

ISSUE #8

GLITZ

FAPA
Feb. 1993





Chatterboxing

Arnie talks about his life and times

The first symptoms of illness are often more terrifying than the actual disease. That's the way it is with deadline-itis. This malady, known to strike four out of every five FAPAn's, can turn a high-volume contributor into deadwood overnight.

So I'm worried, very worried. Each mailing, I seem to flirt more intimately with the deadline, hurrying **Glitz** a little more on each occasion to make sure that I don't commit the mortal sin of missing a mailing.

You think I am harsh to declare missing a FAPA mailing a mortal sin? Consider this: A FAPAn who misses a mailing will find it that much easier to succumb to sloth.

Sad, but true. Once a fan has sunk to the depths implied by skipping a bundle, it is incalculably more difficult to avoid sinking into this depraved form of behavior again.

And do you know where falling

into the habit of missing mailings leads? To arrant deadwoodism. It is the first step on the road to contributing eight pages about your plants per year.

There are some people, men and women of iron will and implacable determination, who have survived in the gray area of the deadwood pile. It doesn't surprise me that Robert Silverberg, noted for his rigorous writing regimen, can unfailingly get that eight pager in on time.

However much we would wish it, few of us tread the olympian heights inhabited by Agberg. Think of some of the stalwart fans who have gone from an occasional missed mailing to deadwood to ex-members. Burbee, Rotsler, Hoffman, Tucker.... the list is long. Even God Himself, Elmer Perdue, was not able to sustain annual minac forever.

So I glance nervously at the date circled on my calendar. Is it merely that I am unusually busy

with work, or have I manifested the first stage of the inexorable decline that will lead me out of FAPA, perhaps to end my days in some lesser amateur press association.

It could be that too much work is responsible for my laggard production pace on **Glitz**. I'd almost forgotten how exhausting, involving, and complex it is to launch a magazine. The first **Electronic Games** went on sale in early October, and I am pleased to report that the monthly is now well-established. Circulation is going up every issue, and the advertisers are signing up in growing numbers, too. We seem to have found an audience that wants a more sophisticated electronic gaming magazine, but we have no way of knowing its potential size.

One of the trickier aspects is working with people based in the Chicago area. When we were

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with *Video Games & Computer Entertainment*, our only responsibility was the editorial content of the computer section and a few regular features like the News and the Game Doctor question-and-answer column. My responsibilities are more sweeping on **Electronic Games**, so there's more communication needed.

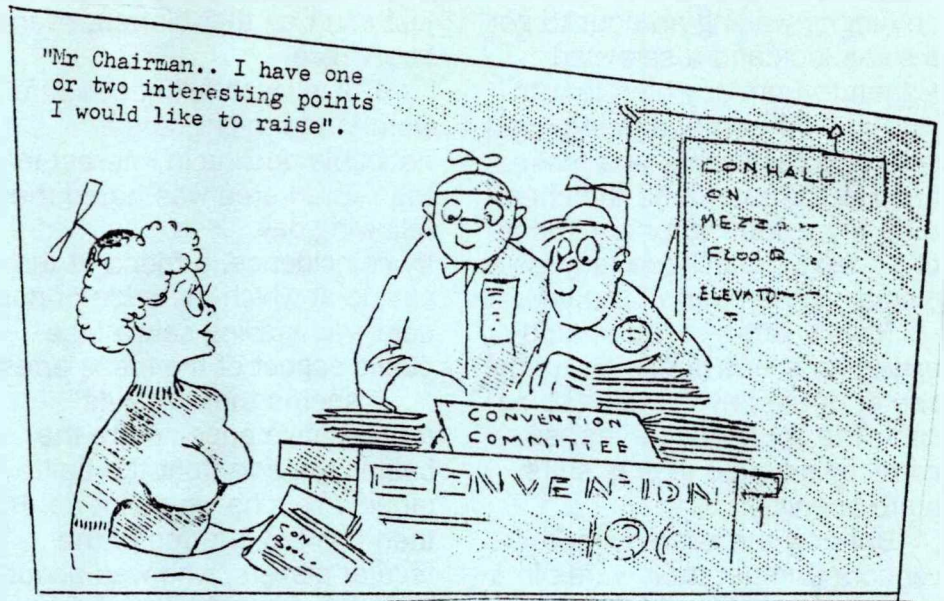
Working with people outside the office is new for the publisher, too, and this combined inexperience causes headaches from time to time. Nothing frustrates like waiting for approval to do something you know will be approved, but which you can't do until you receive that approval.

Steve Harris, Decker Publications' top man, is a hands-on publisher. It's not unusual to find him working all night, laying out pages for **Electronic Gaming Monthly** if the deadline starts to pinch.

On a day-to-day basis, it's sometimes easier to work with a more passive publisher. They don't know what's going on, so they don't meddle. In the long run, I prefer working with a highly involved guy like Steve Harris. He contributes some very good ideas, and he's knowledgeable enough about magazines and electronic gaming to listen to me when my ideas are worthwhile.

Things are working well enough that Decker will soon launch a magazine about electronic sports games under my editorship. Bill, Joyce, and I probably won't write for it as much as we do **EG**, which will give me a chance to buy a little more freelance work. And, yes, that's a hint for FAPAns who want to write about sports games to get in contact.

The biannual Consumer Electronics Shows are the twin



foci of our work year. When the home consumer electronics industry gets together in Chicago in June and Las Vegas in January, you will always find Bill Kunkel, Joyce, and I there from opening bell to exhibit tear-down.

Knowing the predilections of some of my fellow FAPAns, I am fairly sure that mention of CES brings one overriding question to your minds: Was I at the live sex show that the police broke up on Friday night?

I would like to tell you I was there, and that several female FAPAns dances on little tables in g-strings, but such was not the case. At the risk of permanently lowering myself in the eyes of my hero, C.R. Harris of Daventry, England, I confess that none of the local fans were within miles of this landmark event in the history of smut.

I used to stroll through CES' x-rated video area when it was right there in the same hall, since its exile to the Sahara Hotel about five years ago, that wonderland of bizarre glitz is too far out of the way for me to

bother.

By the time I had stopped paying my annual visit to raincoat country, EIA had forced the exhibitors to tone down their booths in a foredoomed effort to make the tawdry adult movie industry fit harmoniously with the ivy league cleanliness of car stereo and portable telephones.

A turnstile separated x-rated land from the real world in those days. Once through, it was aisle after aisle of displays of sexually explicit films. Many of the booths had a mostly nude starlet or two to pose and sign autographs for video store retailers and the relatives of everyone attending any other part of the Consumer Electronics Show.

One company set up a ring and had bikini'd grap[plers sliding around on the hour, and many companies had screens on which the hottest scenes showed continuously.

The most interesting aisle-walkers are the Japanese women. The mammary development of the porno queens mesmerizes them.

These dark little women think nothing of waiting an hour to get a close look and a scrawled signature from any blonde with 40D'a. As they stand in line, they twitter to each other and make hand gestures around the chest area while craning for a glimpse of whatever junoesque lady is on display at the head of the line.

Male visitors to the x-rated exhibition sneak peeks out of the corner of their eyes, trying to be cool. The Japanese ladies, so correctly dressed in gray suits, stare openly.

But now the x-rated video vendors trumpet their wares in a location far removed from the electronic gaming world. Chronically pressed for time, I have ceased to make those little side trips.

So we were not at the Big Bust Bust. When I heard about the incident from my agent Barry Friedman the next morning, my first thought was that some companies had gotten lazy. Otherwise their common sense would've warned that setting up a tent behind an adult book store right on the Las Vegas strip, and then letting hundreds of guys go there to attend a life sex show with audience participattion wwas certain to call down the wrath of the Metro Police.

Back in the early 1980s, the video cassette publishers threw lavish suite parties for potential customers. A colleague who wangled an invitation to several such fgathering told me they were all essentially the same. In the front room were the "B": listers, guys who couldn't put much money into sexy tapes. They got free drinks and a little flirting with voluptuous women in lingerie. My informant's *schnorrin*g talent wasn't equal to obtaining entry to the back room.

This time, the companies decided to throw one big party

instead of a lot of little ones. You just can't be that blatant, even in Las Vegas.

