

FAN-DANGO

AN OUTSIDER PUBLICATION!

Vol. II, No. 1 Summer -- 1944 Whole No. 5

GUTLESS WONDERS ** A DISCUSSION OF FAN ETHICS.

---ooOoo---

The appalling amount of shilly-shallying in the case of Clod Degler is enough to gag a maggot. Are fans so weak-minded, so spineless, so completely lacking in intestinal fortitude that they cannot even expel an undesirable from their midst? I had hoped devoutly that it would not be necessary to waste further space on Degler, but the infuriating vacillations of cowardly pollyannas--both in the LASFS and in FAPA--make it imperative for someone to speak plainly.

First let me recite the treatment of Degler in the LASFS. Many weeks after he had outworn his welcome elsewhere in Shangri-La, he could still number two staunch friends in Forrest J. Ackerman and Myrtle R. Douglas. Naturally, total fan Ackerman would love anyone like Superfan Rogers--their ideas are far closer than most out-of-town fans have suspected. And when the Ack cracks the whip, Morojo jumps. The active LASFS membership otherwise was 100% anti-Degler--in fact, after Degler had left Los Angeles the club adopted an entirely new constitution and system of membership applications designed wholly to prevent the possibility of other crackpots coming in and disrupting the society. Yet, for some mysterious reason, Degler still remained a member of the club. Every attempt to expel him, to demand his resignation, or any other positive action was bucked violently by Morojo, up to her old stunt of fighting Ackerman's battles for him. After weeks of fruitless haranguing, Morojo finally permitted the club to send a very apologetic letter to Degler, informing him that he was dropped for non-payment of dues. In other words, instead of the positive action which any self-respecting individual or organization would have taken as a matter of course, the LASFS tacitly encouraged this blot on fandom. Small wonder that twelve active fans fled into the Knaves and Outsiders, rather than to remain in such a debasing atmosphere of indecision and cowardice, where they were forced to associate with any braying ass who chose to call himself a fan.

Now we see the same thing happening in FAPA. Not only is Degler a complete disgrace to the organization, but here is an individual who has never contributed anything to the mailings. (The single issue of Cosmic Circle Commentator which Degler submitted was not a FAPA magazine, but was identical with the edition circulated outside the mailings; while the stuff in the LASFS post-mailing envelope was submitted as supporting evidence for Fan-Dango 3-A.) Yet how many Fapas actively oppose Degler's expulsion! The persons who wish to increase our over-all membership would do well to bear in mind that there is much dead wood on our present roster.

It has been said by several that Degler has done nothing in violation of the FAPA constitution. This may very well be so, but I fail to see what bearing this has on the question. If FAPA is to be a general fan organization (which Cthulhu forbid!), a group to which any person may belong regardless of merit, perhaps this view of the constitutionalists is valid. If, however, FAPA is to make any attempt at being a worthwhile group, it seems to me that its membership should

be limited to the elite of fandom, that a person should not only prove himself worthy of admittance but should also continue to demonstrate this worthiness by his actions after he has become a member. If these criteria are to be applied in judging Clod Degler, there is no question but that he should be expelled. Despite the contentions of the sob sisters and pollyannas, all healthy organisms find it necessary to defecate occasionally. I suggest we defecate Degler at once.

--oo--

My sub-title mentioned something about fan ethics. I went into the Degler question again solely to furnish a hideous example for us to keep in mind as we discuss these ethics. On a less specific plane, I should like to outline the ethics and behavior patterns which I personally believe should govern fans not only among themselves but in their dealings with the outside world.

First, however, it is almost necessary for us to arrive at a working interpretation of fandom, for our outlook on fandom itself is certain to reflect itself in our ethical approach. There are a number of us, unfortunately, who lack completely anything even remotely approaching a sense of perspective. To these pitifully warped individuals fandom is all things: hobby, life-work, sexual satisfaction (through sublimation), religion--it is their entire world, and any dealings they may have to make with untainted humanity are performed grudgingly and half-heartedly. To such an individual, any person calling himself a fan is something sacred, something apart from his fellows, and to be protected from the buffets of an unkind world by the same amnion which surrounds the typical total fan. Obviously, such a fan will object to any positive action which will cause the faintest ripple in either his or any other fan's bath of amniotic fluid. If this is to be the generally accepted approach to fandom, there is nothing in fandom for me or for any other person who attempts to lead a reasonably well balanced life.

If we are to adopt a sane and sensible view of fandom, however, a great deal of muddled thinking along ethical lines will be cleared up. We will no longer feel impelled to tolerate anyone simply because he happens to read (or claims to read) scientificfiction, but instead will be enabled to judge him as a person. Fandom, in other words, is nothing more than a hobby--a singularly engrossing and pleasurable hobby to be sure--but not a way of life or a pseudo-religion. Those who try to make fandom anything more than a hobby are demonstrating an extremely stupid lack of perspective.

If we accept fandom as a hobby, we are ethically free to make or reject friends wholly without reference to sfandom. No golfer feels impelled to be on an intimate basis of brotherly love with all other persons who happen to play golf; why should you and I feel any necessity of displaying fraternal affection for each and every reader of LeZ? I personally am glad, even eager, to meet other fans, but I certainly intend to retain the right to choose among them the ones with whom I wish to be friendly. Whether or not a person reads sf is the least of my considerations; I judge my acquaintances on a basis of all-round congeniality when I decide whether or not I wish to be intimate with them.

This old custom of holding an open house for any and all visiting fans is in one sense a magnificent display of the loving of one's neighbor. On the other hand, why should you or I put ourselves out for any stupid drip who wants to get some free board and room? I fail to see why there should be any feeling of obligation in the matter. Yet, such is the spineless aura of insane and mawkish sentiment displayed by a few warped total fans, that other fans are expected to

welcome any other fan into their homes. Some misguided persons even have the brazen effrontery to discuss in print whether or not some other fan is within his rights when he refuses some fan admission to his home, as in the recent Ashley disposal of Degler.

