible of all, Faans. Once upon a time most Faans lived in Faandom and didn't bother us peaceful people (or whatever) here in the peaceful realms of Mundania. But lately Faans have been leaking out of Faandom and there have been queer noises and blow-ups over yonder in Faandom, and horrid agents of Faandom have been infiltrating the surrounding lands. These feäl Faans may live normal day-lives but at night in their loathesome caves they perform strange and dreadful rituals and then emerge, dripping some foul black substance, and scuttle about infecting the postal system. When they can, they pass the bhug on to innocent Hoogs or Yobbers and make Faans of them. You can recognize a Faan in the daytime by the dread sign of the Black Crescent under his fingernails.

Now long, long ago when he was a young man our Grandfather Tuck ventured away from peaceful Mundania to dally among the sexpots of Faandom. When he returned home he had lots of loot...treasure, including this gold-plated corn-cob. It had some strange power over him and he was reluctant to give it up; nevertheless the time came when he felt it was time to pass it on to us. "Here Jim or Greg," he said, but he still clutched it tightly in his rheumatic old hand. I wrenched it from him and said, "Fear not, Grandfather Tuck, we will carry on the torch. First Faandom is not dead, but we'll have a try at it." Immediately I began to feel the corn-cob's strange power myself. Every time a trolley car went by I had the strangest urge to thrust it into my left ear.

Then Grandfather Tuck told us what we must do with the magic gold-plated corn-cob. We must carry it ourselves over the frightful, not to mention fell, borders of Faandom and destroy the corn-cob and its ghastly power in the Gigantic Corn Roast in the city of Yelekreb deep in the heart of Faandom. If the corn-cob should fall into the hands of the dreadful ruler of Faandom, the Secret Master, he would use it to take over the world and gruesome fanac would spread over all our peaceful lands, like a gigantic pool of mimeo ink oozing across the sky, blotting out the sunshine of freedom. Our happy people would be torn from their Mundane pursuits and be chained in dungeons and set to cranking the strange and evil machines of the Faans. The green fields would wither beneath mountains of crud-sheets. Rivers would turn Black and Purple, and Fawning Acolytes would spring up like plagues of locusts.

The Journey (note shift into a different tense)

We passed through many strange places and had many strange adventures. Throughout the frightening journey we kept up our spirits as best we could by jesting with each other. For instance, one day I ~~flaked~~ flaked out under a tree, exhausted, with the corn-cob tucked into my jerkin, when Greg (or Jim) hollered into my ear, "ADELANTAL!" and I leaped to my feet and went charging down the hill. "Ho, ho, and adelandeyo too," Greg (or Jim) said as I ground to a halt. "Alar," I muttered. "It's time we were moving on," said Jim (or Greg), "enough sleeping already." We strode off together, he in his black suit with the snorkle, and I in my jewel-barnacled boots and my white leather jacket. We were fine specimens of Mundane men...Hoogs.



We came to this mountain which we couldn't manage to climb. So we decided to go through a tunnel under the mountain instead. There was this pool and some nasty slimy business of a green tentacle that would have got us had we not finally thought up the open-sesame to the tunnel door. We had tried shouting various things at it to no avail, until Jim (or Grey) finally shouted, "Let's swing baby," and the doors opened wide and we flung ourselves inside. Just in time. That tentacle had almost got it and that wouldn't do.

"I don't dig it in here," I said to Greg (or Jim).

"Easy, bredillu," he said. "We are not only brothers but bredin. We'll pullthrough benz."

It was a ghastly journey, simply ghastly. It was long, long, slow, slow, through the utter darkness, the utter silence. Then things speeded up. We were suddenly out of the most constricted part and in a roomier cavern, and we heard DUM DUM DUM, drums beating, louder and louder, faster and faster, and there were things chasing us, and there was fire and rivers of blood and...then we were outside. But it was the same old world. Full of hobgoblins.

On and on we went on our endless journey. But we were determined to reach Yelekreb if we had to wade the Hali and climb the Hyades. At all times we kept our weapons to hand. And by weapons I don't mean courvees, either. We plowed through many icky swamps; most of them nameless, from which came strange cries for many years but which were suddenly cut off due to some mysterious and awful event yonder in Faandom, and the silence hung heavy over us. One of the swamps we passed was notable for its astonishing even edges. This was the mighty Redd Bogg. As we made our way through all this swampy territory, we noticed now and again what seemed to be big logs of deadwood floating in the stagnant water or lodged on the sholls. To our amazement these chunks of deadwood occasionally blinked an eye as we passed.