The jail was full of beautiful women that night, and a noticable decline in interest in the x-rated area was noted the following day.

By coincidence, a friend at the casino at which the pride of pornography was staying saw a less public aspect of the mass arrest.

It seems that the girls' representative appealed to the basino boss to front the bail money. This he would not do. He then pointed out one of the regular players, who was about \$50 G's ahead for the night.

The high roller was made to understand thjat there were 14 female dirty mopvie stars who would feel a special warmth if he would put up the dough for bail. The repreentative suddenly found himself buried in high denomination chips (white checks, as they are called). He was observed at many points later in the weekend in the company of an amazing assort of escorts. He had a smile on his face that no amount of bad luck at the tables could wipe away.

Even in the midst of adversity, there is happiness.

Aside from the jugs juggling, the top CES event was the formal introduction of the 3DO interactive multimedia system. A consortium of companies hopes to establish a standard format for home CD-based hardware and software. When Time Warner, MCA, Matsushita, Kleiner Perkins, AT&T, and Electronic Arts get together, it's big.

Trip Hawkins, 3DO president, rates consideration as the next head of the NSA; 3DO was the best-guarded secret in home electronics. Despite all our sources, Bill, Joyce, and I had only the haziest information until

I interviewed Hawkins and software honcho Bob Faber shortly before CES.

The same engineers who created the Amiga have designed a machine with graphic capabilities far beyond anything currently available. A 386sx computer displays 256 colors and refreshes the screen at the rate of about one million pixels per second. The 3DO can show a million colors and animated at 64 million pixels per second. (Since humans can see over 100,000 colors, is 3DO looking for buyers among domestic animals?)

Without getting any more technical, 3DO sets new standards for graphics and sound. You can get more details in **Electronic Games** (unpaid advert.)

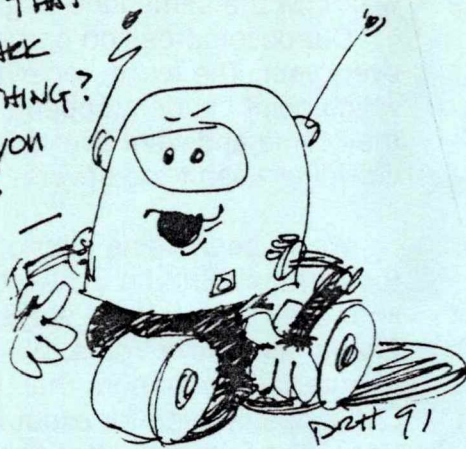
Panasonic, AT&T, and Sanyo will debut unit in time for Christmas at a retail price of \$700. More than 80 software publishers are developing games for this system, and at least 40 titles will be ready when this gizmo hit the stores.

We've already fairly involved with what some believe will be The Next Big Thing. KKW is designing some games for 3DO, and it is likely that we will produce a magazine that addresses the 3DO audience next summer.

The market will determine the fate of this mammoth project. The early signs are encouraging, though. The demonstration impress the hell out of me, but I admit to a little bias.

A story that received no mention was the narrowly averted severe drought threat that menaces CES. I suppose its short duration and confinement to the South Hall Annex caused the absense of media attention.

YOU THINK THAT
LAST REMARK
WAS SOMETHING?
WAIT 'TIL YOU
READ THIS
LETTER!



Bill Kunkel got ill on the first day of the show. He had slink home in the early afternoon to recuperate.

Bill returned to the firing line the next day, rarin' to go. Yet he seemed oddly changed.

The new Bill Kunkel emerged at breakfast. As we wolfed down the Sahara's fine club sandwiches, I noticed that he emptied his water glass several times and even ordered a Sprite.

Soon we were at the convention, ready for the day's first meeting. "Would you like something to drink?" the PR woman asked soliciously.

As I mumbled something about having just finished breakfast, Bill bestowed his beaming smile upon our hostess and said that, yes, he would really love a Sprite. As we discussed the company's forthcoming wares, Bill nonchalantly downed the entire can in about three gulps.

We were soon on our way to the next session. Again, the host offered refreshments. I declined with thanks, but Bill was already chugging a can before the echo of my words had died in the small office hidden at the center of the booth.

As we continued our rounds,

Bill's insatiable thirst seemed to grow rather than diminish. If a booth failed to invite him to have a soda, he asked for one.

During our visit to the Sega exhibit, a company executive took us to the private Club Sega dining room. When Bill saw the trays of sodas, I thought he would snap. I half expected him to dash across the room and fall on them.

"Soda... soda... I must have soda," he croaked. His hands opening and closing reflexively. Sega lost no time getting him a frosty can.

As we crisscrossed the hall, we occasionally run into colleagues. Whenever we saw Laurie Yates, the Elf had a 32-oz. drum of soda in hand. And every time she came within range of Bill "The Camel" Kunkel, she ended up holding a big empty.

By afternoon, the dwindling supply of free soda was no longer equal to containing the Kunkel thirst. Other, less aggressive CES attendees staggered down the aisles, bloated tongues vainly moistening cracked lips.

We bought Bill a soda or two at the restaurant set up in a tent next to the exhibit hall. This soothed him, at least temporarily. We hustled out of

the hall for the trip home before he could further deplete the soft drink stocks. I fancied I saw Bill eye passing soda delivery trucks hungrily as we drove back to our part of town.

Representatives of the Guinness Book of World Records

Willis Plays Vegas

A fan novel

by

Arnie Katz

\$10



Luck of the Fannish

A Fan Novel

by

Arnie Katz

\$5

**Live Right --
Buy Both**

were not present, so I don't know if Bill's pop binge set a new standard for compulsive carbonation consumption. The same goes for his assault on the urination duration record that undoubtedly occurred later that same day. We who were not there can only imagine.

One of the nicest fringe benefits of our move to Las Vegas is that we don't have to face a red-eye flight back to New York after about five days of nearly non-stop work. We'd finish our work at CES by about 3 in the afternoon, and then we'd wait until after midnight for the invariably delayed flight to depart.

Since moving to Las Vegas, the winter CES has become much easier in some respects. We go home to our own comfy beds every night, see our pet cat Slugger, and have easy access to supplies like business cards, notebooks, and pens.

On the other hand, we ended up working a lot harder for a lot longer. The Electronic Industry Association, sponsor of CES, schedules four days of events, in the belief that more would be ruinous to mental and physical health. This year, our meetings persisted for eight days. I found it tough going, despite having the staff of **EG** (Joyce, Bill, Ross, Marc Camron, and me) and top freelancers (Laurie Yates, Russ Ceccola, and Ed Dille) running the obstacle course with me.

One problem is the nature of the assignment. Joyce, Bill, and I have a dual agenda. We have to cover the show as journalists as well as meet industry clients and prospect for new design, evaluation, and consulting work.

Our part of CES is expanding as the expanding market for electronic games involves more and more companies. The hall they couldn't fill five years ago, sharing it with giant satellite dishes and x-rated videos, now overflows into a vast tent for Nintendo, and several large exhibits in other halls. Add to that the companies which set up exhibit suites in hotels, and there are a lot of stops that have to be made. Russ Ceccola, a dynamic 25-year-old, scheduled 43 half-hour meetings in less than three days. We spaced them out a bit more, owing to our age and slothfulness, but all of us kept in motion for a week and a day.

We've established a winter CES tradition of throwing a party Saturday night at our home. We wanted to give people a respite from the high-pressure meetings and press receptions. Mostly,

we throw the same kind of gala we'd give for fans.

Our decompression parties have gotten larger every year. The fourth renewal drew at least 220, at which point Laurie stopped counting. Fortunately, they came and went over a four-hour period, so the crowding wasn't too severe.

We've been doing a lot of fannish entertaining, too. Jeff and Sharon Schwartz, a nonfan couple we knew well in New York, stayed with us from Christmas to New Years. We used that as an excuse to entertain even more than usual. We had a Christmas reunion for expatriate New Yorkers, a big Social the Saturday after Christmas, and a New Years Open House.

Elsewhere in the mailing, assuming I get it done, you'll find a collection of three recent oneshots. Doing fanzines at big parties has become a Las Vegas institution. Sometimes they're pretty good, although the tendency to pontificate is tough for some local fans to resist.