Also, it apparently is impossible to expell any fan from membership in any fan organization. Why should this be? Why should there be this frantic pawing through constitutions, this desperate effort to avoid offending someone simply because he is a fan? Should not fan clubs--being no more than hobby clubs--use the same realistic approach to their membership problems as would any lodge or fraternal society? Must we resign ourselves to continued association with unworthy persons, simply because they are fans? The Querkians have a word for it: TYFE!

It may be argued by some that to set a precedent of arbitrary expulsion might conceivably lead to dictatorship, to ruthless elimination of disliked persons by those who happen to be in control at the moment. Such a naive concept would be laughable, were it not so unforgivably stupid. Fan clubs are merely hobby clubs; the expulsion of any one member or group of members should not prove completely fatal to either party. As far as that goes, I fail to see why any fan or anyone else would care to remain in an organization where he was unwanted. Dictatorship? So what? After all, a rational view of the importance of a hobby club should prevent any fatalities here either. If fandom is nothing more than a hobby to the powers that be in FAPA, they are not likely to attempt dictatorship; if they do, the discriminated-against members can always resign and pursue their interests unmolested. Of course, if fandom is life itself, something without which we cannot exist, I can see some slight basis for the hot and bothered attitude. But I hope a majority of the members of FAPA are not such moronic fools as to take so intense a view of their hobby.

There is little point in my continuing to rave in this vein. My views of fan ethics (or any other kind of ethics for that matter) may be summed up in a nice, selfish nutshell: look out for yourself, I'll look out for myself. If we find mutual pleasure in each other's company, let's be friends; if we cannot, let us not feel obliged to tolerate each other to such an extent that we lose all sense of moral righteousness, but at the same time, let us try not to be so small and petty as to feud over it. Repay good with good, and evil with evil--both on a rather grandiose scale. Rather simple, isn't it? In my own case, this plan of life, system of ethics, or whatever else you may wish to call it, worked without a hitch for over eight years. I'll admit it didn't work so well with certain Los Angeles total-fans, but then, such a program is designed for dealing with normally balanced, intelligent, human beings. Think it over.

FANS vs. FEN. An about-face on Fan-Dango's Editorial Policy.

-oOo-

I quote T. Bruce Yerke, writing in #3 Knarve:

"One particularly irksome habit of the new regime on Bixel Street is the plural for the word fan, i.e., fen. We imagine this is taking use of the germanic method of forming the plural of "man", (Der Mann ...Die Männer) These clever word mongers have knocked off the "m" and substituted an "f".

"We imagine this basic change eliminates the word "man" from their vocabulary. These fen aren't men at all; they are poor, helpless, sexless things excommunicated from their race and origin. Scientifiction fandom is their reality...they ain't guys at all; they're fen, and fen doesn't mean men at all; it precludes membership in species Homo Sapiens.

"So, fans (guys what like stf. some of the time), be careful

when you use this absurd philological tool, because its originator has done some tampering with the very roots of our language. The Semantic results may be most interesting. Oh Mr. Ogden, Mr. Korzybcki, Mr. Hayakawa, come and take a look at this strange corruption. Fan, the plural of which is "fen".

When Norm Stanley first introduced this new word form a couple of mailings ago, I fell in line with the bunch and started using it myself. Bruce, however, has spoiled the term for me; whenever I see the word "fen", I think of a hopelessly misfitted and warped creature sitting unhappily in the LASFS clubroom wishing that he had a few of the characteristics of MEN and a few less of the characteristics of FEN. I'm sorry, folks, but I can no longer stomach the word. In the future, I shall use fans as the plural of this word.

FREE LOVE IN FANDOM. Give credit where credit is due.

-oOo-

In my last article on Slan Center, I mentioned a local fanette's presumably tongue-in-cheek suggestion of free love for such an establishment. Apparently, several FAPAs not only missed the tongue-in-cheek part of this suggestion, but went on to do a stupendous amount of bum guessing. Inasmuch as several members of the fair sex are or have been connected with LA fandom (Pogo, Lora Crozetti, Virginia Laney, Ada Charles, Elinor O'Brien... to name a few) it is only fair to these ladies to state that Morojo made this suggestion. It is also only fair to Morojo to state my personal opinion that the entire conversation between her and myself was a non-serious bit of persiflage, at least, insofar as present-day conditions are concerned.

PROFANITY IN FAPAZINES. Let's clean up the mailings.

-oOo-

The last Fan-Dango was, as you all no doubt noticed, characterized by a free use of four-letter words of a type not condoned in polite society. As many of you may not know, it very nearly was excluded from the mailing on this account. I have no particular excuse to offer for my transgression of good taste--the last issue was written at a time when I was being torn between several mutually frustrating situations (the schism developing in the LASFS, my inability to find a decent place to live, personal family matters, among other things). As a result, I was very bitter toward everything and everyone, and made no particular attempt to subdue myself. This is no excuse at all, but in the future I shall refrain from sending anything to the mailing unless I am in a civilized enough mood so that it will be a completely worthy addition to the mailing in which it appears.

This matter of smut in FAPA has, however, reached alarming proportions. I believe I am in no danger of being called a prude when I state my belief that smut and FAPA should be divorced immediately. If any of you have any doubt as to the propriety of this suggestion, I recommend that you look through the last two or three mailings looking for this sort of thing. Taking the narrow view of enforcers of postal regulations, we must discount the often genuine humor in such material, and consider only whether or not it is likely to result in FAPA being denied mailing privileges. On this basis, many of the publications of Liebscher, Laney, Crutch, Widner, the Futurians, and others certainly have been playing with fire. I have reformed, as of this date--I suggest the others of you join me.

