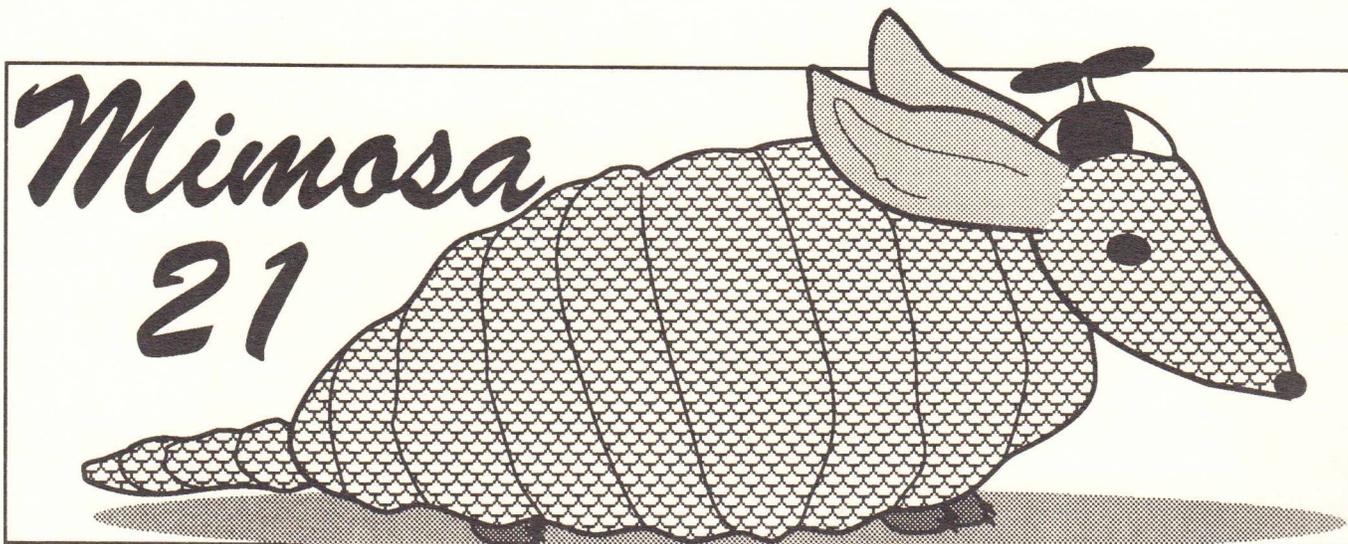


MIMOSA 21

ARMADILLO LADIES WON'T YOU COME OUT TONIGHT AND DANCE BY THE LIGHT OF THE MOON



JMS
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This twenty-first issue of *Mimosa* was published in December 1997, and is available for the really, truly affordable price of just four dollars (U.S. currency or equivalent), which includes cost of postage. We welcome letters and e-mails of comment; one of those, or a fanzine in trade, will get you a copy of *M22* next year. (We'll assume all correspondence we receive is intended for publication unless otherwise indicated.) We also have a continuing need for first-person articles & essays of an anecdotal nature about science fiction fandom and/or things fans do, especially if they are of fan historical interest; publication of same here will make you a permanent fixture on our mailing list. Copies of most back issues are available; please write us for more info on price and availability. This entire issue is ©1997 by Nicki and Richard Lynch, with individual rights reverting back to contributors after this one-time use. All opinions and versions of events expressed by contributors are their own. **Please note our surface mail change of address!**

