

Michael's editorial alarm, in #7, with regard to the tendency of my dispute with the FOCAL POINT crowd to degenerate into an exchange of gratuitous insults and personal attacks is justified, and his decision not to permit this in ENERGIUM's pages seems eminently reasonable. Really, folks, I have a basically sunny disposition (as either of my friends will happily tell you), and prefer friendly chatter to shrill argument any day of the week. But the same distaste for excessive cliqueishness and wrong headedness which forced me to speak out in the first place compels me to respond to subsequent remarks, notably some of those in Ted White's letter in #7. I think that, at least in regard to Ted, I can guarantee to obey Michael's ground rules for the discussion. Ted White is my oldest friend in fandom--he literally gave me my first can of mimeo ink lo! these many years ago--and I'm not about to gratuitously insult or personally attack him.

However, there are several points in his letter that ought to be cleared up.

First of all, I'd be curious to know how Ted manages to arrive at the conclusion that my original statements were principally an attack on John D. Berry. Actually, as I trust my column in #7 made clear, my main gripe is with Arnie Katz & Joyce Fisher. Johnny Berry is a minor member of the clique, and apart from what I consider to be his unjustified putdown of SFR in his pro column, I don't recall ever seeing any comments of his that I'd want to attack.

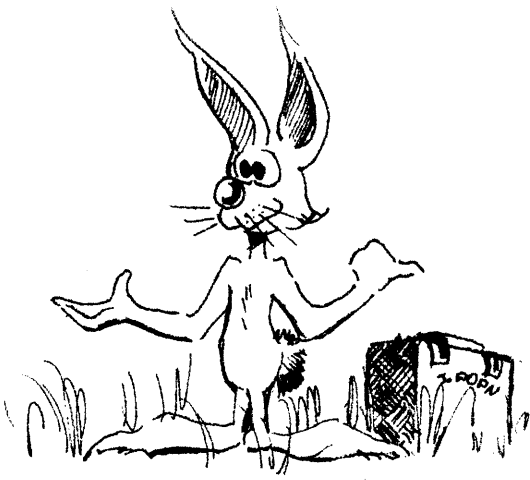
A more substantial matter is touched upon by Ted's comments on the function and appeal of fanzines, and what polls measure. It may surprise him to learn that I agree that most fanzines and most sercon zines are attempting to achieve different things, and that there is no reason to assume that one type is innately superior to another. Furthermore, I agree that what polls measure is popularity, not necessarily quality. The trouble is, the people that I have been writing about have made it abundantly clear that they do feel that one type--their type--is innately superior to the other; and they have become offensively loud about it. Moreover, they seem to feel that they must ridicule and put down fan polls on which they and their friends do not place highly, an execrable practice that is nothing more than sour grapes. (At this point, I will refrain from commenting on Terry Carr's tramping out of that vineyard in FOCAL POINT #28, because for two of the nominees to publicly argue about the Fan Writer Hugo would demean the award.)

As for the "faceless" character of voters in the major fan polls, while, as Michael pointed out in his reply to Ted's letter, it is true that the majority of those eligible to vote for Hugos are not (by our definition) active fans, most of the 400 or so who actually do vote are active fans. If Tony Lewis is willing, sometime after NorEasCon, to release the names of all Hugo voters in the DC-Boston megalopolis area, I would make a money wager with Ted that I've at least heard of 2/3 of them and personally know 1/2.

Of course Ted is right about all of us having our own circle of close friends, our own "clique" if you will. As Michael perceived, my objection is to the action of fans who carry their mutual friendships a bit too far. Ted White is quite wrong when he asserts that he could turn nearly all of my words around and condemn me and my "clique" quite as easily as I condemn his. He could not, for my clique does not act the same way as the one with which he identifies himself. I do not loudly insist that Dave Halterman is the best fan writer, Brian Burley the Number One Fan Face, Del Corbett the best new fan, and so on, and that polls which fail to reflect this are obviously worthless popularity contests decided by faceless fringe fans and readers. On the contrary, I recognize that active fandom is a hell of a lot bigger and more varied than my immediate circle of close friends. The problem is that most of the FOCAL POINT people don't accept any such thing.