In case you've missed the other references in the mailing, it looks like Silvercon 2 will have some special appeal to many FAPAns. The con, scheduled for Las Vegas' Plaza Hotel the first weekend in April, has Poul Anderson as pro GoH and William Rotsler as fan GoH.

I think that's a pretty exciting pair of notables, but the good news got even better when Joyce and I received a note from Cora Burbee saying that she and Burb will be among the merrymakers, too! Other FAPAns who've announced plans to attend include Robert Lichtman, Art Widner, Jack Speer, Richard Brandt (and Michelle Lyons), and all the locals (Yates, Forman, Bernardi, Burke, McDowell, Chamberlain, and us).

It'll be a relatively small event with a relatively relaxed air. Joyce and I want to personally extend an invitation to everyone to converge on Vegas. We can provide transportation from the air port and other helps for those who might need them,

We'll host a FAPA party on Saturday evening. The one at last year's Silvercon was one of the event's bright spots, and this time should be even better. If you weren't at the first one, you missed Woody asking Speer if he's a member of FAPA, and who knows what might happen this time?

It may be your sterling personality that cajols Rotsler and Burbee back into FAPA!

Bill, Laurie, Joyce, and I had dinner with Robert

Bloch in mid-January. He was here to star at a Book Fair. Laurie left a message at his hotel, he called me, and we arranged to pick him up at the Sahara.

I hadn't seen Bloch for about 25 years – a too-often-repeated phrase in my writing, I admit, but true – and I was scarcely more than an eager young neofan at the time. We've stayed in good fannish contact, though, so I was a-quiver with anticipation when we collected him.

Bloch is as much the legendary fan-pro, though he was sometimes pro-fane in his zingers at the foibles and foolishness of the world around us.

His tentative gait suggests that his eyesight might be on a par, if not worse, than mine. It was all Laurie could do to shepherd Robert and I through the dimly lit restaurant.

We ate at the All-American Bar & Grill in the Rio. It's a beef-eater's heaven. My filet mignon was, as usual, among the best I've had anywhere. (The prices are typical Vegas, too. I held off going there originally, because I couldn't imagine that a 10-buck steak would be very good.)

Bloch proved as mental agile as ever, despite the deleterious effects of 60 years of fanning. He kept the conversation so lively that, for one of the few times, I was too enthralled to jot down notes. My apologies for not being able to regale you with his anecdotes and quips.

I brought my hardback first edition of "The Eighth Stage of Fandom" (with dust jacket), and he obligingly inscribed it to me. I thought about bringing a large jar and making an attempt to Pickle

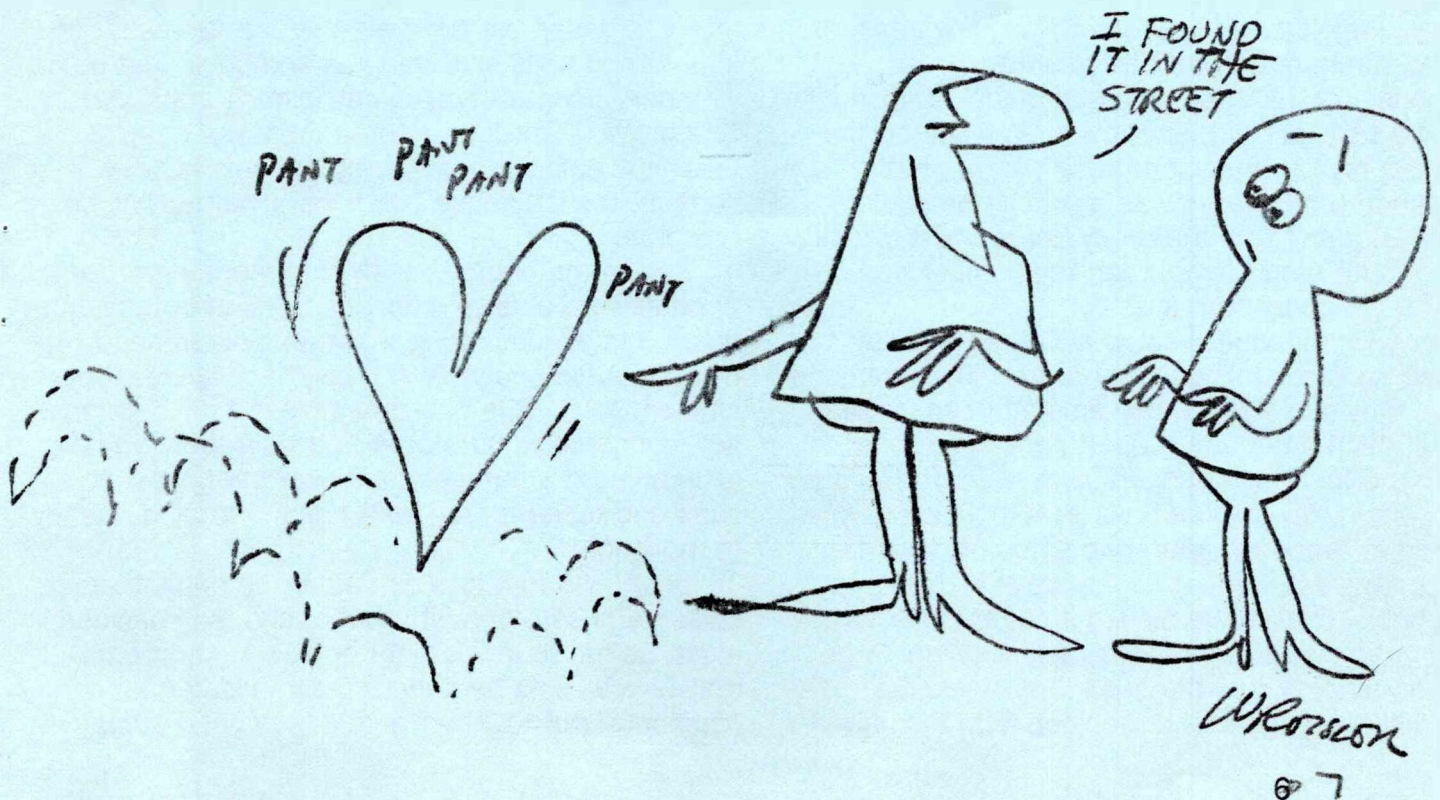
Bloch for Posterity, but I didn't want to risk embarrassing our guest in a public place. I also decided that trying to come up with a new wrinkle for Pickle Bloch for Posterity might be only one notch above making a pun on his name.

For the first time, I'm going to testify as an expert witness. I've done consulting on some cases, and Bill Kunkel has appeared in two different actions, but it looks like I will actually be called by Atari Games in its legal battle with Nintendo.

The most interesting thing so far was the deposition. The opposition's lawyer questioned me one very long day during the first week of February.

Both sides agreed to meet me in Las Vegas, owing to my hectic schedule, so we met at the office of a firm affiliated with the one handling Atari Games. Four of us spent nine hours, minus one for lunch, locked in a tiny room (me, the two lawyers and the stenographer. To add a slightly unusual touch, she worked with pad and pencil rather than a machine. Apparently, this was rare enough to impress both of attorneys.

It wouldn't be ethical to discuss the meat of the examination, but I found the process fascinating. Objections and counter-objections flew across the table like an episode of "Perry Mason", though I sensed that neither lawyer took anything personally. My guy wouldn't let me answer a few questions, which raised the room temperature, and we even had a few Secret Conferences.



Joyce Katz's Carrying On...

Let's All Get Small

I've always loved tiny things. Miniatures enchant me, and dioramas, which reduce life to a manageable size, are even more intriguing. When I was a child, I never sought out giantism, but loved best the toys that were small replicas of reality.

This fascination with the diminutive has continued all my life. Among my souvenirs are toy zoos, plastic cowboys, tiny Indian villages, elves, birds, vehicles, and dozens of other objects of small moment. I drag them all out for the Holiday Season, annually remarking "it's amazing the things people give you over the years". Inwardly, of course, my cynicism is all fake, and even as I unpack I rejoice over the return of my tiny treasures.