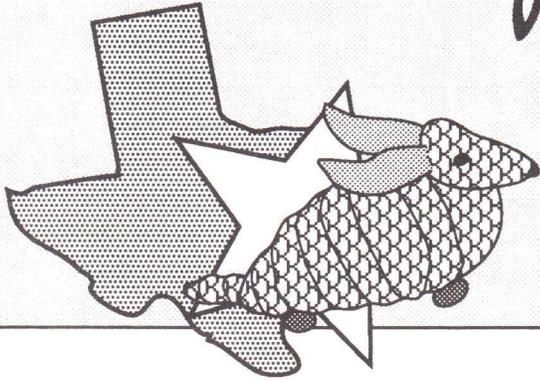
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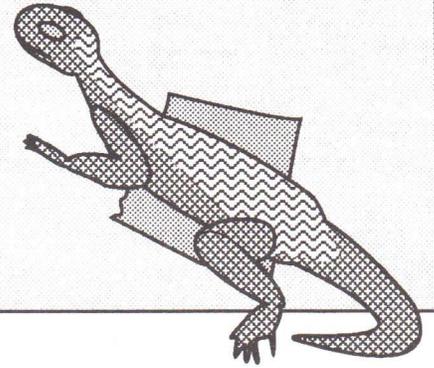
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A Tale of Two Worldcons



Opening Comments
by
Richard & Nicki



The man and woman who boarded the airplane together in St. Louis looked familiar to us. We had probably seen them someplace before, but after two decades-plus of conventions and fourteen previous worldcons, almost everyone was starting to look familiar. They sat right across the aisle from us, and by the time the flight landed at San Antonio we had decided at least one of them was an author, but we just couldn't figure out which one. As luck would have it, they sat near us again on the airport shuttle into the city, so we decided to just ask them a neo-ish question: "Are you here for the convention?" It was the woman who replied somewhat patronizingly, giving us the answer we probably deserved but all the confirmation we really needed: "Gosh, there's a *convention* here this week??"

And so began LoneStarCon. We didn't recognize anyone on the bus, but the minute we walked into the hotel there were familiar faces all over the place. It was a comfortable feeling, knowing that the next several days would be filled with reunions with old friends and introductions to new ones, dinner expeditions, interesting conversations, friendly politicking, and (of course) all the late-night parties. Worldcons are unique events that bring all of these and more together for us; we feel almost compelled to go to the worldcon each year, despite the cost and aggravation of getting there. It's true that worldcons are big and expensive, but for us, worldcons are an essential part of fandom as we expect they are for many other fans.

But hasn't it *always* been that way?

Well, no it hasn't. It wasn't that way at all. Our first worldcon was in 1978, the Phoenix Iguanacon. Back then, we knew hardly anybody. We hadn't been actively involved in fandom for very long, and so when we were greeted with that blast of hot desert air as we got off the plane in Phoenix we were still little more than neos, plopped down in the middle of a frenetic human kaleidoscope. Back then we were mesmerized by the sense of limitless energy of the convention and all the people there, from the operations people scurrying around everywhere to the Guest of Honor, writing a story amid the chaos all around him, secluded inside a tent set up for him in the atrium of one of the hotels. Back then, we could only marvel at the myriad programming tracks that competed for your attention and which continued well into the night each evening, at the size and resplendence of the masquerade, at the dozens and dozens of writers present while wondering who among the nominated would win the Hugo Awards (especially the one for Best Novel). Back then, we went to just a few room parties, partly because we knew so few people. Back then, the convention was full of that science fictional sense of wonder, and it went on forever; subjectively it seemed like a month passed before we returned back home.

Back then, when we were much younger, the world was a different place. Have things really changed that much? We'd like to think that each

worldcon still possesses that magical sense of wonder (maybe we're still neos at heart), but after more than two decades of fandom you get the feeling that you've seen it all before. But on the other hand, you don't really get *tired* of it.

Anyway, as worldcons go, LoneStarCon wasn't the biggest we've been to, nor the best run, nor the most memorable. It *was* one of the more fun ones, though. We hadn't known very much about San Antonio other than that the Alamo was there, so we traveled to south Texas with few expectations. Turns out it's actually a good city to hold a worldcon, for more or less the same reason as for San Francisco or New Orleans — the city itself offers more than enough diversions to fill the hours away from the convention. Part of the attraction, of course, is the history surrounding the Alamo, where in 1836, the army of Mexican general Santa Anna overran and killed to the last man a group of Texas independence fighters led by William Travis. The downtown area of the city was conveniently near to the Alamo, all just a quarter mile from the convention. We went there our first full day in San Antonio. We're not sure what we were expecting from the Alamo, but we do know we were expecting it to be a bit bigger than it was. The Alamo mission building, known as the 'shrine' to Texans, is really quite small, not all that much bigger than a large single-family home, with its interior basically just one large area, with a few small rooms around the perimeter where ammunition and powder was stored.

