

TESSERACTION

The fannish answer to Penguin 60s

The Nature of Profit

It appears difficult for some people outside of the fan culture to understand why certain ethics are critical within the fan culture for it to survive. Various people have explained the critical basis, and you appear to ignore them: sf cons run on a purely volunteer basis. It is critical that we *all* work as volunteers, because as soon as someone is paid for doing the same work as a volunteer, most of the volunteers will quit. Then you have no con. Or you have a con that pays a bunch of people, exploits others, and must run on a profit

basis so the goal becomes Making Money. Again, this leads either to no cons, or truly repulsive types of cons, vide Creation and many media/comics/gaming cons. If you want a fandom made up only of Creation cons and cons run by people whose motive is to take as much of your cash as possible, fine, but this has nothing to do with the sixty-year tradition of volunteer-fan conventions.

There's nothing whatever inherently wrong with making a profit. Of course. But we are talking specifically about a sixty-year

culture of sf fandom, and how it works. And it works entirely on volunteer labor. If you are not familiar with this, I suggest you obtain Harry Warner, Jr.'s histories, *All Our Yesterdays* and *A Wealth Of Fable*

There are areas of life where we *do* regard it as wrong to make a profit, or to charge money, without it affecting areas outside: you don't ask to be paid every time you make love with a loved one, do you? Why is making a profit evil? Are you paid when you hug your parents or children? Why is making a profit

evil? Do you charge your friends a fee to enter your home? Why is making a profit evil? Because these are areas of our life we draw a line around and deem to function on a different economy than one of money. We draw that line about certain (not all) areas of fandom, where fandom couldn't survive on any other basis.

Conventions work because everyone volunteers. I, and thousands of other sf fans, have spent hundreds, or thousands of hours working as volunteers to support fandom because we get a lot out of it. We won't do it so

someone else can make a living off of our labor. And if you support a con that someone is trying to take a profit from, you are saying that you don't care about the volunteer nature of fandom. You are saying that you would be just as happy to support someone who merely wants your money as much or more as you support people who support fandom because they love it. You are saying that you don't care if the voluntary support for fandom collapses because that isn't important to you. And since that's the basis for fandom, you are saying

you support the destruction of fandom as we know it in favor of people out only to make money from fans.

Your choice.

Naming Fanzines

Don't name your magazine/fanzine "Tesseract," either; it's been thought of. Several hundred times. (And, yes, I laugh every time I see the Canadian zine, but who am I to tell them they look clueless using the most cliched title in the history of the field?)

This is number 12 in a
series of 13—

The Lost Fanzines of Gary Farber

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Farberday:

All contents

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