Finally, I must admit to being thoroughly puzzled by Ted's final paragraph: "There's a lot more to fandom than a wild night of hearts on the New Jersey Turnpike, Ted Pauls. I sure hope you make the discovery for yourself some day." Ted knows perfectly well that I've been in fandom since the late 1950's and have participated in every aspect of it: publishing and writing for fanzines, attending and running conventions, joining local clubs, partying and in general living my life in fandom. I am somewhat proud (perhaps inordinately) of the fact that, while I am known in fandom principally for my sercon efforts, I am at least as well known on the East Coast for being part of fanzine fandom. Perhaps you should better reword your statement and direct it to the people who really need it. With your permission, I shall: "There's a lot more to fandom than a half dozen people reporting each other's conversations at tedious length, Focal Pointers. I sure hope you make the discovery for yourself some day."

--Ted Pauls



THOTS WHILE

LAWN-MOWING

A SUMMATION BY TED WHITE

DAVIDSON

When I was a mere tad, a little boy indeed, I used to follow my father about while he pushed the lawnmower around our lawn. Once in a while he would let me push it. The handle was over my head and I'd throw myself against it to make the thing work, looking for all the world as if I was dangling from an oddly-made monkey-bar.

Then, somewhere along the line, I grew taller, and for 50¢ or some such munificent sum, I was, ahah, allowed to mow the lawn all by myself. I did this for years. Many years.

Now, our lawn was not one of your piddling little patches of grass. Our house was set back a full lot from the road, and surrounded on four sides by pieces of lawns interspersed with flower beds, bushes, and other similar items, including a number of large trees. And, next door and directly connected by more lawn, was my grandmother's house, in front of which was the vastest lawn in the whole world--or so it seemed to me the first time I cut it. Large enough to play a goodly game of croquet on, vast and open and unornamented by anything but two small dogwoods out by the street, this was a killer-lawn. When we still possessed only a hand-push type lawnmower, it was the work of a full afternoon (with times out on the hour and half hour for cold lemonade or home-made rootbeer) for me to mow just that lawn in front of my grandmother's house. (The side lawns were another hour or more.) The gnats would circle my head continuously, and sweat would roll down my naked back, and I would push the mower with a furious run down the long straight stretches and collapse for a panting moment at the turns. A killer-lawn, indeed.

Somewhere along the line my parents took pity on me and bought a power-mower. But not one of your noisy, messy, gasoline-powered mowers. No sir; this was an electric lawn mower. It was a "reel type" mower, with the same type of blades the hand mower had, and a long electric cord which you plugged in inside the house. Naturally, the cord was a problem; you didn't want to run over it. You might cut it and get a shock. Our mower had an ingenious arrangement to deal with the cord: a takeup reel mounted on top of the mower, powered by a friction-gear to keep the wire wound up and taut at all times. This was all right as far as it went, but meant that when cutting a big square lawn one had to do a figure-eight maneuver on the third corner to get the cord back on the outside of the mower (otherwise it wrapped around your handle).

I tell you this by way of prologue--and also because I fear such arcane knowledge will otherwise die with me. Today, of course, such mowers are unknown to Western Man. Indeed, only a few years later my family acquiesced and began a long series of purchases of more modern power-mowers, all of which have been better and none of which had half the character of that electric mower.

Thirteen years ago I moved away from the house in which I had grown up, and I went out into the world of men and lived in a variety of unlikely places, in improbable cities

like Baltimore and New York, and not once did I have a lawn to cut--nor did I regret it.

Last fall we returned to the ancestral manse, however, and such is the inevitable progress of the seasons that only last week I found myself studying the instruction booklet for a Sears Craftsman power mower which had been thoughtfully left in a shed for my use. And all too soon I was back again, mowing the same lawns I had mowed so many times before.

But with a difference. As a kid I thought those lawns vast and almost unconquerable. I would divide that big square lawn up into sections and cut it a section at a time, taking half an hour or more for each, just to reduce it to a manageable state, for instance.

Last Saturday it took me an hour by my watch to mow the entirety of my grandmother's lawns--which are now twice the size they once were (a wooded patch has been reclaimed for grass). Today, a week later, I cut them again and the lawns around my own house as well. Her big front lawn took me ten minutes, total.

Each week, beginning in the spring and continuing into the fall, I cut those lawns. From age eight to age twenty: twelve years I followed a lawn mower of one sort or another around those lawns, walking miles on each occasion. What does one do while mowing lawns?

I thought a lot.

I was a solitary sort of kid. I read a lot. I listened to the radio. It was inevitable that to while away otherwise wasted time I would tell myself stories. I did it while walking (a mile each way) to school (or later, bicycling it), and I did it while mowing the lawns. Usually I subvocalized the dialogue, learning to speak without moving my lips (I was very proud of that accomplishment until I started meeting deaf fans who lipread; then it was a liability), and supplying a wide variety of sounds which, to my inner ear, approximated the standardized sound effects I heard on the radio shows. I also hummed or whistled appropriate theme music--mostly lifted from movie serials and radio dramas, and probably, now that I think on it, stolen from Prokofiev.