Finally we made it out of the swamps and onto a road. Immediately a leronis in a capeton went riding by in a cariole. We ducked into the ditch. Wouldn't you? But we were happy to be out of the swamps and began horsing around. "Come on chiyu, com'ii, old pal-and-brother, let's swill down some Elzirian and then find an Evanda or even an emmasca or whatever we can dig up." "By the compact, we'd better have some jaco instead of Elzirian, or even some fiti. Travelling to Yelekreb is a jou sombredi." "It's no jouette, that's for sure." "But come, let's take a break. Let's fish up some reis and find us a rosel who'll pely a rryl for usk in the sdereune, and she'll be wearing a reyroca capeton and have a neifieri in her hair." "We've no time for that nonsense. Lazy oaf. We must move on." "Son of Kadarin," muttered whoever's turn it is, with old Kifirgh scars glowing in his face, "Kihu." "Kirihiu—wet behind the ears. Do you think this whole thing is an elaborate joke?" "Sandal-wearer, you don't even know what to do with a rosel." "Ah, give me some sdereune, and I can make with the gre'thu as good as anyone." "Bah, shallen-drinker." "You're a skiri-i-kihu, I suppose." "Geshundeit." "Su serve." But we didn't really mean all that; of course. We were brothers after all, and since we couldn't tell each other apart we couldn't afford to really quarrel.

On we went. Behind us now was the swamp, the Redd Bogg with the furry black creatures scuttling around in it, but ahead lay the lair of Jack the Spear, a fearsome creature, with a fearsome Spear. He proved however to be less dangerous than he looked, for he spent his time wielding his mighty spear on nits.



On we went. We passed the cave wheredwelt, or so legend has it, the Burning Ray Boy, who long ago when the world was young used to ride forth in a leather tunic, with keys dangling from his belt, crying, fearsomely, "A Bas!", and slicing off fuggy heads from grisly shoulders with his great sword, which was named Derogation. Legend has it that some day the Burning Ray Boy will scourge the country once more with his cry of A Bas. But he didn't stir that day.

We passed the Buzz-bee, who were drinking from lotus-blossoms and listening to beetle-songs, on an island in the middle of the Goldwater stream.

For a time we tarried and listened to Ray, the Ballad-singer, a sturdy peasant type (built like a trailman).

And after many more equally hideous encounters, we came to the outskirts of the fell city of Yelekreb and we could already feel the heat from the Great Corn Roast. It was there that I saw it. On Jim's hands. (Or Greg's hands) The dreaded sign of the Black Crescent. My own brother. I tried to conceal the fact that I'd discovered his allegiance to Faandom but alas he noticed me faint. When I came to he was smiling evially. "Yes, Jim, or Greg," he said. "You, and not the Golden Corncob, were to go into the inferno. I am going to keep the Golden Corncob and with it I shall depose the Secret Master and become the new Secret Master. Ahahaha."

I leaped away and drew my mighty and fearsome weapon. He drew his also. There we were, brother against brother, as even a match as you could find, in skill, in weight, in experience. But I had to win, or the world would be lost.