But how about subversive matter? Are not many of our iconoclastic discussions subjecting us to this same risk?

"SPEAK SOFTLY, BUT CARRY A BIG STICK". by Theodor Rosebud, the Rough-
Rider.....OR, The FTLaniao mulls over the mailing.

-oOo-

Several members have given suggestions on making my activity index more valid, such as counting pages for instance. It may be that I shall do this at some future time, when I have more leisure at my disposal, but for the nonce, I shall have to continue in my own glespy manner. This does give a partial picture, and the very fact that it is here, mailing after mailing, may have a worthwhile psychological effect on certain of the less active members. I hope so anyway. (For the benefit of newcomers, I should mention that these figures are derived by dividing the number of members into the number of items in the mailing to present a percentage of activity which is then expressed in decimal form.)

34th Mailing.	35 papers from 51 members.	.690
35th Mailing.	36 papers from 65 members.	.400
36th Mailing.	48 papers from 65 members.	.737
27th Mailing.	*31 papers from 65 members.	.477

(* Includes Celephais, post-mailed by Bill Evans.)

.....And now to the mailing.

-oOo-

THE FANTASY AMATEUR. The portion of Ashley's message dealing with Degler has already been covered by me elsewhere in this and other mailings. Suffice it to say here that I shall never shut up on the matter until Degler has been tossed out of FAPA on his ear....The matter of censorship of material to be included in the mailings is another matter, however. I am not so sure that a censorship is what we want. In the first place, few FAPA mags are written out in advance soon enough to go in and be censored, returned to the editor, mimeographed and submitted in time to make the mailing. I have a feeling that any such arrangement would result in a diminishing of activity, simply because the members would not want to go to all this trouble. A far better solution, it seems to me, would be to leave the matter to individual members' discretions, with some proviso to act to ban anything contrary to POSTAL REGULATIONS. (I do not consider the heading of this page to come under that category simply because the word used is one known only in fandom.) Any censorship would have to be watched very strongly to prevent any tendency to suppress iconoclastic material which might personally offend one of the censors, but which was still quite available.

In connection with the 14-man waiting list and the ever present demand to increase our overall membership, I looked over our present roster, and found 18 names which do not seem active enough to be considered worthwhile FAPAns. If I have stupidly overlooked something, I wish to apologise in advance. Here are the ones I feel are too inactive: Buck, Carnell, Connor, Cunnigham, Daugherty, Deutch, Edg, Fortier, Hodgkins, Hurter, Jenkins, Ludowitz, Martin, Moffatt, Rogers, Ryder, Unger, and Youd. If our activity requirements are upped hard, I think a couple or three mailings would see many of these names off the roster for good. I personally have neither, time, money, energy, nor inclination to run off a vast quantity of copies of Fan-Dango, simply because FAPA is too gutless to demand worthwhile contributions from all its members. Down with deadheads, says The FTLaniao!

Norm Stanley's linking of The Knaves with all of Degler's "organisations" strikes me as being about the most offensive thing I yet have encountered in FAPA. If this was intended as humor, it certainly misfired; I suggest non-residents of Los Angeles either stay out of our local feuds altogether, or else inform themselves of the true facts in the case before going off half-cocked.

THE PHANTAGRAPH. (Two issues). The essay on oil hit right into something that has been worrying me a great deal, too. Perhaps the collapse of the machine age, which has so often been depicted in sf, may actually be upon us, something most of us actually will see...HCK's anti-hiss campaign always has seemed somewhat futile to me in that it was attacking one minute facet of the vast mass of poor writing in pulp fiction. Whether or not the verb "to hiss" has perhaps taken on wider connotations than it at one time had, I believe that Koenig's biting wit might better be turned to other objects.

-oOo-

FLEETING MOMENTS. This is the type of thing which FAPA should encourage: serious attempts at artistic achievement, far more worthwhile than such ephemeral items as Fandango, or Suspro.

-oOo-

MILTY'S MAG. The prayer wheel turning should be directed at Mel Brown; I cut a stencil for him while he did the needful to Milty. However, one or another of the Outsiders will mimeograph anything Milty cares to stencil for FAPA.

-oOo-

PHANNY. Generally speaking, I agree with the lead article, Fandom as a Way of Life, from the opening remark that points out the necessity of miggling with non-fan humanity to the punch line about the \$9 per week. I think, however, that the reason most fans tend to look on the dark side of things is simply that most of us are highly-strung, unstable, nervous, and extremely sensitive; couple this with our almost pathological tendency toward introspection, and it is obvious that the end result will be pessimism, introversion, and Ivory-Towerism. But of course the idea of setting up Slan Center as an arsenal of progress and a time capsule to preserve civilization is as laughable as it is pathetic. Poor little "slans"! ... Your mention of the Los Angeles bible burners would be more complete if you pointed out that there is only one of us who indulges in such childishness. He also gets all the free cigarettes he can from the USO and such places and destroys them, so as to diminish the amount of nicotine consumed in the world. His name is... well, he is our most prominent local fan. Look on the Widner poll if you can't guess. No wonder the LASFS blew up in his face!

-oOo-

A TALE OF THE EVANS. I dislike strongly to have to jump on a man who is probably the most sincere and solid of all the older fans. There is no question that EEEvans is one of our most worthwhile members, and that for a man of his age, his forbearance in dealing with and tolerating the frequently irritating group known as fandom deserves orchids rather than attack. But there are two attitudes (or rather two facets of the same attitude) shown in this current issue which I dislike so violently that I find it impossible to hold my peace.