No surprise, then, that I've always loved dollhouses. I had a small metal mansion when I was 10-11 years old, and it was undoubtedly the greatest toy I ever owned. I don't know what happened to it; when I was a young woman it vanished along with the teddy bears and babydolls of my youth, and I simply can't remember how or when it got away from me.

As a young adult, I could never really justify getting another dollhouse for myself. They are quite bulky; they occupy a goodly amount of space that was at such premium to apartment dwellers.

This Christmas changed all that. Now that Arnie and I are in Nevada, we have a lot more space than we had in Brooklyn, and Arnie gifted me with the finest, fanciest, largest dollhouse in Michaels (a craft-hobby chain). We picked it out together; the completed display model was a real seller. Three stories, nine rooms, three porches/balconies...it's styled like a gingerbread mansion from the late

1800's.

I waited to open the box with great anticipation until December 23... we were expecting holiday visitors to arrive at midnight, and I thought it might be nice to have it up, or at least in process, when they came in.

I was totally unprepared for the contents of the box (which had assured me of easy-assembly). The instructions came tumbling out of the box along with hundreds, perhaps thousands, of tiny pieces of wood, and bolts and screws and nails. Each piece of roof was an individual shingle. Every piece of flooring was a separate board. The walls were not, as I had supposed,

in precut

sections to snap together; they were separate strips of siding. There was even, ghu help me, brick dust, from which I was expected to painstakingly form bricks for the foundation of the edifice.

Do I need to tell you how far from my dream this was? The project was infinitely beyond what I have time, or interest, or probably ability, to tackle.

But ghu does provide, if your fannish heart is true (and maybe even if it isn't). Laurie Yates said she'd be interested in undertaking the building....even when I pressed her privately and assured her that she really didn't have to do this monumental good deed, she persevered in her intent to assemble my dream house. So I sent the lumber and nails and shingles and brick dust home with her, along with my overwhelming gratitude. She predicts it will take three months...I say at least six. But, three or six, by the next holiday season, the dollhouse I've always wanted will be complete.

Having the onerous task of carpentry removed, I am therefore able to relax and think of nothing but decor. I'm accumulating furniture by leaps and bounds. Arnie bought my "heavy" appliances, so my kitchen is set. Sue Williams gave me my bathroom set (complete with hamper and wastebasket). I've accumulated a three-piece wicker set (loveseat, chair and table) for my front porch. I'm all but ready to move in!

Dollhouse furniture can either be bought intact, for fancy prices, or built up from kits, so I decided it might be fun to tackle a kit or two. My first effort, I realize now, was perhaps too complicated for a beginner. I put together an old-fashioned pump

organ, then painted and finished it. It doesn't look bad; one or two of the side pieces are a bit crooked, and although the keyboard was no problem, I couldn't manage gluing in the itsy-bitsy stops. (Since then, I've dug out my magnifying stand and slave hands which I used when I painted D&D miniatures, so I'll do better next time.) I antiqued it..actually, more than I intended. I wanted to make it look just a little aged, and instead it looks like it's been stored in a barn for 20 years. But, it's not too bad for a first.

I was a little more crafty, and a lot wiser, when I picked my second project. Although my skills were slightly improved, I chose a simpler kit, with fewer pieces, and none that were as tiny as the organ stops. I successfully completed my rocking chair and footstool with no great trouble...and it doesn't look half bad.

Tales of SilverCon

Excitement grows in Las Vegas as the time for SilverCon 2 draws nearer. Scheduled for April 2-4 and originally billed as a relaxicon, the plans are increasing to the point that there will be quite a bit of programming for me to ignore.

I'm very happy about the hotel the committee chose. They originally had picked the Aladdin, which is an atmospheric, yet slightly down-at-the-heels strip hotel. When management decided to replace the ballroom with a mammoth buffet, thus eating away at our plans, the committee wrestled between an upscale glamorous strip hotel, and the slightly seedy but ever-exciting downtown area, where the lights never dim and the action lasts 24 hours a day.

I really like the idea of being in the bright; going to downtown Vegas is like going to the French Quarters of New Orleans. Funky, loud, and garish....all the cheap food convention-goers could

ever want, and just about a block from the city's bus station.

The hotel itself is a biggie, right at the end of Main Street, Jackie Gaughan's Plaza. (I didn't make that up.) I expect to have a ball.

As time gets closer, the list of friends planning to attend grows. **Poul Anderson** is GOH, and that's very nice. On the fannish side, it couldn't be better. **Bill Rotsler** is fGOH. Among the expected guests are **Robert Lichtman, Art Widner, Jack Speer, Richard Brandt**, plus the sizable local contingent of FAPAns and FAPA WLers. The biggest surprises on the guest list so far are **Charles and Cora Burbee**. We are quite overwhelmed, here in Vegas, at the brightness of the stars converging here.

Gardening Update

There'll be no garden this year. Harumph! Bah humbug!

Worley-Gigs

(Isn't this a nifty title **John Hardin** thunk up for me?)

The Winter Consumer Electronic Show, held in Vegas during the first week in January, was the healthiest my industry has seen in years. It would seem that everyone made money last year; the holiday buying season filled the companies' coffers, and the mood in South Hall (where the gaming industry is ensconced) was cheerful and optimistic.

Nintendo isn't the dominant force that it was this time a year ago. Sega's Genesis has a very strong backing; the market is about as evenly split between the two companies as has been since....oh, since Atari and Odyssey first started mixing it up in the early 80's, before Atari gained its supremacy.

Both companies are doing more development in the United States this year; that puts a lot of money into the gaming economy, instead of it all flowing



toward Japan. And, computer software sales are also up. It may not be exactly a boom, but then, no one is going bust right now, either.

Rather than Arnie, Bill Kunkel and I working the show on our own, we actually had a fair-sized team. At least 8 writers were going around on behalf of **Electronic Games**, not counting the ad salesmen. Yet, even with that many people working, it was still, as always, a stretch. There was no way that any one of us could see everything; it took combining all of our notes to put together anything like a complete picture.

A good-natured rivalry sprang up among some of us: who could have the best, and the most pages of notes. (Editors dream of this kind of self-motivated contest.) The result was a document the size of a small book, with details and descriptions that became the basis of the special CES coverages.

The afternoon of the last day of the show everyone started transcribing notes. The next day Arnie actually put together, with a little help from the rest of us, a special five page CES section for the March issue. Now comes the amazing part: Before the end of January, we actually had the first copies hot from the press, with the CES coverage! This is the fastest, most timely turn-around I have ever experienced in all my days of magazine writing. Now, **Harry Warner**, I realize that this is nothing by your newspaper-trained standards.... but magazines are normally ponderous, slow-moving entities. It was completely exciting to be able to get the show highlights to the readers within the same month.

Ah, just wait 'til Chicago show in June! We'll wow 'em with our wheels.

I'll be seeing you....

Until next time.... I hope to see some of you at SilverCon in April, and will see many more of you at Corflu in Madison, in May. Party On!

- Joyce Katz

The Battle Hymn of the Insurgents

(to "The Battle Hymn of the Republic")

By Arnie Katz

Francis Towner Laney slashed a fugghead with his pen,
The fugghead gafiated and was never seen again
Insurgents make our fandom better for all decent fen
Their zines go pubbing on!

(chorus) Burbee, Rotsler, Towner Laney
Burbee, Rotsler, Towner Laney
Burbee, Rotsler, Towner Laney
Insurgents never die!

Tucker fought the staple war 'cause he knew right from wrong,
But when he wasn't really dead, *Astounding* said, "So long."
Then Bob was resurrected in the guise of Hoy Ping Pong
Le Zombie marches on!

(chorus) Burbee, Rotsler, Towner Laney
Burbee, Rotsler, Towner Laney
Burbee, Rotsler, Towner Laney
Insurgents never rest!

We went down to a fan club just to see who would be there
We saw semi-psycho fuggheads, narrow minds, and greasy hair
The stretch of unwashed bodies was impossible to bear
Insurgents sound off now!

(chorus) Burbee, Rotsler, Towner Laney
Burbee, Rotsler, Towner Laney
Burbee, Rotsler, Towner Laney
Insurgents never die!