He swung and caught me on the right ear. It rang. I swung and caught him on the left ear. "Aargh," he hissed. He swung and nicked my eye. I swung and nicked his eye. He swung WUMP and caught me square on the nose. Blood splattered on my plastic apron. I swung and smashed his nose. He dripped and tried to staunch the flow with his leather handkerchief. He got me a couple of good ones across the arms and they began to go numb, and I felt my weapon begin to sláp out out of my grip. I leaped forward to try to keep it and he began beating my head and shoulders unmercifully. I felt darkness begin to close in on me. The journey had been long and hard and I was so tired... Then I realized that this was the evial influence of the magic corn-cob. Some instinct made me reach for it and pull it out of its nestling place. As Jim (or Greg) spotted it, he momentarily forgot our vicious combat and grabbed for it, his little eyes glinting with lust. I seized the opportunity and rained blow after blow on him. He, the dirty dog, the mad dog, let me have one in the groin. That made me mad. There I was doubled over and groaning, and he was screaming foul faanish words at me. "FIANOLI MULTI-APAN! EGOBOO!" I couldn't bear to think that this dreadful faanishness would blot out the world I loved. With super-hoogan effort I rose and beat at him, screaming good clean Mundane words: "STAMP-COLLECTING! BIRD-WATCHING! GIRLS!" He returned blow for blow shrieking even more foul and ghastly words: "FEMEFANS! CLOSED-DOOR PARTIES! QUEEBSHOTS!" I answered his obscenities with a clear courageous call of "SQUARE DANCING! TELEVISION! GAFIA!" That last word threw him a bit. I immediately moved in and hit a tremendous blow. His counterblow hardly touched me but his weapon burst and a great cloud of feathers rose around us and then settled on the bloody scene like sweetly concealing snow. My weapon in its trusty case of double-ply blue ticking was still intact.

I grabbed the Golden Corncob and flang it into the great fire. There was a tremendous explosion and then a widespread rain of manna, gold-flecked popcorn, fell all over all the surrounding lands, and Free Peoples everywhere knew their Way of Life had been preserved.

(I wouldn't want to influence the Angelenos into turning in their swords for hoogan weapons. There aren't many interesting things to be done with them. Broadaxes sound fine though.)



the problem of the  
**WAITING LIST**

You fapans are a copeless bunch--sitting around chattering about how to take care of the Waiting List, and some of you make feeble suggestions, not carefully thought out. Like Harry Warner, for instance. Highly impractical and unworkable, Harry. It is time someone came along and made daring, revolutionary suggestions. Suggestions that are practical, satisfactory to everyone, and, above all, ORIGINAL. Here are my ideas--

Revolutionary suggestion No. 1

Fapa and the Waiting List would be joined into one organization. The members would be divided evenly so that we had two halves of equal size (this may come about naturally, however, if we wait a little longer, since the List is almost equal to the Membership already). Then one portion would be the fapa for one mailing and the other portion for the next mailing, and so on, alternating through the years. Of course, if another List starts up, fapa could be divided into three portions, or four, or as many as required.

Revolutionary suggestion No. 2

Fapa and the Waiting List would be joined into one organization. Now Fapa Membership is listed from 1 to 65. Under this proposal, Waiting Lister No. 1 would become No. 66, and Lister No. 2 would become Member No. 67, etc. Then, for the first mailing under this setup, the first 65 members (the "original fapa") would constitute the membership for that mailing. Then, for the second mailing, No. 1 on the List (and successors) would reside in the bottom position, and No. 66 brought in, and so on and on. No. 1 on the List (and successors) would then have to wait only 45 mailings to get back in, which is a matter of only eleven years. However, if some spoilsports object to waiting eleven years to

get back in, we could go by fives instead of by ones. That would reduce the interval between being kicked out and being readmitted to only a little over two years.

Revolutionary suggestion No. 3

Fapa and the Waiting List would be joined into one organization. However, since the postage costs for a Membership of over 100 would break the treasury, what we would do is require one only of each person's fanzine to be sent to the official editor, who would then make up one bundle, which he would then send to the first person on the list. The said first person would read it and then send it on to the second, at his own expense (which would cost him only slightly more than he'd pay under the present system to send his 68 copies to the OE). And so on. If mailings were half-yearly instead of quarterly, and each member were allowed to keep the bundle only 24 hours, then there would be plenty of time for the bundle to make the complete rounds, and there would still be a month or so left over for the last recipient to do his comments for the next mailing. This suggestion, if adopted, would be rather hard on completists, but the more frenetic could photostat the bundle as it goes by. Of course, fapa could be divided into a number of groups--say 12--each of which would have its own bundle to distribute amongst its members, which system might be somewhat more practical than the unadulterated proposal.

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You know, if I keep throwing off brilliant ideas like this, I almost owe it to the organization to run for dictator, in which office I might get an opportunity to put some of them into practice. I bet I could mold this outfit into a really lively little group.