The remarks (pp.3-4) on alcohol and prohibition show a complete failure to grasp the whole facts in the case. Evans talks as though people could be trained to avoid indulgence in something which perhaps injures them in the long run; he seems to feel that prohibitory laws are desirable. In the first place, there never has been any accurate and non-partisan scientific research conducted concerning the longtime effect of a moderate use of alcohol over a period of several generations. Distillers will tell us it hurts us not at all; prohibitionists will tell us that one glass of beer and we're on our way to the gutter. Neither, obviously, know what they're talking about, and both have axes to grind. Secondly, most alcohol users take this drug to escape from defects in either their environments or their own faulty personalities; without a few drinks, life is intolerable--with them, it may be borne with some degree of fortitude, perhaps may even seem rosy for a time.

Evans, apparently, fails to consider this escapist angle. I will freely grant that mankind would have no need for alcohol if all conditions were made so tolerable that there was nothing for him to escape from; however, I do not wish to see our anesthetic taken away from us until we are taken out of the torture chamber. I may perhaps be doing no more than to display my own lack of adjustment to life, but I personally have no desire to live without alcohol. I am a long way from being a dipsomaniac, but the fact remains that liquor softens the impact of life, and eases the tensions built up by the mere misery of having to live in so hideous and hateful a world. Whenever I find my inner tensions building up to such a point I'm ready to explode, I go out on a good tear, and wake up the next morning relaxed, soothed, and ready to carry on somewhat more light-heartedly. While the liquor may injure me physically, it heals me psychically; in the long run, I feel that I benefit from it. Another advantage of alcohol is its beneficial effect in breaking down inhibitions. If Evans will reconstruct society in such a way as to remove most inhibitions from us, I will be quite happy to let him destroy the distilleries, and take my chances on dodging the other miseries by some other means.

The other paragraph I disliked was the one about paying the piper. As long as "Al and Ollie and Fwankie" (HOW, by the way, does one pronounce "Fwankie"?) were willing to pay their own piping bills, I fail to see where anyone else had anything to complain about. Of course, if EEE had been stuck with performing these indulgers duties for them, he might have had something to yell about.

The whole thing is just this; I feel EEE should be willing to let us all go to hell our own way, without recriminations or preaching. After all, EEE is not responsible for us, nor should he feel any obligation to help us climb out of any holes we may fall into.

-oOo-

GUTETO. The Madman of Mars was bad enough to suffer with in "English"--if we must now endure a translation into Esperanto....I submit that Morojo is certainly capable of giving us a fapazine of far more worthwhile content and general interest than GUTETO. Should stuff such as this be given credit as complying with mailing requirements? And don't forget to get your green and brown ribbons, kiddies!

-oOo-

SAPPHO. I am delighted to have this worthwhile magazine resume, and only hope that Bill will get it in every mailing, rather than only in two per year. I should mention that the item on page 11, credited to RHBarrow and myself, was actually written by H. P. Lovecraft. I gave it to Watson when I visited him last fall, and told him that Barlow should be thanked in print for furnishing the typescript in the first place. My name has no business being on it at all.

-oOo-

BROWSING (2 issues). Good for you, Mike, I like to see lots of this sort of thing. In connection with collection arranging, I should perhaps sketch my own method. In the first place, I see no need of hard-and-fast arrangement; with the exception that I keep fantastic and non-fantastic material in separate cases, and in both cases make a supreme attempt to keep everything by any one author not only together on the shelves but in as near chronological order of writing as possible. Otherwise, I let the shape of my shelves determine what goes where, and make no effort to alphabetize, segregate special editions, or anything like that. I do not put very tall books next to very short ones, however; if I have a wide range in size of books by the same author I try to dispose the tall ones on a high shelf immediately beneath the low ones on a lower shelf. And I find box files entirely adequate and satisfactory for fanzines. All periodicals, pro and fan, are kept in chronological order.

BEYOND. Norm Stanley's unselfish efforts in publishing these very elaborate issues for Rosco certainly deserve a mention; there are few fans indeed who are so generous of their time and labor. Coward's Flight is the best thing in the issue, to my notion at least. There is something about the dialog that comes very close to catching the actual spirit of a dream....Your remarks on pp. 6 and 9 about fans losing interest I believe should be broadened to say something like this: "Fans do not so much lose interest in stf and fandom as they amplify their interests. When a fan first comes into the field, it usually is the first intellectual hobby he has ridden, and naturally he goes all out for it. Later, he finds other things to interest him, some of them the natural sequel to fandom, and others suggested to him or brought to his attention by other fans. Thus, he gradually reduces the time spent on purely fan projects--he may even say he's lost interest, but a closer examination of the case will usually show the interest still there but overshadowed by his natural growth. Evolution of interests is natural; the so-called "total fan", who year in and year out lives and thinks nothing but scientifiotion fandom is a pitiable case of arrested developement."

---ooOoo---

LIGHT. Had my last Fan-Dango been banned from the mailing, and Light included, I would have been furious. As it is, I enjoyed Les' typically bawdy wit to the full. Particularly delightful to me were the crudely drawn cartoons on pp. 2 and 6; though a long way from being art, they fitted beautifully into the local feud. Good old Les; in some ways he acts like a Knave!...I personally think your discussion on the CC was about three months out of date. And toward the top of page 4, you're talking like Degler when you speak so glibly of "millions of extra fans". Come, come....Your remarks on the relative merit of ASF and AS---well.. You might be interested to know that, though I still draw the line at Ziff-Davis, I quit buying ASF two issues ago. I purchase only FFM, WT, Startling, and Planet now...Your remarks on Miss Gargantua of Shangri-La are more or less right insofar as commonsense is concerned; however, there is a certain matter of postal laws. I was in the clubroom when Ackerman so lovingly pasted that piece of paper over the part of the picture he'd spent so many hours admiring, and know that the reason for this was not so much cowardice as his desire to conform with that section of the postal law which prohibits public hair. And on this matter of laws, I suggest that you clean up Light a bit, Les. There are so many legal ways of saying the same sort of thing!

