

Dave Van Arnam wafts this endless on-stencil essay to you (200 and more of you) via the SF WEEKLY envelopes, from 1730 Harrison Ave, Apt 353, Bronx, NY 10453. It is theoretically free (or for trade), and yhos doesn't in the least mind seeing it written up in fmz review columns.

FIRST DRAFT #201

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Mehitabel Likes St Louis.

WE CONTINUE with Rick Sneary's letter, picking him up with his second topic.

RICK SNEARY :: Dec. 28th, 1967 ((Installment Two...))

As I don't smoke anything, I am hardly personally interested in legalizing pot. It may or may not be harmful, but I remember that men have been smoking tobacco over 400 years, and science is just getting around to proving that it helps kill you. Marijuana supporters can hardly prove that it doesn't harm its users.. I find it hard to believe that any chemical that effects the body or the mind to any degree, can not have some lasting effects. ←(Well, yes, of course. A chemical has an effect, therefore it has an effect. The question is the possibility of any serious harm. One of the great opponents of LSD and the psychedelics is Dr Donald Louria, author of DANGEROUS GIFTS, I think the title is. He has been thundering about the landscape of the NYTIMES Sunday Magazine section and elsewhere, telling us how dangerous LSD is because Bellevue Hospital, bolt-hole for half the nuts on the eastern seaboard in popular mythos, has over the last year or so had about a hundred people come there suffering from bad LSD trips. Most of them, at that horrifying two-a-week rate, were over the bad effects by the next day. A handful (Louria gives no particulars) suffered acute psychotic breakdowns which required more lengthy hospitalization. Louria also notes with odd satisfaction that the number of bad-trip cases at Bellevue has been steadily lessening, indicating to him that less people are using it, and indicating to me that the users are learning more and more about how to use it -- take your own choice. The point of this? If LSD, the utterly horrible filthy dangerous vile psychotic killer, etc. ad nauseam, produces so few bad scenes, how much, how very much less. dangerous pot must be, seeing that LSD is thousands of times stronger than mescaline, which is hundreds of times stronger than pot. And psychotic breakdown is the only even half-way serious charge against pot. -- dgv→)

I have a very strong personal feeling against the use of drugs -- by me that is. I have long had that odd feeling the "I" am a little green man looking out the portholes of a poorly built machine. Mostly I control what it does, but some times the machine brakes down and wont run, even though "I" feel fine. At other times the "machine" acts in a manner "I" don't like, but the controls don't respond. A few times when I have drank too much, there is the slight panicky feeling afterward that I've lost controll... (Please, I'm not really as nuts as this sounds.. I'm exaggerating to a degree to make my point) Due to poor lung-heart operation I have to take pills daily to put enough Oxyagin into my blood. If I don't, I tire easily, as though I had suddenly moved to a very high elevation and was short of breath... -- To fight hay-fever, I have to take an anti-hystamine, which in two hours makes me quite drouzy, and for 36 hours I feel tired and mentally listless.... To counter that I

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(RICK SNEARY continues ::)

have a small pill that charges me with mental enrgy inside of an hour. It makes me talkative, and seemingly my mind is, if not clearer, moving faster....

All these things are out side agencies effecting my person-ality. I hate the thought that how I act and behave is not dependent on my own will and ideas, but on what pills I have taken. The "machine" is the master at times like this.. I would never submit to loseing more control though the use of drugs I didn't have to take. (I do drink, but lightly, and not very often, and I'm not always pleased with the results.) -- This is of course a personal reaction, and I'm not saying others should'n't use them because of the way I feal...but I can't understand the desire.. I can see how some one might want to kill their mind, but not to distort it.

-- Rick Sneary

☐☐☐ Dave Van Arnam back again, to the bottom of the page.

I think one basic crux of the matter is that very last sentence. I have seen this misconception of psychedelics expressed by several fans in various apas, and of course the notion is rampant in a probable majority of the various types of public presses.

I am not really ready to unleash this next gun; I have a lot more read- ing, a lot more studying, a lot more thinking, and some other things to do before I can be sure that I am not somehow getting things wrong. Basically, I have for the last few months been reading a number of books by Alan Watts, all of which are basically explications of Zen Buddhism. And Zen Buddhism promises (and, apparently unquestionably, delivers) a fundamentally changed outlook on what is so casually termed Reality. The premise is that the ego, the "I", is a cultural myth, that there is no little man inside one's head, in control of everything in the body. The body runs itself. Left to itself, the ego-less mind and body will run itself, and far better than the ego can, because the ego simply gets in the way with irrelevancies.

Now this is a gross oversimplification, beyond question, and omits a number of crucial matters, as I have stated it. And before anyone lands on me with piles of history telling me Buddhism has done this and that and the other Bad Thing to people over the millenia, I'll agree: Buddhism itself quickly degenerated. But Zen, so far the ultimate derivation from the original Vedanta concepts, has not degenerated in the last 1200 years or so.

This, however, is getting away from my point, which is this: Zen works. There seems no reason to doubt that satori is attainable, and that satori transforms a man's life. And what is satori? The final flash of revelation, of release, of Liberation from all societal myths, etc., a changed way of looking at things. Which is precisely -- and this is the reason for bringing up Zen before I was ready to -- what the psyche- delics do. But, just as with Zen, one must study, one must understand, what one is getting into, beforehand. When a child first starts to speak, to use words, though he has made perhaps the major changeover to humanity he still can't write a book, can't discourse on philosophy or world affairs or music or sex, until he has learned enough. TANSTAAFL, in a way; to achieve Liberation one must work for it first, in Zen, and should, in my opinion, work for it first, by studying, before using LSD. But neither Zen nor psychedelics distort reality -- they make it pos- sible to see reality, free of societal irrelevancies and untruths.

☐☐☐ Hoping you are the sane...

-- dgV

The Fifth Annual

ELEVEN-FOOT POLL

(for science-fiction and fantasy that you wouldn't touch with a 10-foot poll)

For several years there have been numerous polls asking science-fiction and fantasy fans which were the best novels, best prozines, best fanzines, etc., of the previous year. The Eleven-Foot Poll provides a way by which fandom can vote on the WORST items in these various categories. Eligibility for these categories shall be the same as for the corresponding categories on the Hugo ballot. Eligibility for categories not on the Hugo ballot is at the discretion of the voter. Any person considering himself a science-fiction or fantasy fan may vote in the Eleven-Foot Poll. All categories refer to science-fiction, fantasy, or fanac of 1967.

WORST NOVEL _____

WORST NOVELETTE _____

WORST SHORT STORY _____

WORST DRAMA _____

WORST PRO WRITER _____

WORST PRO ARTIST _____

WORST PROZINE _____

WORST FANZINE _____

WORST FAN _____

WORST FAN ARTIST _____

WORST NEW FAN FASE _____

SPECIAL AWARDS _____

Return this ballot on or before 1 March 1968 to John Boardman, 592 16th Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11218, U. S. A. The results of this poll will be published in our new fanzine, as yet untitled. The results of the first four Eleven-Foot Polls appear in LEFTOVERS #2. Both LEFTOVERS #2 and the new 'zine cost 25¢ a copy, subscriptions 5 issues for \$1.00.

To prevent double voting, please fill out the lines below. YOUR REPLIES WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. Other fan editors may also print and distribute this form verbatim. No complaints about this poll being inadequately representative of fandom will be entertained from anyone who received a ballot and did not send it in.

Name _____

Address _____