We didn't stay long at the Alamo; just an hour or so and we were on to other places. We suppose the rest of the grounds was filled with history if you looked for it, but it wasn't all that obvious. There are no grave sites on the grounds. Nobody knows the true final resting places for Jim Bowie, Davy Crockett, or any of the others; Santa Anna had all the bodies burned.

The rest of the city was also interesting. The Big Attraction of San Antonio is not the Alamo, but the Riverwalk. It's a small canal that twists through the heart of the city, about twenty feet below street level. Down there it's almost a different world, or more accurately, several different

worlds. The southern part of the canal quietly winds through the historic, first-settled part of the city, where there are cypress trees, small islands, garden areas, and even an amphitheater. That part of the Riverwalk has a sub-tropical feel to it, as if you'd expect to see parrots in the trees. The northern part of the canal, though, was jam-packed with tourist-collecting restaurants. One of them, the County Line Barbecue, was so popular for fan dinner expeditions that for practical purposes it became part of the worldcon program.

The food really was pretty good in San Antonio. Before we went we had visions of nothing but Tex-Mex, but there was enough variety that you could eat pretty much whatever cuisine you wanted. The most memorable dinner expedition was Friday night of the convention, when our friends Neil and Cris Kaden organized a trip to Gruene, Texas, three counties north of San Antonio, a small town on the Guadalupe River. It was early evening when we arrived there, just about the right time for Gruene's feature attraction, its dance hall. Next door to our steak house was what had once been a large barn, with loud Texas swing music coming out and lots of younger people going in. It was just a hot summer night, and they were all living for the weekend. Were we really that way once?

Besides all this, there was a worldcon to go to. And because of that there were friends to see again. Worldcons are now about the only place we get to meet up with many of our fans friends from what are now remote places. One of the happiest reunions was with two of our best friends in fandom, Dorothy Tompkins and Lowell Cunningham from Knoxville, Tennessee, whom we've known for more than fifteen years. Back when we lived in Tennessee, we got together every few months or so either at a convention or some kind of party (they used to host a little microcon they called "Barbecon" at their home that featured lots of eating and partying; at one of them, in 1986, Lowell and Richard kept each other awake throughout the evening and night just so they could stay up and see Halley's Comet). We hadn't even realized they were going to be at LoneStarCon because Lowell hadn't

been scheduled in any of the program events. We had kind of expected that he would have been, seeing as how his 'obscure' little comic book had been made into the year's top grossing movie.

Another friend we invariably see at worldcons and nowhere else is fellow fanzine publisher Guy Lillian. Guy, bless him, has also been our friend for a long, long time, and over the years we've had some interesting adventures together. But there are times when he delights in teasing people, and in the process, causing some embarrassment. Guy was passing through LoneStarCon's concourse area when he found Nicki standing in line for a Fred Pohl book signing. "Hey," he said, loud enough for the people in front and behind to hear. "What are you doing in line? Don't they know you're an important person?!?" After a bit of banter he moved on, but by then Nicki could feel the eyes of those around her. A few moments later, the woman behind her leaned over to check her name badge and nominee ribbon: "Are you an author I should know?" Gee, thanks a lot, Guy! (Wait until he sees what we've got in store for *him* next year!)

There was more to the program than just book signings, of course, and we actually got to more program items this year than for any other worldcon except Iguanacon. The quality of the program really didn't seem that much different from other worldcons; maybe it's just our interests that are subtly shifting. The program items we were on were, of course, all fan-related and all of them aimed mostly at the neofans — discussion panels on making connections in fandom, fan slang, and an introduction to fanzines. Other program events we attended ranged from media-oriented (everything from a modest discussion panel on strong female characters on TV to J. Michael Straczynski's *Babylon 5* extravaganza), to science-related (discussions on the on-going Mars Pathfinder and Galileo Jupiter missions), to the historical (interviews with some of the notable fans of prior fan eras, including the Fan Guest of Honor, Roy Tackett), to organizational (but five minutes at one of the WSFS business meetings was more than enough!). There was even a fannish operetta, *The Pirates of Fenzance*, staged by next year's worldcon, Bucconeer.