Sci Fi

Thots on the Sci Fi Channel

Did you hear about the Science Fiction Channel? Unfortunately the new cable service, which premiered last September, is still just an enticing rumor here in Las Vegas. Prime Cable, the cable operator for most of the city, has declined to carry it.

At first they told callers that there wasn't enough interested in the service to justify its addition. Of course, that was waving a red flag in front of area fans. Soon the phonecalls grew so numerous that they stopped putting complainers about Sci Fi Channel through to the program director. That's when SNAFFU organized a big letter writing campaign.

When the avalanche of mail failed to produce any discernible effect, the club decided to stage a small protest at Prime Cable's headquarters. I wrote a press release and faxed it to the three

major local T.V. stations, which produced a very favorable story on the protest on channel 13's evening news.

The sign-waving and speech-making, led by Aileen Forman and Joyce, had little immediate impact. Prime retreats to a claim that there were no available channel slots. In the long run, however, the hubbub has alerted Prime to the fact that there's money to be made from this rocketshit. The operator has just moved to larger quarters and expects to add additional channels soon.

It was particularly galling to miss seeing Joyce's brief appearance, during the first week of Sci Fi Channel. At Magicon, a video crew drafted her and Suzanne Vick as window dressing for a Jack Williamson interview segment. Even my agent Barry Friedman, who lives in the wilds of New Brunswick,

Canada, saw Joyce.

The Sci Fi Channel is a harbinger of things to come in home entertainment. The idea is straight out of the narrow-casting handbook. When an audience is divided among a great number of alternatives, securing a niche audience is a sure way to guarantee a share of viewership.

Las Vegas has over 40 channels available on cable. That's a lot of choices, even if many of the offerings are far from choice. Thirty years ago, a city the size of Vegas might've had five channels, and none of them would have touched round-the-clock science fiction with a Frederick Pohl.

Even those towers of broadcasting power, the networks, have felt the effect of the multiplication of channels. Budgets for episodes of regular series are lower, relatively

cheap shows (sitcoms and tabloid news) dominate programming, and the number of homes tuned to the networks has slid steadily in recent years.

The networks peddle audience size. There's some demographic analysis, but it mostly boils down to numbers. A show with an awful rating is seldom spared because of its appeal to a particular income, ethnic, or age group. (An exception: golf, which stays on because rich folks watch it in big numbers). and the shows with "top 10" total viewership are seldom downrated no matter what the composition of their audience. If a show appealed to the mentally ill so much that they all tuned in every week, *TV Guide* would call it a megahit.

So the size of the science fiction audience doesn't look too bad these days. The success of "Star Trek" movies and T.V. shows, Stephen King and similar authors, "Quantum Leap", and the half-hour video anthologies like "Tales from the Darkside" and "Tales from the Crypt" hasn't hurt, either.

As an outsider, I can only speculate about the reasons The Science Fiction Channel hasn't rocketed onto the airwaves as originally planned. There are probably things of which I am totally unaware, but a few factors have certainly had some effect on the launch.

One roadblock may have been a couple of rival cable channels with fairly similar formats. Cable systems saw the confusion that ensued when The Comedy Channel and Ha! tried to sign up outlets at roughly the same time. Rather than make the wrong commitment, some cable operators evidently preferred to make none.

It's hard to believe, but the

cable dial is getting crowded. The theoretical number of channels is huge, of course, but the technological limitations of older cable systems restrict the actual number in most areas. Some cities won't have space to add another basic cable service until one of the existing ones falters.

Like most fans, I'm hoping that The Science Fiction Channel can surmount these problems, put together a schedule, and attract enough advertisers to make it a financial success. My fanzines don't carry much sf material, it's true, but I am a sucker for electronic SF.

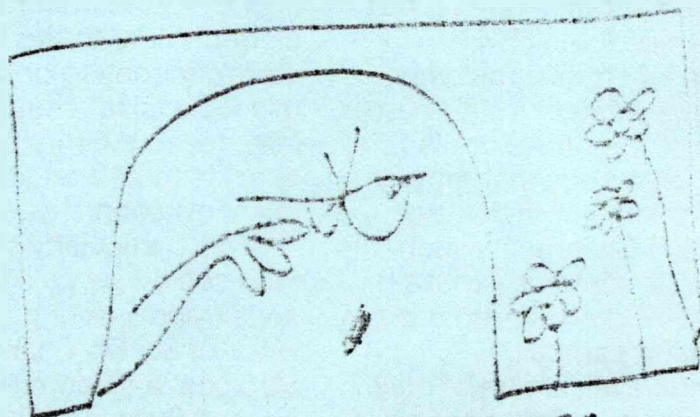
It seems logical to assume that The Science Fiction Channel, when it turns on the juice, will have a selection of movies and T.V. series. I especially anticipate seeing "Dr Who" again. It was a favorite when I lived in New York, where it's on a half-dozen stations in various formats and time slots, but it isn't shown in Las Vegas.

All the programs the Science

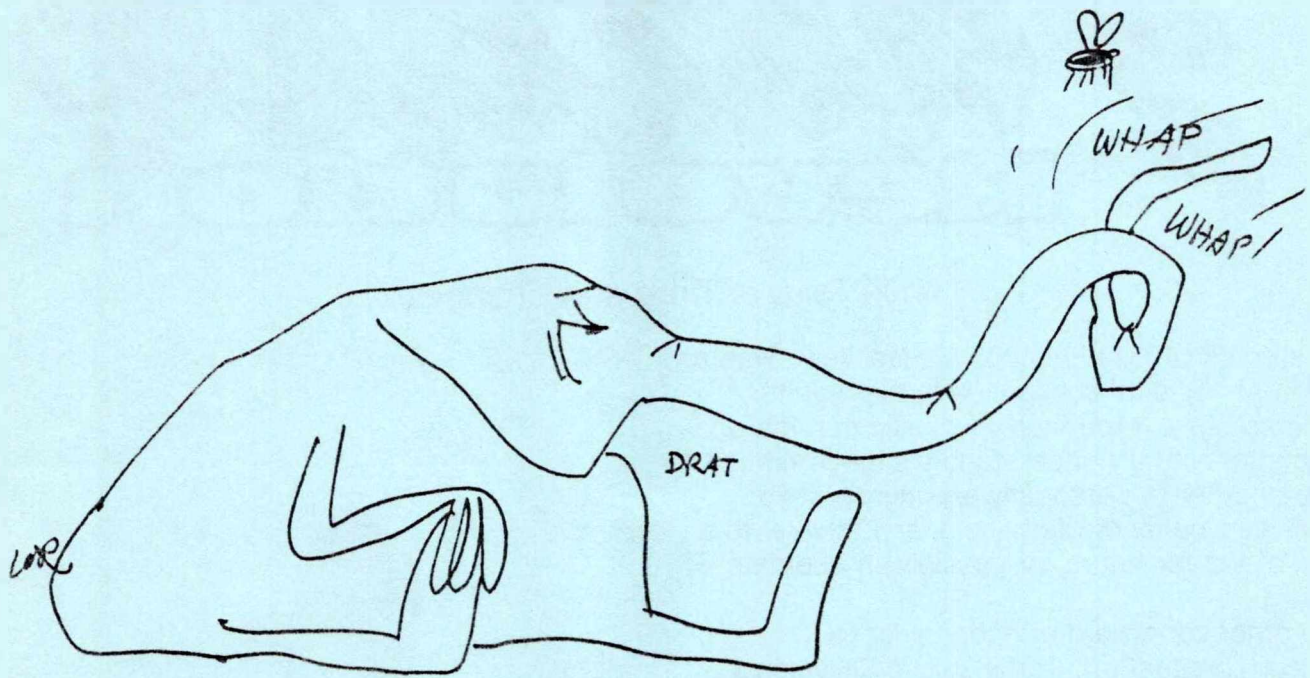
Fiction Channel might want to telecast aren't available. Some movies are already part of packages, while syndication contracts are likely to take some beloved T.V. series out of contention. We might get "Twilight Zone" and "Night Gallery", or it could be "My Favorite Martian" and "The Invaders".