That probably carried me through the first five years of lawn mowing. Then, at thirteen, I discovered fandom.

I spent one whole summer (1953) planning an elaborate fanzine which I hadn't the nerve to publish. Each session behind the lawn mower would be an issue of my fanzine, mocked up with remarkable clarity in my head, the impeccably-mimeod pages blotting out the sight of the grass clippings flying into the air at my feet. Occasionally I composed masterful articles or stunning letters to my various fan correspondants while out doing the lawn. But I quickly learned that my imaginings were better confined to projects I had no intention of realizing, since the letters I composed inevitably destroyed my capacity to write their actual counterparts later. The magnificently put together phrases flew completely out of my mind when I was facing an actual piece of paper and could write them down. And the bitter memory that I had constructed a better letter in my head made the poorer reality not worth the effort. (I didn't realize that I was already doing something writers call "talking the story out"--an actual problem some writers have if they talk about stories they intend to write before writing them.) (You'll laugh when I tell you that I actually double-drafted all my early fan correspondence, writing it out longhand before typing it. But I was too poor a typist to maintain a train of thought while searching out the keys with which to type each letter. I was thirteen, remember, and a self-taught hunt-and-peck typist.)

I had time, then, to sketch reams of material in my head while mowing the lawn. And I needed something to do with my thoughts while pursuing such an automated chore.

I hadn't thought about this in years. I hadn't mowed the lawns in years, either. But last Saturday I felt this strange wrenching sensation one encounters when repeating a

task one has performed many times before when much younger. It was the same--and yet not the same. And through my mind rushed tumbled thoughts of the things I'd done and the things I'd thought while mowing this lawn so many years earlier--more than a third of my life ago. It was a deja vu experience--in reverse.

Today--another Saturday--the mail brought a letter from Mike Glicksohn and a xerox of "the relevant sections of Ted Pauls' latest letter". They are a reply of sorts to my letter in *ENERGUMEN* #7, and I just had time to read them before setting out to mow the lawn.

You can imagine the thoughts I thought while mowing.

At some point I said to myself, "Best stifle it, fella; otherwise you'll write it all out in your head and never put it down on paper." Which was true, but deprived me of the topic uppermost in my mind just then. So I cogitated a bit on my relationship over the years with Ted Pauls (it dates back to 1958--the year I stopped mowing the family lawn), and fannish-fandom vs. sercon-fandom, and other such weighty but generalized topics, and before I knew it, the grass was cut, the lawns were mowed, and that was that. It hadn't taken long.

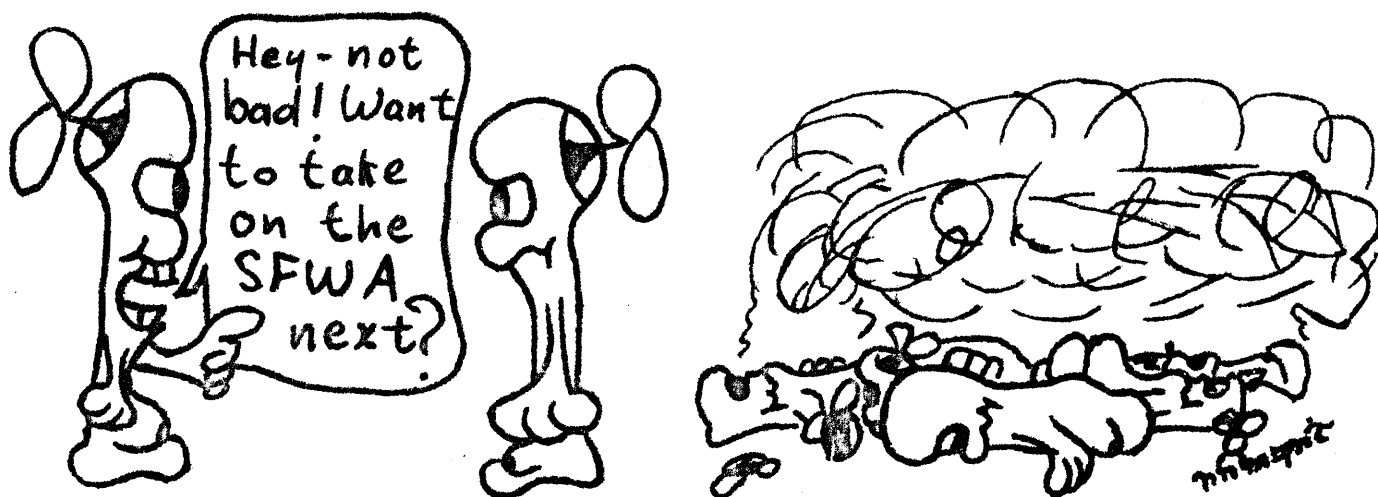
Back in my office I dredged out a copy of *ENERGUMEN* #s 5 and 7, for reference purposes, and then reread the xerox of Ted's newest letter (or "relevant sections" thereof.) It was worth the side-by-side comparison--and I urge you to do the same if you can. It will be an education for you.