---ooOoo---

AGENBITE OF INWIT. In response to the "Note To Mr. Laney", I should like to mention that, while the admittedly inept reconciliation of the location of Kadath was my own idea, I discussed this matter in a letter to Derleth at the time, and he was in accord with my using this attempted clarification. It is obvious that dreams distort reality, and that The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath was nothing more nor less than an attempt to depict a long dream realistically; on the other hand, many of the creations of the Lovecraft Mythos made their original appearance, chronologically speaking, in this story, and for this reason, I thought it best to make some attempt to square any inconsistencies. As far as believing that there is an actual connection between the "horrifying truths in Lovecraft's serious revelations, and the amusingly distorted weavings of Dream-Quest.."; there can be little doubt that there is such a connection. In one group of stories, HPL was showing as dream revelations the same horrors that he showed elsewhere with "cold, unromantic reality"....A point on which I will agree with you however is the last sentence on page 6. It is worth repeat-

ing: ".the day is coming when this nation will have to choose between its economic system (as is) and the welfare of the great majority of the people who inhabit it." Truer words could not be spoken... Getting lost in the microcosm of fandom? I can name at least one individual who certainly has managed to do this [...]. And I like Michel's Reflections very much.

---ooOoo---

EN GARDE. My lead article discusses your "Matters of Ethics"... I thought you wanted to clean up FAPA, Al, and here you call the ads in Fanfare "simply excruciating". They were, to be sure, but is this not somewhat inconsistent of you?

---ooOoo---

FAN-TODS. The age of wonders evidently is not over, when a man of Stanley's position resorts to statistical tables to make the lowly FTLaniac out a liar! Wheee! I feel no end flattered. Seriously, I admit I was indulging in the highly unscientific stunt of generalizing without working out the data completely; my point was and is, however, that a basic attitude of mistrust and disbelief is a handy thing to have in one's makeup. Obviously, I use some discrimination in what I accept or reject. If the statement comes from someone who should know, and who has no particular reason to falsify, I'm quite willing to take his word for it. On the other hand, if the statement comes from anyone who has a financial, political, moral, or other axe to grind, I tend to make a loud and disrespectful sound with the tongue and lips. Coming to cases, I will accept material coming from a non-commercial scientific laboratory; but will reject advertising, political statements, religious dissertations, and similar verbiage. I suppose that I err on the side of extreme incredulity, yet it is obviously impossible to guess right intuitively all the time, and I personally would prefer to reject a truth rather than to accept a falsehood. Just my Missourian ancestry, I guess.... And whaddya mean, calling me "a real old timer"? This, sir, is the fifth mailing in which I've participated, which should scarcely make me a veteran. But then, I like to be flattered.... Incidentally, lest there be any doubt on the matter, my crack at you under my discussion of FA a few pages back is strictly impersonal.... Also strictly impersonal is the following: On page 17 of FT, you say "CAPA MAILING: I hafta give Donnie an activity credential for this, you know." May I ask WHY? Though we muffed it ourselves by not saying so in the Lean-3 or whatever we called it, the underlying idea of submitting this junk was to serve as supporting evidence for Fan-Dango No. 3-A (the single-sheeter which demanded the expulsion of Degler). At one time, in fact, we intended to staple these sheets together, with Fan-Dango on the front as a cover. It seems to me obvious that Degler should have no activity credit for this stuff which we submitted to use against him, and I will state further that had I happened to hold your august office at the time this happened, I would have given credit for this pile of stuff to Laney, as part of Fan-Dango. You must remember that this is stuff which Degler left behind in his hasty evacuation of Shangri-La, and we salvaged it from Kepner's closet. Many of these items had never been circulated at all outside of Los Angeles, and would not have been, had we not decided to let Degler's own remarks damn him. Let's not let a little matter of stupid ethics stand in our way of squashing this creature.

---ooOoo---

SARDONYX. I wish to state publicly that Chauvenet is wonderful. Chauvenet is marvelous. Chauvenet is god. What a man! Fapafile is, of course, responsible for my delight--of the fans I know, Russell missed fire on only one, which is pretty doggone good for a chap who has met so few of these people personally. On Bronson, I feel you are mistaken. I have gotten to know Phil quite well, and certainly can

see no justification for calling him "an onlooker and dallying amateur only". While it is quite true that Phil's first flash of youthful fervor has worn off, and that much of the energy that he once spent on being a superfan is now spent in other interests, this is a poor thing to damn him on, for a similar statement could be truthfully made about most of the older FAPA members--including you'n'me! Since the first of the year, Phil has single-handed brought out one issue of The Fanta-site, and co-edited three issues of The Knavve (the third of which will be out long before this stencil sees print). I'm typing this on April 14; thus Bronson has published four fanzines in four months--rather a respectable batting average, don't you think? In addition, he has taken a very active part in local fan affairs during this time--has not yet missed a meeting of The Outsiders (which means an average of three evenings a week at club and/or publishing sessions), and recently staged the Second Santa Monica at which a baker's dozen of local fans gathered in honor of Stan Shack's Dal Coger and Chicago's Fwankie Wobinson.... "FEN WHO LIVE FOR FANDOM ALONE & NOTHING ELSE ARE PATHOLOGICAL CASES & NOT REPRESENTATIVE AT ALL," says Chauvenet on page 7. Pin this up on the LASFS clubroom wall, somebody!... And further to bring me glee, Chauvenet bats down Speer's ears on the negro question! LRC must be a Knavve at heart!