What else will we see? I mean besides Harlan Ellison telling the world about his hard feelings toward fandom. Discussion shows, Japanimation, remotes from cons, and tons of old movies are good bets to get air time.

Even with multiple repeats of each show, all those hours will prove hard to fill. ESPN throws in guaranteed crowd-pleasers like skeet shooting and women's bowling, when it doesn't have enough basketball, baseball, and boxing. When The Science Fiction Channel gets into a similar bind, it may be a choice between running badly dubbed



WHAT ARE YOU FLOWERS
UP TO ?



"Super Argo" movies and making a little room on the tube for Fandom.

So they'll try "Super Argo". Eventually they'll get desperate, and then fandom will get its shot at glory. Fandom owed it to itself to be ready to take advantage of this opportunity. Here are a few ideas I've had for original programming with a science fiction slant.

Beauty and the Beast (Drama)
• 1 hour

Drama romance, and bumper sticker philosophy wash across the cathode ray tube in this moving series about a femmefan and her Gestetner copier.

Insurgents (Adventure) • 1 hour

The coast-to-coast

adventures of a band of fabulous fannish coeditors, who are kicking out at random righting wrongs offandom. Greg Benford plays himself.

770 (Comedy) • 1/2 hour

He's oh-so-cute and cuddly! He's Mike Glycer, the editor of the world's most infrequent newszine, and the star of this laugh-a-millennium sitcom.

The Wonder Years (Comedy-Drama) • 1 hour

You'll laugh, you'll cry in this long-format adaptation of "The Immortal Storm".

The B-Team (Drama) • 1 hour

Tonight's episode: Enter Wally "Wastebasket" Weber!

One Fan's Family (Comedy) • 1/2 hour

He has six kids (boys), she has four (girls). Together there's One Fan's Family -- and the members of the first apa founded for residents of one home.

Quandry Leap (Science Fiction) • 1 hour

A trufan voyages back and forth through Numbered Fandoms as she tries to return to the early 1950s. Tongith: Lee faces a fan crisis in 1967. Bjo Trimble: Debra Winger.

And when there isn't a show they can bear to stick on the air at, say, 5:30 AM Sunday morning, it'll be time for the program for which trufans have hungered without knowing what it was. That's when they'll run "The Fandom Infomercial"!

The Fantasy Revolution

Arnie Talks of Time and Changes

Westercolt .45, in Phoenix, AZ, last July, was a typical large regional convention to most of its 1,800 members. It stunned Joyce and me. It's one thing to intellectually understand a situation, but it is quite another to personally experience it. For most of the weekend, I felt like a time traveler to a fandom of the far future, or possibly an alternate reality.

The other cons we'd attended prior to Westercon (VegasCon, Corflu 9, and Silvercon 1) didn't prepare us for the sweeping changes since our last spate of con-going in the early 1970s.

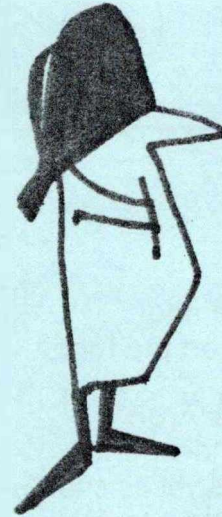
Everyone assures me that Westercolt .45 was a mainstream con with broad similarities to other large regionals. Arizona fandom seems disdainful of fanzine fandom, but Westercon still drew enough familiar-to-me people to make it a pleasant couple of days.

Nonetheless, it was a radical departure from any con we'd previously attended. New (to us) were: the huge number of "hall costumes"; the heavy emphasis on gaming; the shift in huckster room merchandise from books and magazines to jewelry, blades, staffs and the like; and the masquerade replacing the banquet as the con's most important official event.

These drastic alterations in the fabric of fandom have provided much material for thought. Today's fandom is the consequence of many causes, but I have a theory that the most important influence is the change in emphasis from science fiction to fantasy.

I'm not saying the changes of the last two decades are good or bad. They make "Fandom-at-large" of less interest to me, but the current state of affairs clearly delights a vast number of people. I would never want to take away their fun.

This article isn't a call for changes in Fandom.



It's just my attempt to explain How We Got Here from There. Personally, I'm quite content to attend the cons, like Corflu and Ditto, that cater to our little splinter of fandom and Pub My Ish. At heart, I guess I'm still one of those little boys who likes to pull apart his toys and see how they work.

Fantasy's traditional place in fandom was as a special interest. Some folks read it, but you can do anything you want in the privacy of your own home. Many fantasy authors had large followings in fandom – Lovecraft, Bradbury, and Howard, to name three – but fantasy was an adjunct to science fiction. With the possible exception of the "Conan:" saga, most popular fantasy was of a distinctly literary bent, contrasted to the pulp s. f. dispensed by *Planet* and *Startling*.

Science fiction dominated conventions through

the mid-1960s. Most masquerade costumes were whimsical, fannish, or derived from science fiction. Fantasy-inspired costumes usually presented some classic horror element like vampires or werewolves. Hall costumes were virtually unknown. Anyone who wore a stfnal ornament was sure to draw attention, because it was a rare thing.

The huckster room was mostly old books and magazines. Filk singing featured humor about books and fannish references.

I think there was also a special relationship between the pros and fanzine fans. So many had passed through the hobby, and there were always the likes of Bloch and Tucker to provide a direct connection. Even the pros without fan experience sometimes found that fanzine fans were kindred spirits – bookworms who liked a good bull session about outlandish ideas and respected the talent it took to make a living as a writer or artist.

Gaming had no official status. Chess, hearts, poker, and homemade science fiction boardgames got the most play late at night. Unless you count Tucker. (I always count Tucker, who is quite a card himself. A ten of clubs, I believe.) One of the highlights of my first worldcon, Discon in 1963, was a game of chess with Kate MacLean. The easy familiarity that develops over a game made it possible to narrow the gap between an awestruck teenager and a Genuine Pro Author.

A series of pop cultural events, with repercussions far beyond the narrow confines of fandom, reshaped s.f. fandom into an informal network of fantasy fans.

The Tolkien boom of the late 1960s, kindled in part by the hippie counterculture, had a profound effect on fandom. Fans had touted the merits of Middle Earth for many years, but the Tolkien boom threw the trilogy into the thick of sercon discussion.

(I don't know how to evaluate the impact of the Burroughs boom of the mid-1960s. John Carter, Carson of Venus, and Pellucidar probably fall into the science-fantasy category, which means that these books may have prepared many for the adventurous fantasy of Tolkien.)

It was natural for publishers to see the incredible success of "Lord of the Rings" and seek to emulate it with new fantasy fiction in the same general mold. Terry Brooks' "Sword of Shanara", a novel pretty much disdained by fans at the time, showed that the author didn't have to grapple with the lofty themes of "LOTR" to appeal to that new audience.

Then came the sword & sorcery craze, which drew strength from the upswing in mysticism in

Western Civilization that also led to the New Age movement. Blade-bearing barbarians swashbuckled their way through movies, comic books, and innumerable novels.

Like the Tolkien boom, the mania for sword & sorcery increased the number of fantasy lovers in the general population, the pool from which new fans are drawn. The rise of sword & sorcery also signaled a shift in the fantasy mainstream, away from the lofty themes and heavy content of Tolkien to stories that stressed colorful setting and characters in simple, action-driven plots.

Many science fiction fans esteem fantasy because its most notable expressions derive from literary, rather than pulp, tradition. With exceptions like Michael Moorcock, sword & sorcery is pulp fantasy. A person who masters the elements of the genre can sell books that do not depend on bold new ideas, mind-boggling concepts or deep, convoluted philosophical themes. More people are capable of writing a story about a deposed princeling who must cross the great wilderness to assemble the seven segments of the Sacred Staff of Setaract to rescue the princess and reclaim the throne than can produce a salable science fiction novel.

In the late 1960s, some fantasy fans graduated from reading and watching it to acting out its more colorful aspects. The Society for Creative Anachronisms made its first worldcon appearance at 1968's Baycon, somewhat to the distaste of science fiction fans. Renaissance Fairs generated even more pseudo-Medievalists with a strong interest in costumery.