In #5, Pauls says, "What's irritating me at the moment is the clique of faaannishness, and by that I mean about two dozen people who read and write for each other's fanzines and believe that they are fandom. Now, these people, maybe eight or nine in the New York area and the rest scattered across the country, wouldn't be so annoying if they confined themselves to quietly conducting their mutual admiration society, embellishing Fabulous Tales about each other, and telling each other that they are Where It's At and that the other thousand or so of us in active fandom are hangers-on. Ridiculous, yes, but not annoying. Arrogance, unfortunately, is rarely a quiet fault, and some of the faaans spend a good deal of time clamourously insisting that they are the centre of the universe and putting down everything else."

That's one complete paragraph, sic to the affected English spellings. It serves as a lead-in to Pauls' defense of SFR, which he seems to feel this "clique of faaanishness" has been unfairly putting down. But let's look at that paragraph as it stands alone. Is it soundly shored by fact?

"About two dozen people," Pauls says, "maybe eight or nine in the New York area." These are fairly specific numbers. To whom do they apply? Well, they "read and write for each other's fanzines." That narrows it down a bit. Most fans read and write for each other's fanzines, of course (I never knew it was a crime), but "eight or nine in the New York area"? Despite Pauls' claim in the same paragraph that there are another thousand "in active fandom", I doubt that more than two hundred people in North America are writing for or producing fanzines. (I exclude comics fanzines and movie-monster fanzines as separate fandoms with only a slight overlap. I imagine Pauls would agree with me there.) And of the several hundred people in the Greater New York area who attend clubs or go to local cons, there are probably no more than a dozen--maybe two dozen at the outside--who have anything to do with fanzines. Narrow it down a bit more: fanzines produced in the area are *LOCUS*, *LUNA MONTHLY*, several college-fanclub zines of high mortality, the apa-zines produced by people like John Boardman which are rarely seen by most of us, and the so-called Fanoclast-produced fanzines. The latter include *FOCAL POINT*, Jay Kinney's *NOPE*, John Berry and myself's *EGOBOO*, and...?

So who is under attack? Obviously, from the context, *FOCAL POINT* et al. The "faaanish" fans: Rich Brown, Steve Stiles, Arnie Katz, Jay Kinney, Terry Carr, Lee Hoffman (to a



lesser extent), Joyce Fisher (now Katz), Joe Staton, Andy Porter, John Berry...that's ten, and I haven't counted myself, although many people would include me in that list.

I think that most people, if they considered the actual fannish output of these people, would admit that Pauls' characterization of them is narrow and unfair. But of course Pauls did not name the people he was attacking. He set up a group of straw fen and knocked them down again.

The next paragraph in Pauls' #5 column was devoted to a falacious defense of SFR. Falacious, because, as I pointed out in my letter in #7, it simply ignores the facts of fanzine publishing and equates "the best, most popular and most successful" fanzine with that which has the most subscriptions. This argument breaks down the instant one realizes that for many years James Taurasi's FANTASY TIMES (later SF TIMES) had a circulation five times greater than HYPHEN's--or Geis's first-incarnation PSYCHOTIC/SFR.

The final paragraph of Pauls' column devoted to this topic says, "I do not propose to defend SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW or its editor, because neither requires defending. Both the fanzine and the man are too big to be bothered by the frantic squeaking of tadpoles /tadpoles make no noises. -tw/, and SFR's third Hugo will not be less meaningful because some of the faaans are belittling the award and implying that Geis 'cheated' in some vaguely defined way. It's just that the faaan clique has become irritating and at the same time profoundly boring to me, and I felt like saying a few words about it."