In short, there were enough things to do at the convention that the time seemed to fly by. Saturday night arrived all too quickly, and with it the Hugo Award Ceremony. *Mimosa* was once again a nominee this year (and our thanks to all our readers!); it's always pleasant being nominated, but the day of the Awards is always hard on the digestive system. Just before the event we went to dinner with our friends Joyce Scrivner, Mark Loney and Nigel Rowe, but somehow the topic of conversation got stuck on food poisoning, which didn't exactly help to calm the queasy feeling in our stomachs. When Nigel's order of raw oysters arrived, Mark eyed them suspiciously and launched into a story of a major food poisoning case in Australia involving oysters. (It fell on deaf ears, though. Nigel, undeterred, ate every oyster, and even thought about ordering more.) Nobody could think of anything bad to say about shrimp, however, so that's what we had.

Being a nominee does have some advantages. Back in 1978 we sat in the back of the Phoenix Convention Center's balcony on Hugo Night, and everybody on stage looked the about size of your thumbnail. At LoneStarCon, we had seats just six rows from the stage. The Best Fanzine Hugo was the third one announced, right after Dave Langford won once again for Best Fan Writer. But Dave had also won the Best Fanzine Hugo (for his entertaining newszine *Ansible*) the previous two years, and after that we weren't very hopeful about our chances this year. So when *Mimosa* was announced as the winner, it took a couple of seconds for us to realize we'd won. Later, we found out that the results had been very close, with *Mimosa* winning by just seven votes (making up for last year, when we'd lost by only eight). And we'd perhaps been lucky to win at all — the main opposition wasn't *Ansible* after all; it was Dave Truesdale's fine reviewzine *Tangent*, which had a substantial thirty-one vote lead going into the final round of vote counting.

If winning the vote count was an adventure, getting up to the stage was even more so; the stairs backstage were as steep as Mount Everest, but were lined with people who directed/lifted us

upward, all the while whispering, "Congratulations! Watch your step!" The award itself was handsome, a chrome rocket mounted on a slab of course-grained Texas granite which had been machined into the shape of the state of Texas. It was time for some acknowledgments, and we did so — to Roxanne Smith-Graham, who helped create the *Mimosa* website... to Dave Kyle, who, way back in 1979, had put the idea of a fan-history-related fanzine into our heads... to all the other fanzine nominees (Richard said that all the other nominees were so good that he wished the vote had ended in a five-way tie)... and to our contributors, to whom we *really* owe the honor. A fanzine is only as good as its contributors make it, and we've been blessed with some very excellent fan writing and illustration. The way back down from the stage seemed equally perilous with those stairs looking in the dark as steep as the wall of a canyon, but once again there were a dozen or more steadying hands helping us along ("Congratulations! Watch your step!"). Afterwards, at the Bucconeer-sponsored Hugo nominees party, Richard's wish came true, after a fashion — all the other nominees *did* receive awards. There was an entire table filled with miniature rocket-shaped gifts — all of them made from

chocolate!

Anyway, it really was an enjoyable week. There were way too many parties each night, so many that you had to decide if you were going to visit each one for a few minutes, or pick two or three where you could settle down and spend some quality time with friends. We mostly chose the latter, mainly because we're getting too old for all that stay-up-to-three-in-the-morning stuff. The best place to settle down was actually not a party at all, it was the Cincinnati Fantasy Group suite. They have one at every worldcon, and it's a much less frenetic place for talking to people than the typical worldcon bid party. The most outstanding bid party was the Boston in 2001 suite, which had two theme parties; the one we got to was an "under the sea" party, with hundreds of blue helium-filled balloons covering the ceiling of their suite, shrimp with cocktail sauce, and candy sushi. If they gave out Hugo Awards for bid parties, that one would have won easily.