---ooOoo---

MOPSY, SUSPRO, and the S-F DEMOCRAT. I wish to state my emphatic approval of "No, No, 65 Times No". I believe that it is the feeling of most of the older fans that the law of diminishing returns steps in the moment one has to make a large edition of any fanzine, that the labor of crank-turning and assembling takes all the fun out of amateur publishing unless editions are held to a minimum. I already have to make 80 copies of Fan-Dango, since several of my non-FAPA associates seem to insist on copies; if I had to increase this run to 100 or 120, it would probably mean that Fan-Dango would appear about half as often as it does now. Or would this be advantageous?

Your rather nasty comments on my jumping all over Washington do not quite seem justified. It is true, of course, that "the best way to assure someone's adherence to a cause" etc. is to tear into him as I did; however, anyone who is such a stupid fool as to support Begler as long as Washington has can scarcely be worth keeping on our roster; it is doubtful if he has the intelligence to comprehend most of the material in the mailings.

Beyond Which Limits is one of the most valuable items in the mailing, and should be circulated rather widely outside of FAPA as well. Associating with Yerke has made me very libel-conscious, as he can see libel in nearly every controversial statement the way I word it originally.

Your attitude on the race problem betrays so hideously appalling a lack of tolerance, such a reactionary and anti-American outlook, that it is difficult for me to refrain from nasty personalities in commenting on it. If I should accidentally transgress the bounds of impersonal debate, I assure you it is not deliberate; but that my natural emotions at such a narrow and destructive view got the better of me. "But what kind of reasoning is this," you say, "Since African rhythms have entered into popular music, therefore, the negro's heredity is fit to mix with ours?" I violently resent persons who are unable to argue without putting words in their opponents' mouths. I have just reread my comments on Nucleus (Fandango I-3), and fail to see where I gave you this impression. My first paragraph discussed racial interbreeding; my second discussed a facet of what Trudy called "the rich cultural benefits the Negro race has to offer". If you are capable of reading anything openmindedly, I suggest you reread this.

In the discussion of racial interbreeding, you are missing the entire point. As a matter of fact, we do not know how this would work; so far as I know there have been no studies of this problem made on a basis of cold, scientific, controlled experimentation. In order to be able to state dogmatically that interbreeding is or is not a good thing we should have to back us up the results of a long and intensive series of experiments extending over several generations. Basically speaking, however, the only possible objections to racial interbreeding of any kind would be the inferiority of the mongrel product, in case the said product actually was biologically inferior. For example, if hereditary size of foetus failed to gibe with the hereditary size and flexibility of the vagina (as is the case, I believe, in certain Eurasian halfings) obviously such interbreeding would be wrong. Scores of other inherited factors--resistence to certain diseases, longevity, quantity and quality of synapses, muscular tone, to name a few--would have to be considered before we were able to state with assurance that interbreeding in a given case was or was not right.

However, matters such as these are not to be judged on an emotional basis of prejudice having its roots in the conditioned fears of a former slave-owning caste. Though you have repeatedly shown your ability to reason and evaluate intelligently, on this one problem at least you react without the faintest sign of mentality. Certainly you are not to be blamed personally for the conditioned reflexes which were instilled in you as a child; on the other hand, your utterances on such topics surely should be taken for what they are, and furthermore, you, as an intelligent person, should make every effort to keep unreasoning emotions out of what is merely an intellectual and scientific problem. In other words, Speer, your psychology is muddled on this one point; you should seek to recognise this fact, and attempt to rectify it.

But I veer. In considering this problem of racial interbreeding, we will have to go beyond the scientific and biological concept, and consider the social conditions which the children of such unions would confront. As long as we persist in treating the negro as an inferior, we must expect to have strong interracial feeling on both sides. As long as we insist on a person's having certain skin pigmentation in order to enjoy fully the rights which are the rightful expectation of all of us, we really have no right to demand that this situation be faced by innocent individuals who had nothing to do with their heredity. This argument, if carried to its logical extreme, would of course call for a complete cessation of breeding in such a minority group. Racial instincts concerning such basic necessities as the survival of a species will of course militate against this, and rightly so. Just who are any of us to say which species should be and which species should not?

The greatest fallacy of Speer's arguments lies in the fact that he leaps to the conclusion that EQUAL RIGHTS for negroes implies INTERBREEDING as a matter of course. Speer, in common with many thousands of others, seems to find the thought of intercourse with a chocolate cutie so irresistible that he must be kept from his desires by a system of repressive laws and tabus. The sisters of such people are so overwhelmed by the thought of a black lover that they too must have a curb put on them by society. If these restrictions were to be lifted, we would be treated to the spectacle of all marriageable whites rushing frantically after all marriageable negroes, with 85% of the whites being crowded out due to their much larger numbers. One can even imagine talented and beautiful white girls committing suicide, because there were not enough negroes to go around. That sounds silly, doesn't it? Yet, is this not the logical end of this terror of interbreeding?

In actual fact, if all interracial curbs and discriminations were somehow lifted this moment, the next ten years would show surprisingly

little increase in interbreeding. At first, due to the novelty as much as anything else, there would be a marked upsurge, which would gradually level off and finally decline to a point about where it is today. You must remember that the better class of negroes are as proud of their race as you are of yours, that there is a large amount of negro public opinion just as strongly against interbreeding as anything you can imagine.

Your "Recession" has little bearing on the case. You withdraw certain of your remarks on interbreeding, not because you have decided to look at these matters scientifically, but simply because you have found out that the miscegenation which worries you so is not as likely to take place as you had feared.