Okay, that's fine as far as it goes. I haven't seen the people Pauls is attacking "belittling the award", and their most common complaint wasn't that Geis "cheated", but that it was unseemly of him to come right out and ask for a third Hugo in a row, when two would seem enough for most common folk--but I can accept the fact that they irritate Pauls, and I am not overmuch bothered by it. Pauls has certainly irritated a few people on his own over the years--so, indeed, have I--and that's the way of fandom, after all.

But dig this opening salvo in Pauls' next column (#7) on the same subject:

"As reluctant as I am to inject venomous conflict into the pages of ENERGUMEN, the 'faaan' clique to which I referred last issue continues to irritate me with its preposterous insularity and conceit, and this column is the only outlet I possess for that irritation. Their apparent holy war against SFR and its editor is being carried forth with undiminished juvenile vigor and while it remains true that SFR and Dick Geis do not require defending, the arrogance and pettiness of the attackers is so repulsive as to require being put down."

Savor that paragraph. Read it to yourself a time or two and let it roll about in your mouth. I read that paragraph at the Lunacon, where Mike gave me copies of ENERGUMENs 6

and 7. I read it in a room which was shared by most of the people Ted Pauls was devoting himself to putting down. Indeed, I read it aloud.

Frankly, I was stunned by the, ahh, arrogance and conceit contained in those pompous lines of Pauls'. Who, after all, is mounting a "holy war" on whom? And just how disingenuous can one get, with a disclaimer like "As reluctant as I am to inject venomous conflict into the pages of ENERGUMEN...?"

"Venomous conflict" is, however, a fitting phrase. Pauls' prose is indeed venomous, and the conflict he seeks to inflict upon ENERGUMEN is inappropriate to its pages by most civilized criteria. One might ask, if Ted Pauls takes such umbrage at the doings of certain fans, why does he not confine his criticisms to the arena in which they are operating? POTLATCH and LOG both publish letters--including letters from those who disagree with their editors. Furthermore, both fanzines are small, controlled circulation fanzines (LOG is limited to fifty recipients; POTLATCH, I believe isn't more than double that). Why bring the controversy--if, indeed, that is what it is--into ENERGUMEN's pages? Hell, why not go all the way and take it to LUNA MONTHLY?

Ted lifts quotes from context, adds comments like "Rarely have I seen such gratuitous rudeness in the pages of a fanzine," and generally reaches for a tone of lofty morality which I'm afraid he belies entirely by the very stance he has taken.

This series of columnal attacks is, you see, unprovoked. Pauls purports to be defending not himself but Richard Geis, who "does not require defending," as Pauls himself is the first to admit. His entire justification for this series of gratuitous slams is that he finds certain fans and their fanzines "irritating".

Do you find that a little amazing? I do.

Now at last we come to Pauls' latest comments. He now admits that his #5 column was a "dispute with the FOCAL POINT crowd." And he wonders, "I'd be curious to know how Ted manages to arrive at the conclusion that my original statements were principally an attack on John D. Berry. Actually, as I trust my column in #7 made clear, my main gripe is with Arnie Katz and Joyce Fisher. Johnny Berry is a minor member of the clique, and apart from what I consider to be his unjustified putdown of SFR in his pro column, I don't recall ever seeing any comments of his that I'd want to attack."

Aha! But John, you see, was and remains SFR's strongest critic. Not only did he attack SFR in AMAZING, but he has done so on several occasions in EGOBOO and possibly (if memory does not serve me falsely) in FOOLSCAP. It would appear Pauls is ignorant of this--but since he didn't bother to name who he was attacking, I made the obvious inference.

John and I have argued the point on several occasions, and it was and is obvious to me that ours is an honest difference of opinion. John saw a fanzine emerging in the first few issues of the revived PSYCHOTIC which he liked and to which he responded. When within a few issues Geis shifted horses and PSY became SFR, John was disappointed. The fanzine he admired died in the shift. It's my personal opinion that he had no right to impose his own goals upon PSY, and even less right to insist that Geis/PSY had let him down when Geis followed his own and different goals. But at the same time I can very easily understand and sympathize with his feelings--feelings I've known myself at other times and in other situations. John was quite honest about his feelings--both in letters to Geis and in his public statements on the subject. Indeed, his conscience impelled him to write a second "Clubhouse" column for AMAZING in which he admitted the extent of his own disappointment in SFR, and told his readers to make allowances for it. (This column was written before he had seen any reaction to the previous column--such are prozine deadlines--and without any prompting on my part.)