So that was LoneStarCon, one very full week on the Texas prairie. The world has changed just a bit for us in the past nineteen years, but we're still finding a sense of wonder about fandom's Big Show. And that, as much as anything, is the reason we look forward to going each year. ☆

CHAT, the 4th Fannish Ghod

By TEDDY HARVIA



There were other fanhistory-related events at LoneStarCon besides interviews. One of them was a panel in remembrance of one of the most respected fan personalities of all time — Sam Moskowitz. SaM, as he was known throughout fandom, was chairman of the very first worldcon, the 1939 Nycon, and in later years he became known as a historian and researcher. Fandom will miss him. But SaM was also no stranger to controversy, and became involved in some unpleasant feuds over the years. Here's more about...



SaM — Fan Forever

by Dave Kyle



The Big Event was about to take place for me in less than one month.

On the July 4th weekend, 1939, the eagerly anticipated World's Science Fiction Convention was being held in New York City. It was now June and I had returned back to my home town of Monticello, N.Y., from my first year in college. For nine months I had been out of action in the fannish world whose cauldron of intrigue had bubbled away without me. Now I was ready to return to the exciting battleground of fandom.

The obvious fray capturing my attention was the to-the-death power struggle between the forces of the Futurians (the good guys) and those of New Fandom (the bad guys) over the big event — our World's Convention (later shortened to just 'World Convention') planned as part of the much publicized New York World's Fair.

I have previously mentioned the strong rivalry that had developed between the leaders of the International Scientific Association (the ISA), subsequently identified as the Futurians, and the newly-formed group called New Fandom. {{ed. note: see Dave's article "The Great Exclusion Act of 1939" in *Mimosa* 6 }} And I have explained the genesis of that rivalry through 1937 and 1938. {{ed. note: see Dave's article "Farewell, Teens, Farewell" in *Mimosa* 20 }} In that previous article, I reported how the dynamic young Sam Moskowitz teamed up with the older, former ISA leader Wil-

liam S. Sykora to form a new counter force called 'New Fandom'. Much had transpired in New York fandom during my absence at college, but my sympathies lay with the Futurians, led by Wollheim, Pohl, and Michel. I was not part of the worldcon committee of three which had gained control: Moskowitz, Sykora, and James V. Taurasi, referred to by their detractors as the 'Triumphant Trio'.

And so it was that I was out of touch and only on the fringe as the Great Confrontation was shaping up for that holiday weekend.

I could see the possibility of a horrendous (from my fannish point of view) clash marring the upcoming convention which I so much wanted to be a wonderful success. What contribution could I make? I was not part of the active political intensity of the Futurians, nor was I available to or wanted by the Trio. That is how the "infamous yellow pamphlet" came about as my contribution to that historic first world sf convention.

I had met Sam Moskowitz in 1937 in one of the follow-up, fannish excursions by New Yorkers to Philadelphia now being identified as 'conventions'. I didn't really get to know him, because in 1937 and 1938 I was back in Monticello working as a newspaperman to save money to go to college, and I came to New York City only to visit my friends of the exclusive old ISA crowd — Pohl, Wollheim, Lowndes, Wilson, Wylie, Kornbluth, even an occa-

sional Asimov. And then, from 1938 to the spring of 1939, I was away at the University of Alabama. But up to that time, I had attended all the conventions that had been held over those two years and had observed the perseverance and enthusiasm of a teen-age SaM who, in his maturing, was growing in influence and force of character.

It was the “dynamic” Moskowitz whom I was about to see in action within a month, a Sykora puppet who was well on his way to cutting away all the manipulative strings binding him and thus to be his own man. It was the real beginning of my knowing him: SaM, Fan Forever.

###

There will never be another SaM.

Sam Moskowitz, honored by many and derided by some, is that genuine figure so important in our peculiar world of science fiction — the fan who became a professional who never stopped being a fan.

Kind words, if often qualified, have been said and written — and will continue to be written — of a young man who from his early age grew into a powerful voice in our unique genre of literature.