All of these factors fueled the mania for RPGs (role-playing games) in the 1970s. "Dungeons & Dragons" and other games of this type captured the hearts of millions of players, the most creative of whom became Game Masters (the person who writes and runs the RPG).

Game Masters (GMs) spend months designing backgrounds, detailed to the lowliest shopkeeper in some cases, before characters begin their first adventure. During the interactive gaming sessions, the players' responses embellish the GM's creation. Games often take unexpected swerves when particularly ingenious RPGers find unanticipated solutions to the GM's traps and puzzles.

What makes a successful design for an RPG campaign? Ingredients of the best ones include: a detailed, logical world with enough unique features to engage the players' attention; vibrant characters who take on added depth as they survive adventure

after adventure; tricky situations that require ingenious solution; combat action; colorful non-player characters, and an articulate GM with a knack for description .

Almost unconsciously, GMs learned to create a fantasy novel. Like earlier generations of fledgling writers who used a fanzine apprenticeship as a pro prep school, RPG fans acquired enough skill to sell.

The novels they write, like the campaigns they plan, are heroic fantasies with a strong emphasis on puzzles, clever twists on standard plots, bravura characters, and lots of detail in costuming and weaponry.

Heroic fantasy has become a self-sustaining genre. There are enough RPGers and masqueraders looking for inspiration for their projects to keep quite a few fantasy writers churning out trilogies.

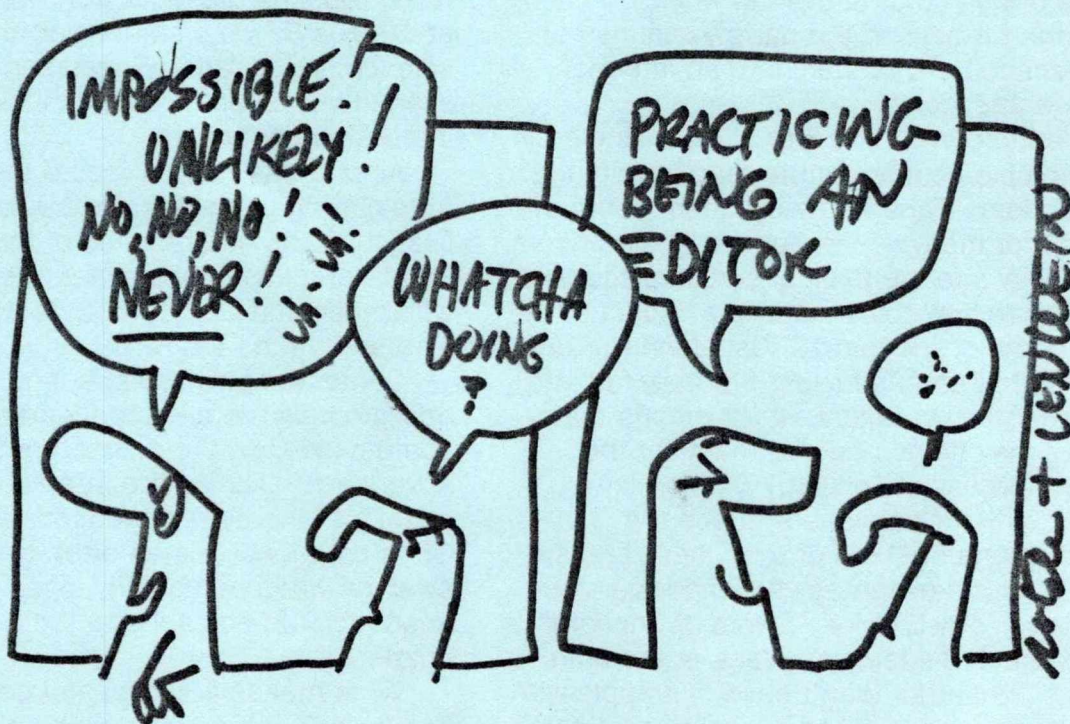
Fandom has no membership requirements, because there's no umbrella organization to set up rules. But perhaps there are "unofficial" prerequisites. People pick hobbies that meet their needs. There are many reasons why I'm a fanzine fan, but some have to do with the pleasure and satisfaction I get from fanac. Otherwise, I'd do something else.

Many of today's fans seem to have a different set of needs than the folks who became fans in earlier eras. Traditional S.F. fans had a literary bent. Fanzine fans carried their appreciation of written creativity to the next level, attempts to write, draw, and edit.

This may be reaching, but I think what most current fans want is more drama in their lives. Masquerades, live-action medievalism, hall costumes, and other manifestations of current fandom are all based on "personal drama".

Could this explain why efforts to recruit fanzine fans from among those who go to cons has worked so poorly? If my notion is right, most of those who go to the large cons don't share fanzine fans' love of literature. There'll always be a few who love both lit and drama - fanzine fandom always has its flamboyant personalities and enthralling speakers - but fanzines answer no particular need for most con-goers.

When I was a young fan, no one except maybe John W. Campbell wrote much about the differences between science fiction and fantasy. Now that fantasy has surpassed science fiction in importance to fandom, those differences have reshaped the hobby.



Carnival of Comments

Arnie comments on FAPA mailing 221

The Fantasy Amateur #221

I'm no authority on FAPA history, especially the most recent era, but I think this must be the largest mailing in some time. I know some people complain when the bundles grow too fat, but I wouldn't mind seeing FAPA crack the 500-page barrier, perhaps as soon as the May 1993 mailing.

What impresses me most is that the quantity is spread over 50 zines. If a substantial number of FAPAns develop the every mailing habit, it virtually guarantees that the group's upward trend will continue/

Eight on the waitlist! I know all of them, some very well, except Jurgen. I'm so eager to see them advance to membership that it tempts me to revive in seriousness the idea I flippantly advanced for an open, floating membership limit.

YHOD #52 (Art Widner)

My sympathy on your loss, Art. I suffered one myself just prior to this mailing when my father died after a four-year illness. He suffered several heart attacks and numerous heart failures, which left this very physical man weak and beridden. (I may write more about my feelings about this in the future, but your eloquence persuades me to think about it a bit more before I try to capture my feelings in words.

Some Comments #3 (Graham Stone)

I can understand A.E. Van Vogt's compulsion to re-write his stories at every proffered opportunity. I seldom resist tweaking my stuff here and there if fate grants me another shot at it. Writing often comes down to a compromise between how good

you'd like something to be and how quickly the deadline for it arrives.

Van Vogt's writing methods, described in a 1960s con speech, may shed some light. He claimed to write his novels a paragraph at a time. His goal was to introduce something new in every paragraph. This resulted in some erratically written novels popping with ideas, but it may also explain why re-writes lack the flair of the originals. Van Vogt wrote the stories with little pre-planning, and he may have found it hard to get in the spirit of the material the second time around.

Notes from Ariman (Roy Tackett)

Thanks for sharing the Bubonicon dramatic tradition with FAPA. I think it's great when the hosts try to do something more than an assembly line regional. I wish an enterprising Albuquerque fan would get into the video software business and make copies of this annual event available.

You know, there might really be a small business in the idea. Selling videocassettes of important sf/f events could be profitable. Cons and clubs might conceivably start selling video rights, but such fees could be worked out on a royalty basis.

For FAPA (Eric Lindsay)

Konami released **Batman Returns!**, the computer game we designed, in January. It's too early to know if the ennui generated by the movie will cast a pall over what I think is a rather original adventure title. It's possible that the success of the Batman animated T.V. series will compensate for the effect of the mediocre sequel to the hit movie.

Licenses can be a two-edged sword in electronic

gaming. A great license can puit a so-so game across with the public, but a license that doesn't pan out has the power to sink even anoutstanding game.

Competition for high-potential licenses is fierce. Video and computer game publishers often pay before the property proves its worth. For example, many companies buy movie-based licenses based on a preliminary script and a list of the cast members.

In the last couple of years, heavyweight boxinh licenses have suffered a particularly high mortality rate. Imagine the explaining that an executive who bought Buster Douglas or Evander Holyfield had to do! Some might say companies that buy such specious names get what they deserve. Certainly, the purchasor of the Douglas license was warned that Tyson's conqueror was almost certainly headed for ther old fighters' home in record time.