Having been on the inside of the "faaanish clique" which so disgusts Ted Pauls, I am aware not only of the injustice of his characterizations of it (there's damn little

"mutual admiration" in the back-patting sense, and any number of divisions of opinion on most subjects), but of the truth that lies behind his glib recital of its behaviour. I don't propose to lay this out at boring length--nothing is more tedious than point-by-point rebuttals--but I can and will say that Ted Pauls is doing no one a favor, himself least of all, with these pious cat-scratchings of his.

Fandom is a large and variegated place. Its denizens are a heterogenous lot, much given to disagreements of opinion, and sometimes to disputes thereover. This has been the nature of fandom since its earliest days (read The Bible by Sam Moskowitz for The Word on this), and I don't suppose it's very likely to change. From time to time, someone goes beyond the pale and All Fandom Is Plunged Into War. The last time that happened was 1964, and I hope it's a long time before it happens again. In the meantime, some people think one way and some think another.

Put simply, Ted Pauls' opinions vary widely from those of those people he calls "the faaanish clique". Of course, he neither understands nor appreciates the opinions of the people he is engaged in putting down, but it does seem an overreaction on his part to use the words and phrases he has resorted to in his "irritation". Frankly, I find them offensive.

What it boils down to is that Ted Pauls is being intolerant. He has accused Arnie and Joyce of intolerance, but his is greater--and so is his rudeness. I can accept this as a one-shot blowing off of steam. I find it more disturbing when it is repeated in three successive columns. So, perhaps do you.

He is still at it, unfortunately, in this latest letter of his. He is guilty of one major sin: grossly oversimplifying the attitudes and actions of the people he is attacking to the point of outright falsehoods. And his minor sins--intemperate language, imprecision of attack, pompousness of style, etc.--are legion. You might say he is beginning to irritate me.

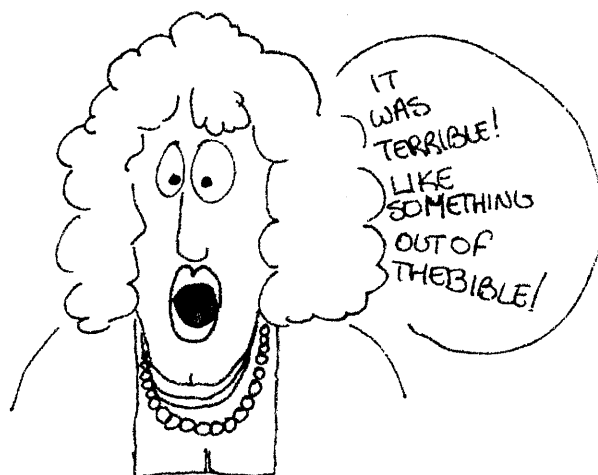
But at last the true motives which have underlain his whole series of attacks are starting to come out. They appear closest to the surface in his parenthetical note "At this point I will refrain from commenting on Terry Carr's tramping out of that vineyard in FOCAL POINT #28, because for two of the nominees to publicly argue about the Fan Writer Hugo would demean the award."

Ted Pauls, you see, wants to win a Hugo.

And various people, among them Arnie Katz and Joyce Fisher (Katz), have expressed the thought that Ted Pauls doesn't deserve a Hugo.

It must rankle him. It would me, I'm sure. But instead of proving these people wrong in a positive way--by writing good, well-rounded pieces about which no one could argue the merits--Pauls has chosen to attack them, and on a series of largely phoney issues, such as SFR's contention for a third Hugo, etc. These issues, as I've demonstrated, are based on such clumsy platforms that they collapse when leaned against in an inquiring way. Obviously, they don't represent the real issue in Ted Pauls' mind.

ELECTRIC
KOOL - AID
EXPERIENCE
NO. 104....



JOHN

The real issue seems to be his annoyance over the way one faction of fandom doesn't take him seriously as a fanwriter. I wish he had the honesty to either come out in the open about this or to drop the sniping at his erstwhile "opponents".

The shame of it is that Ted has good credentials, if you look back over his fan career, which spans the entire decade of the 60's. He came into fandom an introverted kid in his mid-teens, via the N3F, and published the sorts of crudzines we all put out as neos. He learned fast and was quickly (within a year or so) publishing a fanzine of moderate note (and I'll just mention in passing that he "proved up" as both a fanzine writer and publisher in something less than half the time I took when I was a neo), DISJECTA MEMBRA. A year later, via a title change or two, he was putting out KIPPLE, a good, frequent, personalized fannish fanzine.