I knew him as a warm and friendly man and felt obliged to explain or forgive his actions as criticized by those who dismissed him as an over-enthusiastic, self-obsessed, unreasonably compulsive and opinionated interpreter of the sf scene. Certainly, SaM was a genuine enthusiast on behalf of science fiction. Certainly, he was self-confident in his knowledge and opinions. No one who heard him speak either informally or professionally could miss the force of his words or the compelling stentorian power of his booming voice. He was never at a loss for words and was frequently a butt for snide remarks about his pontification and inaccuracy about some of his factual statements, whether inadvertent or deliberate. In the memory of many is the time at a worldcon banquet when he was eulogizing “Doc” Smith, who was about to receive an award. As the audience fidgeted, there was the insistent unseen tugging on SaM’s coattails while he still had ten more years to cover, until SaM finally took the hint. That was SaM.

After the medical loss of his vocal cords, he carried on magnificently. I was constantly impressed by his ability to utilize so effectively the gadget he placed on his throat which he, good-

humoredly, alluded to as sounding like “the voice of a robot,” which it did. But to me it was truly a terrible shame and a loss that a room no longer vibrated from his loud expressions on all subjects and his staccato guffaws as he appreciated his own jokes.

The effect of this self-educated man in our field will last for a long time, perhaps forever. Without a doubt, his early history of fandom, *The Immortal Storm*, will be the seminal work of a dedicated fan, chock-full of trivial details, prejudices, biases, juvenile passions, and inconsistencies — the result of extensive gleanings from a hodgepodge of fannish publications and letters. It is a book of fascinating, mostly inconsequential observations of an unorganized society of youthful aficionados, bubbling with the fanatic voices of overblown, immature egos. Those days before worldcons came about were a glorious time of uninhibited written expressions revolving around a world that Hugo Gernsback had deliberately created.

SaM was a unique personality, a presence of considerable strength whenever or wherever fannish activities took place. He has the distinction of being the first worldcon chairman, who rightly or wrongly, shaped that historical event with an unfortunately ugly blemish, the Great Exclusion Act.

He was at the apex of so many of our fannish milestones, an image of First Fandom which he never fully embraced nor worked for, probably feeling greater than the whole. He was the undisputed ruler for a very long time of his own little fiefdom near his home in Newark, New Jersey — ESFA, the celebrated Eastern Science Fiction Association.

His fannish writings were a self-imposed muddle of objectivity and personal beliefs. He made no secret of his opinionated judgement of both fandom and prodom. While he was considered by many to be the leading authority on science fiction, he was also considered by many to have been a seriously flawed researcher whose reporting and analysis of our literature was very suspect for its interpretations, misinformation, and inaccuracies. Damon Knight, noted for his keen observation and blunt criticisms of our genre in general and our writers in particular, had something significant to say about SaM in his collection of essays entitled *In Search of Wonder*: “Sam Moskowitz is a man I have disagreed with about as often as he has opened his

hundred-decibel mouth. He has many admirable qualities; he's worked as hard for fandom as anyone living; he edited the foredoomed *Science-Fiction Plus*, according to report, with vigor and integrity beyond the call of duty. The only trouble with him, in fact, is his incredible talent for being wrong." Inevitably, SaM took to his typewriter to challenge Damon in pages of rebuttal. SaM's proficiency and verbosity behind a typewriter, or for that matter, in front of an audience, was as remarkable as Isaac Asimov's "compulsive typing" was to Fred Pohl.



SaM was an avowed historian and was accepted as such. He and I were, therefore, both colleagues and friendly competitors. The platform upon which he built his reputation was fannish. *The Immortal Storm*, assembled forty years ago from his fanzine pieces from the previous decades, is a monumental work of facts and hearsay gathered and filtered through his own perspective. From that experience of digging through records, SaM became a noted compiler of obscure early or overlooked science fiction going back into the nineteenth century. The books he generated from other people's works are remarkable, fascinating, and a testament to his persevering dedication, a vehicle for his opinions and views shaped by his own interpretations and beliefs.