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- Georgina Ellis



# OUT OF MY LIFE AND MIND

## Where There's A Will, There's A Co4

It was neither a change of house nor a PO whim that was the reason for our latest change of address (from 223 to 9 Bancroft). When it was decided to institute mail delivery in Aylmer, residents were advised to let Starspinkle know that the PO box numbers would soon be replaced by street addresses; no sooner said than a few weeks later done. And no sooner was that done, than good old Town Hall chuckled fiendishly and said, "Ha! Ha! Let's make trouble for Norm Clarke (he's the fellow who gets all that peculiar mail); let's change the house numbers on Bancroft St." "So let it be written; so let it be done," shrieked the Village Elders, clutching their guts and rolling on the floor.

So that's what happened to our mailing address; from Box 911 to 223 Bancroft to 9 Bancroft in the space of a couple of weeks. There were some interesting results: I got no mail for the first two days after mail delivery was begun; on the third day, I got a pile of letters and magazines (Void, Fanac and the like) that were meant for a family living at the other end of Bancroft St. I began to fidget. I spoke with Boyd Raeburn on the phone, and he told me he'd mailed me a letter three days before; ordinarily, it takes one day for a letter to arrive here from Toronto; so the next day I went to the Post Office and said, politely, "I don't seem to be getting my god damn mail." "Something probably causes it," the friendly postal employees soothed. Reassured, I went home and back to my 24-hour vigil.

Meanwhile, the May FAP4 mailing hadn't arrived, either -- almost a month after the mailing date. Saturday afternoon, after the "mail" had been delivered (a Statement from the Columbia Record Club), I sauntered apoplectically up to the Post Office once again. "Mail," I croaked, "somehow I still don't seem to be getting my m.f. mail." "Hush; I will look for your silly old mail, Mr. Stark," said a kindly little old lady, "Maybe it is one of these here now piles in the back." She disappeared into the gloom, and there were scrabbling sounds for a while.

"Here," she said, a little later, coming back with an envelope, "I found it." It was a doctor's bill. I coughed a racking cough. "That's very nice," I said, but this isn't exactly what I was faunching for." "Qu'est-ce-que-c'est -- funtch?" she asked. "Oh, creeb," I remarked, "Grotch. Shiffuh. Would you look again? There's this very important letter from Willowdale I'm expecting, full of political documents and Atomic Secrets, and there should be a heap of Educational Material from California ...." She scuttled away once more, and returned a scant quarter-hour later, bearing a one-page letter from Steve Stiles. I've never been so happy to receive a fan-nish letter in my life; I ran home, waving the envelope, and burst into the house, yelling, "Look, Gina, look! Mail! Faanish mail!"

"Look what was just delivered, by parcel post," said Gina, sitting in, and on, a pile of FAPazines.

oOo

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"Once upon a time, whenever a dozen fans got together, they started a club. Now they form a jury."  
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---RB



## A Sense Of Egoboo, or, A Daughter Of Two Fans

It certainly was a wonderful thing to see. When I came into the house on that Saturday afternoon when the mailing finally arrived, Gina waved the FA, containing the Egoboo Poll results, at me. "Look at the Best Artist category," she shrieked. "Why the hell should I?" I enquired, reasonably, "I'm sure My Name will not be listed there -- unless someone was fool enough to vote for something I did in Apa X, or Apex, or Whatever Happened To." "Oh yeah? What about the five points for Potsherds In Gaza? But that is beside the point; read that Artist category anyway, you ego-maniacal clod." "Just a minute," I said, "I want to find out ... gee, I came behind Terry Carr in the 'Fiction and Poetry' listing; that's funny -- I wonder whether either of us published any fiction or poetry last year?" "Look at that god damned Best Artist section, you Self-Centred Sonofabitch," said my wife. "Oh, okay, shiffuh," I sighed, "So? Bjo cops it? So what else is new?" "Aw, ya stoopid bestid," cried my helpmeet, lapsing into that coarse prairie dialect which no amount of schooling and Berlitz courses have been able to pygmalionize (especially in moments of stress and excitability, which are frequent), "Look down the list." I did so, muttering, "Rotsler, yeah ... J Coulson, mm-hm ... yeah, uh-huh ... (Jenny Clarke) ... (Jenny Clarke)? Ha. That's a kind of familiar name; she's a daughter of ours or something, isn't she?"