Then he entered a long bout with politics. KIPPLE became politically oriented--at a time when the "discussionzine" was dominant in fandom--and its fannish trappings fell quickly away. (I was doing a fannish column for it at the time--1961--and I remember when Ted rejected it because it was no longer "relevant" to the political discussions he was fostering.) After that Ted drifted away from the fandom I--and you and Mike and ENERGUMEN--inhabit. I recall that the Boondoggle of 1964 elicited a few editorial comments in KIPPLE's pages, but practically nothing else that concerned fandom appeared there. It built up its own readership, overlapping fandom only along the fringes--those fans who were also keenly involved in political discussion, like John Boardman--and for most purposes inhabited its own parallel world.

Sometime in the last three or so years that changed. Ted dropped KIPPLE, began meeting fans again (I believe that I was the last person to see him for some years, when in 1961 Terry Carr, Pete Graham and I visited Ted in Baltimore), coming to Lunarian meetings with Jack Chalker, and publishing a little personalzine of a few pages, WOKL. About the same time he began writing book reviews and dropping them on assorted faneds.

Ted is capable of good solid prose. He's written soundly reasoned arguments and fannishly frivolous anecdotes. He has, in short, done most if not all the things good fanwriters do, and done them well.

But not here. Not this time round.

His book reviews are pedestrian. They are usually sounder than Richard Delap's (for which you may read: Ted White agrees with Pauls more often than he does with Delap), but all too often they are just synopses and not valid criticism. For fanzine-type book reviews, they pass muster--largely because the competition is so lacklustre--but when they're read in one large gulp they are undistinguished and fade one into the next.

One is forced, by this Fan Writer Hugo thing, into comparisons. One previous Hugo winner was known largely for his critical works. Alexei Panshin's writing--in YANDRO, largely--sparkled where Pauls' prose lies flat upon the page. Panshin's ideas were distinguished by their originality of thought, their unconventionality of direction, and the stimulation they caused the reader. How many of Ted Pauls' book reviews made you sit up and clasp your brow with the dazzlingness of their fresh insights? Many? Any?

My theory is that Ted just cranks these reviews out. I asked him to review a book for me, for AMAZING, more or less as a test. I gave him the galleys for the Ace Special edition of Bob Shaw's One Million Tomorrows. I pointed out to him that the novel had just been serialized in AMAZING, and that the last chapter had been changed in the Ace edition.

When he gave me his review, it consisted of a synopsis of the plot, followed by a short value-judgement. He did not mention the differences in the magazine and book versions, and he did not take into account at all that the prospective readers of his review were already familiar with the novel and didn't require a synopsis of it. I was quite disap-

pointed in the review and told him I couldn't use it. His reply was flippant, and I dismissed him from my mind as a future reviewer for AMAZING.

The only non-review material Ted has written for fanzines has been his chatter for WOKL and his column here. If you delete from his columns his attacks on the "faaanish clique" what you have left is a rather pale version of his earlier WOKL writing, which I enjoyed.

Is this enough? Can anyone seriously consider this qualification for a Fan Writer Hugo?

The question becomes more pressing when his opposition is taken into account, especially Terry Carr. Terry has been writing a bi-weekly column for FOCAL POINT for months, now, and for sheer consistency, it is hard to imagine anything better. Terry has touched nearly all bases, from the pro field to fannish polls of the past, and his style is clear, lucid, easy and witty. Terry Carr has been writing for fanzines for two decades now, and for more than half that time his material has been outstanding, a joy to read.

This is simply my opinion of course, and I offer it in as non-rancorous a fashion as I can. It is not a case of back-patting when I say this; I've known Ted Pauls personally for as long as I've known Terry (I met them both in 1958), and I've considered them both friends. But friendship is not an ample criterion for making the sort of judgment Hugo voting calls for--although it is often resorted to, unfortunately.

Let's return to Ted's current comments.

The substance of the remaining "relevant sections" divides itself into two topics. One of them is "the 'faceless' character of voters in the major fan polls." This is an erroneous restating of what I originally said which was inadvertently compounded by Mike's reply to my letter in #7. (I did not characterize Pauls as "faceless", Mike; I said he was "swimming along at the head of the 'tadpoles' of the pond: those faceless souls who send in the sticky quarters, the checks, and the inane little notes that communicate nothing whatsoever in the way of meaningful egoboo, and would be worthless altogether but for their valuable Hugo votes." By which I meant he was allying himself with the "faceless", not "faceless" himself.)