My most noteworthy example of SaM's tendency to shape information to suit his own perspectives, prejudices, and beliefs is that infamous 'Yellow Pamphlet' which precipitated the banning from the first World Science Fiction Convention in 1939 of some prominent fans, including Fred Pohl, Don Wollheim, and Cyril Kornbluth. I printed the pamphlet and they were blamed for it. SaM reprinted half of the pamphlet in his *Storm*, that part which made my argument that freedom of speech would be impaired and that authoritarianism would be imposed. He chose to present my negative

remarks and censored my positive remarks. Thus, his seemingly factual report of the pamphlet was made to sound completely hostile, totally harsh and an unremitting pre-judged condemnation, which it was not. His excerpt misled readers by his deliberate, untruthful comment that "The booklet ended after a few more paragraphs of a similar nature."

In 1989, because of the persistence of the *Mimosa* editors, I wrote my first in this continuing series of reminiscences about science fiction and fandom. That first installment, "The Great Exclusion Act of 1939," was stimulated by persistent questions over the years about that situation and my part in it. The article was succinct — barely 800 words of commentary and 1200 words of the complete original text of the pamphlet.

As could be expected, Sam took to his typewriter and fired off a twelve-page voluminous explanation and rebuttal. I didn't see that reply {{ed. note: it was later published in full by a Colorado fan, Norm Metcalf}}, but it was in effect a rejection of what I considered a temperate dismissal of the pamphlet incident as a juvenile tempest-in-a-teapot, albeit serious at the time. SaM was firmly anchored to the past. He did not want to forget the past nor seemingly let bygones be bygones. I've been encouraged to recall the past dispassionately in *Mimosa* for the enjoyment, surprisingly to me, of new generations. For SaM, unfortunately, the past rankled.

How it festered for him is illustrated by what happened the other year concerning a Lunacon, the big annual East Coast spring gathering sponsored by the Lunarians, a New York City fan club. SaM had been asked to write a piece for the program book on the fan guest of honor, whom we both knew. When I read it, and became aware of its implications, I felt insulted and was thoroughly annoyed. SaM had taken the occasion to resurrect an old fan feud which had involved me and left the impression that I had been guilty of malfeasance. He didn't mention that a lawsuit by me had cleared me and forced a retraction by my persecutors. I complained to the Lunacon committee and, receiving an apology, was told that the article had been rushed into print without being checked. They said it never should have happened. Later I confronted SaM on this. He acted bewildered over my reaction and said he meant no harm, but he didn't apologize. That was

SaM.

And there's another example of his deliberate or unwitting pettiness which I have just learned about at the recent San Antonio worldcon. Because of his recent death, his name came up in the Ops Room and Mark Blackman, a Lunarian and veteran con volunteer, told me a story which startled me, irritated me, and yet amused me. I simply had to put it on record and asked Mark to write it in my ubiquitous convention memory book. Here's what he wrote: "Oddly, my last conversation with SaM was to correct him on a point of fan history regarding you [Dave Kyle] and Lunacons. A Lunarians information sheet had listed you and SaM as founding members of the club. He came to me to 'correct' us. Dave, he said, was not involved with the Lunarians for its first year. The next time I saw [SaM] I told him that I had checked the minutes of the very first Lunarians meeting, November 1956. Not only was Dave involved, but at that meeting he was elected [the club's first] President. Moreover, SaM himself was not present at the meeting, but as he had expressed interest, was, as a courtesy, considered a founding member." That was SaM, you bet.

SaM gloried in his ability to deal with details in an incredibly precise way. Everyone who knew him or heard him speak recognized this remarkable talent for pontificating, especially on the past. Oft times his facts were wrong or weirdly misleading. However, I rarely challenged his information. I recall one con panel we shared when, because of my personal first-hand knowledge, I did contradict him. SaM had claimed that Robert A. Heinlein, who lived in Colorado Springs, had named his house 'Broadmoor'. "How did you know the house's name?" I had asked. "It was printed on Heinlein's stationery," he'd replied. Then I explained why it wasn't so: 'Broadmoor', I said, was the name of the very famous resort hotel across the street from where Heinlein had lived. Bob Heinlein had used the hotel in many ways, such as the writing room, and entertained guests there, such as my wife Ruth and me. That's the origin of the 'Broadmoor' which topped many letters of his.