At this point, Jenny entered the living-room (where we do some of our Riotous Living). "Hey Jenny," I said, not unkindly, "C'mere, kid. Hahahaha. I got more points than you in the Egoboo Poll." She started to cry loudly. She always does that when I speak to her, though; I don't think she meant anything by it. "Now see what you've done, you beast," said Gina, as usual. "Shut up, Jenny," I explained, "Look at this -- what we call -- 'fanzine'." "Shiffuh," she said, and I glanced around to make sure that Gary Deindorfer was nowhere in sight, which he sure seems to be, lately. "Looka here, though, Jenny," I continued, "You can read, so show off for the benefit of Redd Boggs, who will be reading the article I am planning to write about this Historic Moment (( This very one -- Ed. ))" Laboriously, Jenny screwed up her face and her Image. "J-e-n-n-y C-l-a-r-k-e," she sounded out, phonetically or something, and took a bow. "You bet your ass, Jenny," I said proudly, and that Mention Of Your Name means that you have won a place in the Egoboo Poll, and you know what that means?" She shook her head innocently. "Well, it means that a whole bunch of people, like Boyd Raeburn and Miri&Jerry, who live away far away in the States and places, think your pictures are Real Real Good." Her mouth gaped open, and she stood immobile in imbecilic childlike incomprehension for all of three seconds. Then she whizzed away to her chest of drawers, from which she pulled out her Giant Economy Writing Tablet and a pen. She spent the rest of the day feverishly churning out drawings of bugs and "things."

We're anxiously awaiting her first Feud.

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mouth -to-mouth regurgitation  
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## Summer Is Over

Tomorrow (as I write) is the first of August, and summer begins to end. It begins to end for me, that is, even though it's likely that the weather will be warm and bright and the days long and languid for weeks and weeks yet -- well on into October, with any luck. But, to me, the first day of August is the day when something goes "snap" and suddenly, all around, signs of approaching winter are



everywhere. Just like that, it seems, there is more brown in the lawns and fields than green; suddenly, there are leaves dropping from the trees -- oh, not many of them; but they're falling steadily. And on even the hottest August afternoon, a chilly gust of wind will make your shoulders hunch up, if only just for a moment: just enough to let you know that it's there, and that it will be there more and more often, in the coming weeks.

The children won't be using the wading pool in the back yard, now, as much as they did a week or two ago. The vegetables in the garden -- potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers -- will be ripening, but there'll not be so many flowers from now on. The picnic days are over; not because the weather is any the less suitable for picnicking, but just because there is no longer the lush green lure of the countryside to entice you into putting up with the anty inconvenience of sitting on ill-contoured ground to eat a mushy sandwich rather than stay home with a steak and an easy chair. The enthusiasms of spring and early summer are gone, replaced by lethargy and a dull resignation. Winter is on its way again, no matter what the instruments say.

I don't know whether I have always felt this way about the first of August, and about the ending of summer. I suppose not. In fact, I think I was about equally pleased by all seasons, as a child. The infinite variety of days was much more apparent then than it is now; the first snow was just as wonderful a thing as the first robin, and kicking up piles of raked leaves was as great fun as sailing matchsticks in the gurgling March gutters. That, of course, was when I was very young; later, I felt the end of summer when I realized that it was Back To School in a week or two; the Central Canada Exhibition, coming in the last week of August, was at once the bright, giddy climax of summer, and its knell. After the carousels and ferris-wheels, we knew, it was back to the vilanelles and florence flasks.

When I was a child and it was April, I thought of the long, long summer that was about to begin -- how it would stretch out, go on and on; and so it did, until suddenly it was over. When I was a young man -- a teenager, I mean -- I was rather more realistic: I counted the weeks and months that would be full of warmth and sunshine and freedom; but I knew that autumn would arrive at precisely the end of those calculated days. And now it is the first of August; it is August, and summer begins to end; and by my very awareness that summer is beginning to end, summer is over. Well, it's been a lovely summer, and I hope the autumn will be fine. About all I can hope for winter is that it will be brief.

-----oOo-----

"I want a butter sandwich." "What is a butter sandwich?" "Yellow."

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### Real Soon Now

Two lessons I have learned, out of all the many I should have, about myself: (1) In order to achieve best results in anything I plan, I must act immediately, almost on the spur of the moment; and (2) I am a master of the art of procrastination. You can see that there is a conflict of sorts there. Anyway, the Law in effect around here seems to be "anything not done right away is probably not worth doing"; or maybe "anything not done right away will probably not get done."