I wasn't referring to "major fan polls". I was referring to the Hugo voters. There is a distinct difference. Fandom only sporadically dominates the Hugo voting, and now much less than it once did. It's true that the thousand or fifteen hundred eligible to vote don't vote. But it is not true that only the active fans do vote. They don't. Out of, say, 400 votes, less than half will be from recognizable fans, and probably less than fifty from those fans who receive a sizable sampling of current fanzines. I base this statement on the ballots we received in the NyCon 3 Hugo voting. The number of active, fannish fans, the well-known fans of the last decade, who voted that year could probably be counted without using the fingers of both hands more than twice. These are the fans who have the perspective and knowledge of fanzines and fandom to vote meaningfully. I would guess that in 1967 there were probably between one and two hundred such fans active at that time in fandom. And I am not counting the faded ENFs whose activity and knowledge of fandom was by then confined to FAPA. Out of those one or two hundred fans, less than two dozen voted.

Of the remainder of the voters, the percentages mirrored the percentages of NyCon 3 members. Perhaps a hundred votes came from people recently acquainted with fanzines, whose votes were predictably for those fanzines they'd seen. Another hundred votes came from people I, personally, had never heard of. The remainder of those who voted did not vote in the fanzine category.

In the category of the first hundred were fans who have attended club meetings and the like for years, but care little about fanzines. People like Ken Beale and Art Saha, to name two in the New York area whom I know and like, but whose votes I would have to consider uninformed.

Ted challenges me to go over the list of NorEasCon voters and see how many we know. I'm perfectly willing, but I challenge the notion that any name we recognize is the name of an informed voter. I think it would be more interesting and enlightening if that list of prospective voters was checked against the circulation lists of the contending fanzines by their editors. I wonder, Mike, how many of those who vote this year will have seen ENERGUMEN...?

The remaining topic Pauls brings up is not one I wish to pursue closely. He names his close friends and challenges me to "condemn" them as easily as he has mine. That's the kind of dirty pool that benefits no one, least of all his "friends". To be sure, no one "insists that Dave Halterman is the best fan writer, Brian Burley the Number One Fan Face, Del Corbett the best new fan," etc., and for good reason. They aren't. I think that's all that need be said.

But perhaps--just perhaps, Ted Pauls--those fans whom you persist in self-rightously condemning really do deserve consideration for the positions of honor you mentioned. And if they are friends of mine, there is just the barest chance that you are insulting me in your continuing attacks upon them.

You tread on very thin ice when you say your "clique" does not behave in a way which invites criticism. I suggest the next time you see Brian Burley you ask him about past history. It's better that he tell you.

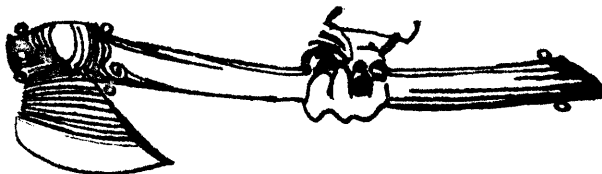
There are, you see, many ramifications to this whole business which Pauls has brought to these pages. I have put a few of them down here. A great many more remain unstated, either for reasons of tact or of space.

Lawn-mowing, you see, provides me with great stimulus for thinking, and the above are some of the thoughts which came to me this afternoon.

--Ted White

((There are several points I'd like to comment on briefly here: Any "affected English spellings" in these pages are probably due to my typing and my English heritage. I apologize to any author who feels I have inadvertently disfigured his or her manuscript by inserting the occasional 'u'. I have already stated in LOW-DOWN my thoughts on the Fan Writer Hugo and my reason for voting for Ted Pauls. But I must point out that Ted's writing in ENERGUMEN is not under consideration for the award in question and that Terry Carr's FOCAL POINT output was limited in 1970 since his regular column did not begin until the fall of that year. Those are just facts, dear readers, and I'm well aware of the 'quality vs. quantity' arguments. Please let me repeat that I am not interested in any continuation on this discussion. Both sides have clearly and adequately stated their opinions and I see no benefit in reiterating them. If there are factual errors in any of the above, I would appreciate hearing about them and I think the nature of Hugo voters is a topic worth considering; but the basic arguments are concluded here. And, Ted, I'd estimate that perhaps one out of ten of the eligible Hugo voters will have seen ENERGUMEN and perhaps one out of five of those who vote. If Tony Lewis could be talked into releasing the names--not the ballots, just the names--of this year's Hugo voters, it certainly would be fascinating. Peace--mg))

AND SO CONCLUDES --THE LAST WORD-- A FEARLESS, TRENCANT, OUTSPOKEN AND
CONTROVERTIAL energumen SUPPLEMENT FOR THOSE WHO NEED FEUD FOR THOUGHT IN THEIR FANZINES



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