The most obvious difference between negroes and whites lies in a matter of inherited pigmentation. The most obvious difference between red-headed whites and brunette and blond whites is also a matter of inherited pigmentation. Would you care to join my new campaign to segregate all red-heads into ghettos of their own, so that they will not contaminate our sacred selves with their loathsome presence? Oh, I forgot. What color is your hair, chum?

---ooOoo---

WALT'S WRAMBLINGS. Alter-hobbies? I am a hobbyist from way back. In 1923 I commenced collecting postage stamps, and rode this hobby full blast until 1936, when I sold my collection--which by then had reached gigantic proportions. I still collect revenue and telegraph stamps, and find much pleasure in so-called poster stamps (reklamemarken). At the same time I collected coins, paper money, and sundry other corruption. At the age of 10 or 11, I commenced a museum, which continued until I was 14 or 15; it ran strongest to mineralogical exhibits (my Dad was a geologist) and indian relics. From 1926 until about 1930 I rode entomology quite hard. I've been reading and collecting books since I was 9 or 10 years old; though of course I've made and disposed of many collections as my tastes changed. I was late in getting interested in women; did not start chasing around much until I was 20--but the past decade has seen my album of memories crammed with many lovely pressed rosebuds. 1935 saw me start collecting phonograph records; at first I collected everything and anything, but I now limit myself to hot jazz plus a limited amount of swing. About 500 records at the moment, I suppose. Another of my big hobbies is woodworking, carpentry, etc. I also like to prowl in second hand stores and junk shops, whether actively collecting or not.

---ooOoo---

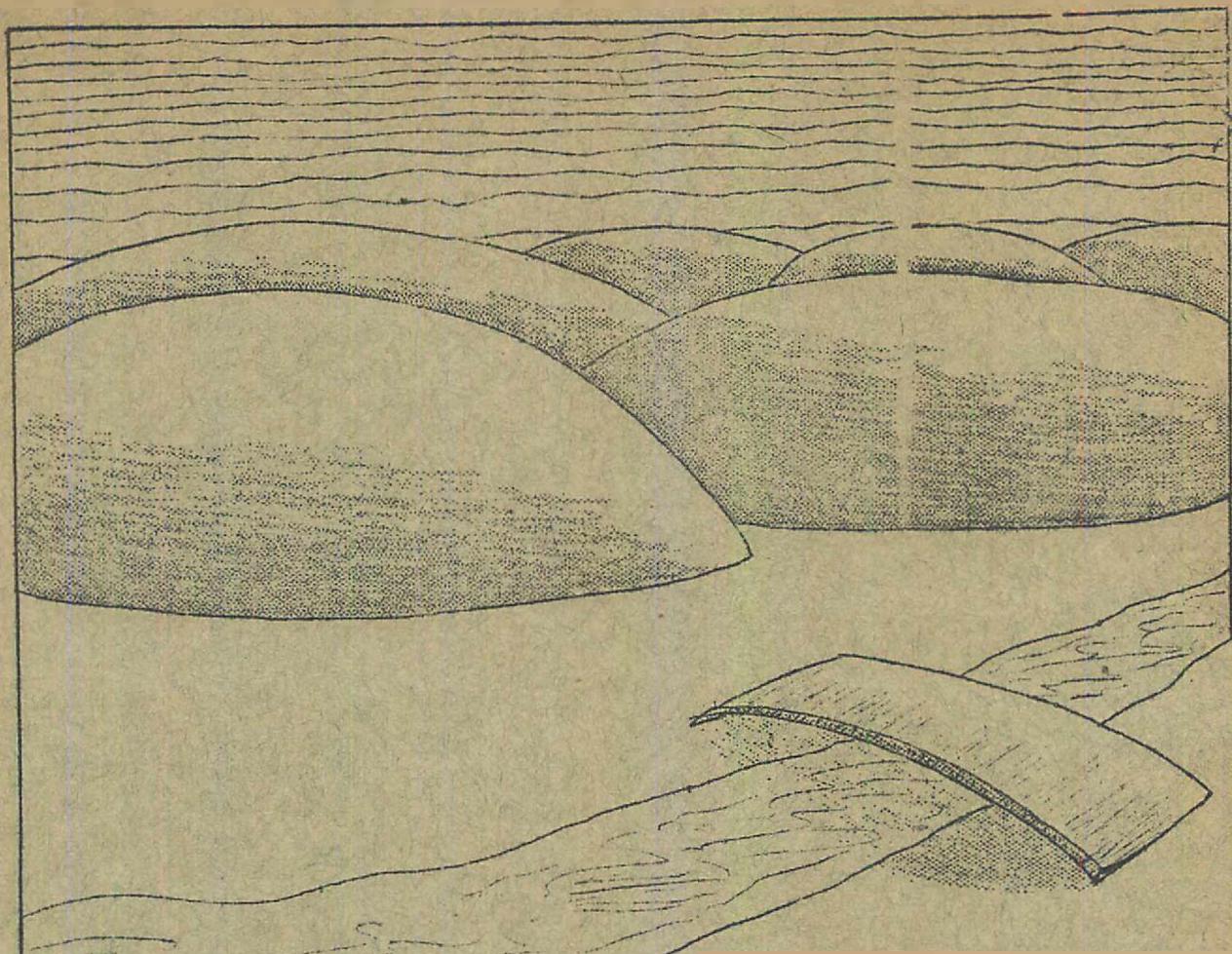
HORIZONS. Your page 3 remarks on Degler are a bit wishy-washy, aren't they?...I'm glad to find someone else who is unawed by Campbell. As far as I'm concerned, ASF is gone. It is just as stereotyped, just as pulpuky, as Amazing; though of course in a different way. Street and Smith needs a new editor badly.