For instance, there's the FAPazine I was planning to have in the 100th mailing; it's beginning to seem as though I'm never going to get it finished. Almost one hundred pages of mailing comments, and there they lie -- dust-covered, coffee-stained, unread. Of course, that's about what they'd be doing now if I had published them; but it would have been an accomplishment. Now those piles of unpublished mailing



comments serve only to remind me, bitterly, of the months of futile effort I spent on them. And I should have known my efforts were futile; I should have known then, as I began my fiftieth page and my second month of work, that in order to have anything in the 100th mailing, the best thing would be to sit at the typer two weeks before the deadline, gulp down four beers in quick succession, and write three or four terrific articles, much like this one. But, instead, look what happened: I set myself a Goal, and worked toward it (well, off and on), and not only did I not publish those mc's in the 100th mailing, but there was no Descant there at all. I'm saving those mailing comments I wrote, though; you never know when you'll find a use for things like that.

And here's another example: if you (say) sent me a fanzine more than three weeks ago and haven't yet received a letter of comment from me, you might as well forget about it. It's not that I despised your fanzine (or maybe I did -- what did you say it was called, again?), or that I was too busy to write (I'm busy? It is to laugh hysterically). In fact, I have probably started two or three letters to you, a week or so after receiving your fanzine; the trouble is that I should always write LoCs the minute I finish reading a fanzine, or else I'm liable to wander around for three or four days, thinking of interesting and clever things to say about it; and then, when it comes time to actually sit down and write that letter, I am so bored with all the many, many interesting and clever things I have thought of to say that, if I write at all, it is a postcard: "Dear Marland: Got your fmz, Enovid. The Editorial (by you) was very ~~xxxx~~ well-done. I liked it. The short article about spaceships ~~xxx~~ amused me a good deal. Your artwork was ~~xxx~~ drawn well, I thought, although I don't know anything about Art. Ahahaha. ++ This is the only funny line I can come up with, by this time.++ Well, glad you sent this, Marl. I'll try to have some more constructive criticism next time. I've been sick and ..."

On the other hand, when I sit down immediately after reading a fanzine and dash off a letter -- well, it's just the funniest, most sparkling and perceptive thing you'd ever want to see, in case you haven't already (I know somebody has; damn, I wish I could remember who I sent it to; he never replied, I remember that.)

Well, I guess I'll finish writing this article tomorrow.

oOo

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"... The bit was for Peggy and I ++ Eney++ to go up to (Ellik), the moment he came in, with our arms around each other and greet him with: 'Ron, we've got a little announcement for FANAC ...' I tried to get Bob Pavlat to replace me but she still wouldn't hear of it."

-- Axe 12, Sept. 17, 1961

"WEDDING BELLS. Bob Pavlat and Peggy Rae McKnight were wed in Hyattsville, Md.; on 20 June ..."

-- ~~FANAC~~ Starspinkle 41, July 2, 64

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### Rumpcon Report

Seeing that this Descant is going to be postmailed, as bleeding usual, I decided that I'd have time to write a convention report, or "Rumpcon Report" (see above title). This here, then here, is that very same report. That I decided I'd have time to write. Possibly you haven't got time, though, to read it. Screw; who needs you? (Aw, go on and read it, Buck.)



Gina sent out the invitations a few days before Labor Day weekend. She wrote something like this:

In honor of Walter Donaho, we are holding a Ramp Con, in Aylmer, on Labor Day. There will be a panel discussion, featuring Bill Morse, Paul Wyszowski, and Norm "W.L." Clarke; the subject will be "The Role of the Imbecile in Science Fiction Fandom." Questions will be asked, from the floor, by Maria Morse, Bunia Wyszowski, and Gina "Georgina" Clarke. These questions will be along lines like, "When are we going home?" "Don't you think you've had enough to drink?" and "What time is it?" RSVP, you fools you.