Although *Beyond the Enchanted Duplicator* is not a fannish touchstone, at least for me, I'd unhesitatingly recommend it as good reading for any fan. Willis and White attempt to enlarge the definition of trufandom to include fans who pursue activities other than fanzines, but the presentation is not wholly convincing.

Disinformation 41 (Alrthur Hlavaty)

Seldom has fandom spoken with such a thunderous, unified voice. My attempt to design a quantitative measurement for fanzines may have reduced the value of the paper on which it was printed, but it is a pleasure to see such unanimity of opinion in fandom. Even Andy Hooper, whose trailblazing article inspired mine, told me to give it up.

At the risk of boring FAPAnS further with an explanation of an explanation, my goal was to create a rating system that could be applied to fanzines from all fandoms, not justours. I didn't mean to suggest that this rating is a substitute for an intelligent, incisive review. Rather, my intention was to provide a common frame of reference for all personal publishers.

My approach is patterned after the baseball writings of Bill James. He fostered a scientific method of evaluating baseball statistics called sabremetrics. I guess I was trying to launch Fanometrics.

Horzons #206 (Harry Warner)

That "Ah Swede Idiocy" pun deserves a letter bomb – and a point for humor on my next poll ballot. It conjures up a singularly frigthening fannish

concept. We are all familiar with Carl Brandon, Jr., otherwise known as John-Henri Holberg. His love of American fandom, and the fannish spirit that CJB ep[itomized, led him to adopt the name and the attitude.

But what if another Swede of different bent felt the same way about the Stormy Petrel and adopted the name Francis Towner Laney, Jr. I wonder if Sweden has enough synonymmys for homosexual to support a home-grown version of ASI>

More seriously, I think the homophobia in Laney's memoirs is its most troublesome feature for contemporary readers. Though attitudes towards gays still need a lot of improvement, it is amazing how far we've come in the nearly 50 years since "Ah, Sweet Idicoy!".

Maybe this is a question which some of the older FAPAnS could answer for me: Hopw do Laney's attitudes toward homosexuals correlate with general society and fandom of that period? I mean, Was Laney out of step with his associates in and out of fandom, or would they have recopgnized his hostility as excessive?

A Propos de Rien (Jim Caughran)

I wasn't a fan in the 1950s. In fact, 1993 marks three decades since my first contact with the hobby. Despite that, I also thought fondly of **Grue** and Dean Grennell about the time you mentioned him in the last mailing.

What I was thinking is that Grennell is under-appreciated. I've accumulated a pretty good runb of **Grue**, but I don't think many of those whop entered fandomin the late 1960s or thereafter know him or his fanzine very well.

Estimating fannish reputations is one step from counting the angels dancing on the head of that pin. That didn't keep me from trying.

I'm sure there are plenty of exceptions, but I see a pattern among fans who don't get their share of retro egoboo. I tried to factor out "shooting stars" who blazed as briefly as they did brightly by concentrating on fans who've produced quantity as well as quality. That kept Jeff Wanshel, Joe Pilati and others out of the sample.

Of fans who began activity after 1950, since 1950, those who are in eclipse concentrated their activity in the 1952-1962 period. (Major fans of the 194801952 era end to be much better known than the group which followed.)

Maybe a byproduct of the Boondoggle was a fannish generation gap. I was fortunate to become associated with avid fanhistorians like Ted White, rich brown, Terry Carr, and Sam Moskowitz early in

my fanlife, and one of Tucker's fanzine sale provided runs of some top titles from the pre-Boondoggle era. I don't know many fans who've had the same opportunity to become familiar with the decade in question.

A lot of my fannish contemporaries collect fanzines, but some of the choicest titles are hard to find, evidently. The pity is that so much superb fanning has been nearly forgotten. Among my favorite "forgotten fans": Vernon McCain, Bob Leman, John Berry, and DAG.

Some of these faded legends may be about to get their Fannish Justice. The subject came up recently when Ken Forman and John Hardin were over to socialize and read some of our old fanzines. Both were captivated by those Foo Blue **Grues**, and I think they'll probably do a reprint of some of the best stuff with a little help from Joyce and me.

Excuse me, sir, are you saying that I simultaneously advocated making FAPA larger and smaller? I fall back on the excuse that I was running for FAPA President and invoke the privilege of politicians to say anything to anyone who might conceivably check my name on the ballot.

Incidentally, I want to formally announce that I am going to run for a second term as President. The way I figure it, that gives me license to stay a quirky and contrary s.o.b. for almost another year.

Since you've caught me pontificating with both tongues, I ought to expand on my original remarks. I was in favor of reducing the FAPA roster to 50 when I first re-joined, because that seemed to me at that time the best way to get members more involved in the mailings and spark a higher level of participation.

Just because I favored a smaller roster didn't make me less anxious to invogorate the current membership with new blood. Hence the recruiting binge.

I mention unlimited membership on the premise that if FRAPAns weren't sure how big or small the group should be, allowing the roster to move freely for awhile would soon give us more information. Now, as I look at the names on the waitlist, I sort of wish membership was unlimited, so all those fine fans could bring their talents into FAPA right away.

And that, I fear, must conclude my abbreviated mailing comments for this time. I hate to skimp on such a meaty mailing, but the alternative is to miss February altogether. Please accept this apology along with my vow to do more complete comments in the May mailing.

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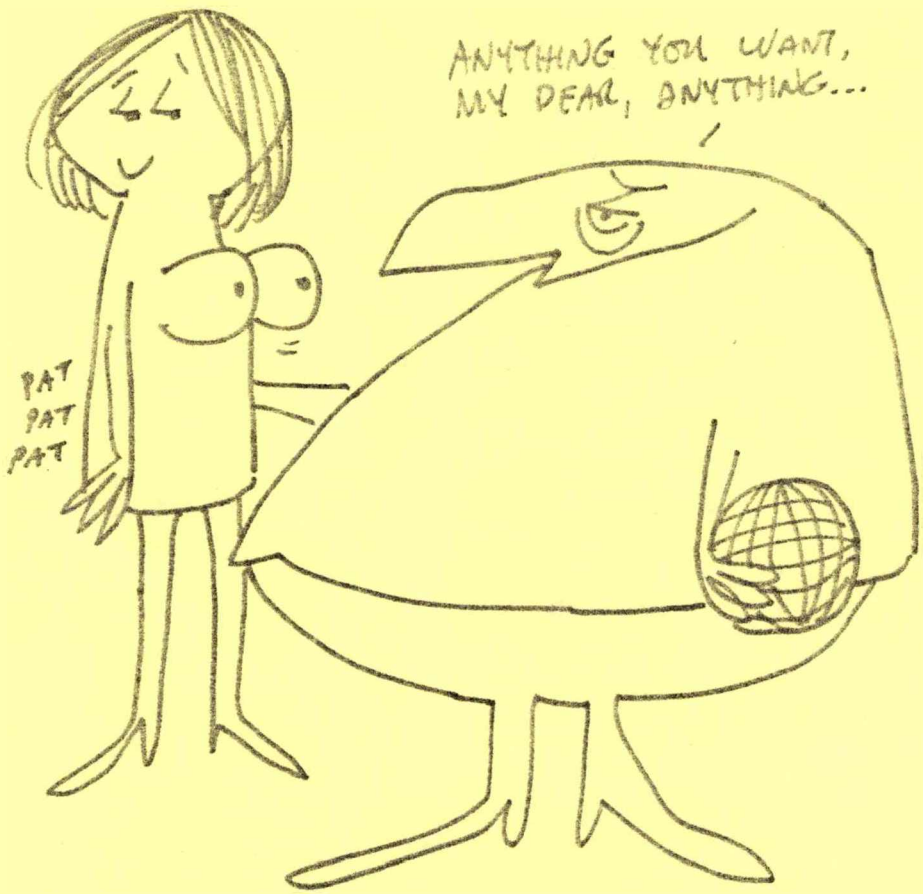
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Art Credits

ATom: 3, 9, 14

David Haugh: 5

JBill Rotsler: Cover, 2,
12, 13, 16, 20



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ANYTHING YOU WANT,
MY DEAR, ANYTHING...