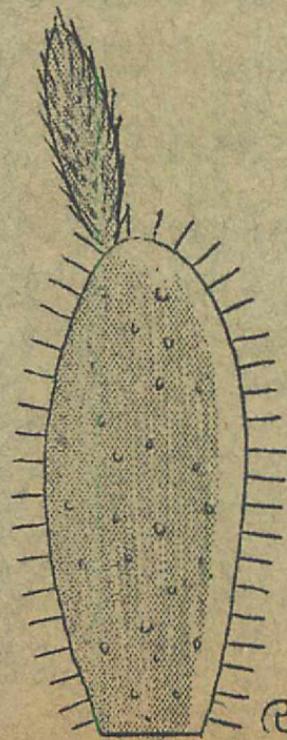
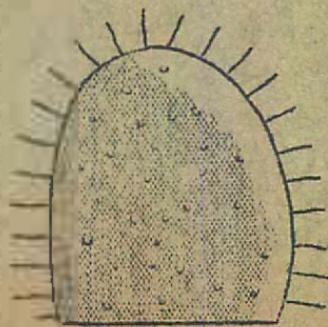
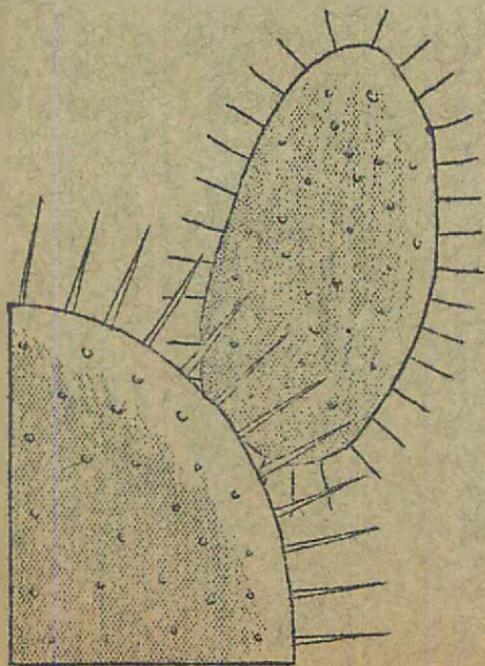
---ooOoo---

CELEPHAIS. It is regrettable that the genius who conceived the air-tight packing for this magazine did not have the foresight to send along instructions for opening it. The Clark Ashton Smith reprint is marvellous, though, and well worth the half-hour fight it took to get the mag torn apart. (By the way, how many FAPAns have untorn copies of Celephais??) One of the best in the mailing.

---ooOoo---

BLITHERINGS. I originally intended to tear this apart in my well-known nasty manner, and then ask Chan if he felt at home! However, I shall content myself with a raised eyebrow at The Next Step (good stuff, but practically unfeasible from a realistic point of view), a burst of applause for the pro-labor attitude, and a disgusted grimace





Rahu

at the apologetic for Street and Smith. In connection with this last, I can't resist taking a poke at the phrase, "trying to convert a non-fan". Why would one wish to do such a thing, anyway? Is not the missionary closely allied to the reformer? Live and let live, say I, and to the devil with trying to drag everyone into fandom. If I were going to do some recruiting, I'd go at it from the amateur journalism, fanzine, FAPA angle; and use books as the ammunition for the fantasy aspect. Perhaps some of the 1939-40 ASF would be all right for the purpose, but the present brand of junk is not worthy of consideration. You mention the Campbell regime articles. I was not aware that intelligent people learned their science from popularized features in cheap magazines. But had always believed they read books for such knowledge. You disillusion me, oh no.

Your simplified spelling is far worse than Ackerman's, beyond which I can think of nothing nastier to say. Why not learn to express yourself in literate English like a human being, instead of descending to such cheaply immature exhibitionism? You state that the purpose of doing this as you do is to make the reader read slowly; in my case, it kept me from reading much of the mag. The portions I did read were read only through a strong sense of duty. Oh, well, put B in every mailing, and don't let a few nasty cracks scare you off.

---ooOoo---

A STATEMENT FROM THE FUTURIANS. "Give Degler His Due"?? How about a good swift kick? He has it coming!

---ooOoo---

FANTASTICONGLOMERATION. I hope that everyone understand that my digs at this magazine have no connection with the local feud. But I feel that this publication, which undoubtedly cost the most of any item in the mailing, has less of lasting merit to recommend it than 90% of the other zines in the mailing. The cover is interesting, even amusing, but I fail to see that this was worth lithographing. Pong is screamingly funny. Vision Into the Boundless moderately interesting, the rest of the mag? Well? A person with Ackerman's avowed love for the field and his immensely long connection with it, should be capable of something of solid, lasting merit; rather than the typical insane display of intellectual sterility which has characterized so many Los Angeles publications.

---ooOoo---

FAN-MAP plus THE END OF THE WORLD. Interesting.

---ooOoo---

YHOS. WHERE do you get the idea that I was raised a catholic?? As a matter of fact, my religious education was characterized by its complete absence; I've never attended a sunday school, nor have I been to church more than eight or ten times in my life.

---ooOoo---

NUCLEUS. Trudy, you talk a good deal about girl-fans, how they should be treated, and so on. I believe you should have amplified your statements by pointing out the fact (evident locally at least) that the average male-fan is very badly adjusted to women, and that the presence of a girl in a fan club is enough to turn 90% of the members inside out emotionally. With this regrettable state of affairs obtaining, you can scarcely expect these people to behave toward you as a fan; to them you are that rara avis in their cramped lives, a woman. But what can you do about it? The mere attempt to make the LASFS more social and human blew the club apart... My definition of fan did not imply that a person had to be a total-fan; merely that these criteria should apply to his or her activity, what there was of it. On rereading, I see I did not express myself accurately.

FAN-DANGO. Published for FAPA by Francis T. Laney. Stencilled 4/16.