We got replies to the invitations right away. All Ottawa Fandom responded immediately with faaanish enthusiasm: "I guess maybe we might possibly be able to make it, perhaps," said all Ottawa Fandom, with faaanish enthusiasm. So, Monday afternoon (Labor Day, here in Quebec), there arrived, in ~~separate~~ separate cars, the entire fannish contingent of the Ottawa area (plus one Anti-Fan, Bunia W; she insisted I make that clear, in this report). It was a fantisting sight to see: close your eyes and just try to imagine a sight like All Ottawa Fandom gathered together in one motorecade. Why, I bet you can't! A sight such as this had never been beheld by our neighbours -- oh, they're used to Raeburn by now, of course: "I see your friend with the crocodile was visiting you again this weekend," they say, "Come for another Queebcon, has he? He certainly has a Toronto accent, bah goom." However, when this bunch showed up, several of our neighbours put up FOR SALE signs on their houses, and sniffed at us. "We don't want no goddam fakefans coming around here and lowering Property Values," one of them said -- a fellow wearing a DIZZY GILLESPIE FOR VICE-PRESIDENT button (I remember it well, for, when I bent incredulously to examine it more closely, I got a shot of seltzer in the eye. Incidentally, vote for Diz for V-P; for, as he said, "If I am elected vice-president, nobody will dare assassinate the president." He's ~~right~~ correct, folks!)

Well, anyway, that is neither here nor there nor anyplace else that I'm aware of (of course, B--- R----- would tell you that there are mighty few things that I am aware of: "You are not Aware," is what he usually tells me; I'm aware of that.). What you are dying to hear about (hey, Buck?) is what went on at this tremendous Ramp Con, here in Aylmer E., Que., right? Isn't that what you are dying to hear about? Honest to god, you FFPans are easily amused.

Well, I hate to say this, but the truth is that nothing of the slightest interest to anyone happened here, at our terrific Ramp Con. First we had a few drinks, and then everyone decided they'd had enough to drink, except me. Some time later, All Ottawa Fandom said goodbye and left Aylmer in an orderly cortege. At least, that's what I'm told.

oOo

-- njc

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And that brings us to the end of Descant the Dirty Dozenth (subtitled, now that I think of it, THE MAGAZINE OF FRIPPERIES, LYING, CRAFT, AND PILLORIES); and don't think it hasn't been just as much a chore for us to write as it has been for you to read. Queebshots are much easier, and lots more fun. Caveat Fugghhead.

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seemed to protrude when he spoke. He had a long nose, and I noticed that he needed a handkerchief very badly at the moment.

"Brrrip."

He didn't need a handkerchief any longer. His mouth stretched from ear to ear, and at each ear there should have been a sign saying "continued." As for the ears themselves, well, they flopped. He was dressed in a little suit consisting of a waist length tunic and knee breeches, below which were patched stockings, even the patches were patched, and then a pair of oversize boots. And the whole works was filthy.

Deciding that I wasn't a very pretty picture myself, with my mouth hanging open, and that this was actually happening to me, I might as well make the best of it.

"If it wouldn't be asking too much," I questioned, "Would you mind telling me who you are, where you're from and what you're doing here?"

He looked at me for a moment, wiped his nose with the back of his hand and answered me with his aggravating, rasping voice.

"Why, I'm your spirit of science fiction, I'm one of the little people. Therefore, being one of the little people, it just follows that I'm from the world of the little people. And as for what I'm doing here, well, I just decided to drop in and meet the guy personally that I control."

Having heard that there was a spot of Irish in my ancestry somewhere, it did not seem too incredible that he was from the land of the little people. But the part about controlling me....

"Oh look now, what do you mean control me? Don't you know this is a democracy? You can't control me, human rights and all that stuff."

"Nevertheless it is true," he cackled. "You see, it's like this, for every science fiction fan, author and artist even scientists--oh the whole damn works right from the ditch-digger to the king--there is one of the little people who controls them. We control everything everybody does, all their actions. I dislike very much being called a liar, even by my human counterpart, so if you don't believe me I can prove it to you."

"So prove it." I felt now that I might as well go all the way with the game.

He beckoned me, and jumped off the typewriter. He strode across the desk to the wall where he opened a little door that I couldn't remember ever being there before. He beckoned to me again and I walked around the desk, and put my eye up to the opening and peeked through. The next thing I was aware of was a blinding white light, and then I was standing beside the little fellow, and lo and behold, I was no bigger than he. I looked back, but instead of the doorway all that I



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