SaM had also told the audience that Heinlein had a 'bomb shelter' in his front yard. However, I had seen what he really had, and informed the audience that it was a very well-equipped and elaborate fallout shelter. Considering that he lived at the foot

of the Rocky Mountain into which was tunneled the notorious North American Defense Command, a 'bomb shelter' would have been ridiculous, but a fallout shelter was fashionable and practical for Bob as a military man.

These may seem like trivial criticisms, but they're not. A respected researcher like SaM considered himself to be isn't permitted to be careless with the facts.

The wonder of it all is that, in person, we always got along very well. He went with Ruth and me on our honeymoon to the Worldcon in England in 1957 — along with 52 other fans in my chartered airplane. The best evidence that we were ostensibly good friends was the fact that he and I were co-chairmen of the highly successful Metrocon of 1954, which was my preparation for the chairmanship of the 14th Worldcon some two years later. Ruth even gave Christine some helpful hints when she was setting her cap for SaM, her husband to be. Ruth later, however, lost all tolerance for SaM because of his snide remarks. I tried to explain to her that SaM's sense of humor made them sound unfriendly, but she took them at face value.

The influence of the BNFs, the Big Name Fans, sometimes fades away. SaM's may diminish, but it will not disappear. I predict, should historical fandom survive the plethora of modern-day fandoms of science fiction and its offshoots, that he will become, in another fifty years, a half-forgotten legendary figure. One must consider that SaM was more than just a historian — he was also a fabulous collector of science fiction artifacts. His extensive paper collection is, I am assured, unparalleled. I certainly regret that I was never invited to view it. If it eventually becomes available, it will be his finest legacy to us all.

Farewell, Sam Moskowitz. You were a huge part of my very special science fiction life. We had our differences, but I never thought of you as an enemy. You seemed to have always clung to the idea of my role as a willing cat's paw for the hated Futurians. That scar from the past left by the Futurians never healed for you. You were firmly anchored to the past — which made you such a prolific researcher and historian. You strove to remember and reconstruct the past with obsessive passion. It was your greatest strength, and also your greatest weakness. ✧

As we mentioned, LoneStarCon had a significant amount of fanhistory-related programming. Next year's Bucconeer will have even more, as it incorporates the 1997 FanHistoricon which will be, in effect, a 'convention within a convention' where Baltimore fandom itself will probably be one of the topics. In *Mimosa 20*, we presented the first part of a mini-history of the Baltimore Science Fiction Society by one of its founders, Jack Chalker. Here is his concluding installment.



A SHORT HISTORY OF BALTIMORE FANDOM PART 2

by Jack Chalker



Now, about those business meetings...

The truth was, we didn't have all that much business to conduct. BSFS was held in members' homes; there were minor dues and a 'BYO-Everything' atmosphere. The very purpose of the club was to provide a way for like-minded people to get together and have fun on a regular basis. Because of this, by the mid-1960s BSFS eclipsed its neighbor, the Washington Science Fiction Association, in size and in being the 'in' place to be for parties and such. This was not only due to BSFS's own growth and lack of interest in anything but fun, but also because WSFA itself lost Elizabeth Cullen and thus her wonderful house that had been the focal point of its meetings for more than a decade.

The BSFS business meetings, having nothing whatsoever to do, tended to be long and complicated affairs. There were a lot of people who were so in love with procedure and business that they only showed up at those sessions; other than announcements, which *were* important, the most frequent activity was revising the BSFS constitution. It happened dozens of times. Committees were formed and came back with revised constitutions; they were debated in detail (with anyone ruled out of order commanded to be keelhauled under the U.S.S. Constellation down at the harbor) and ultimately adopted. A new committee to revise the constitution was then immediately appointed.

However, in 1966, the club actually tried to do something serious. It bid for the 1967 World Science Fiction Convention, going to other conventions, throwing bid parties, distributing flyers, etc. We had a reputation for never closing a bid party at a con so long as even one person was there, so we were always the last hangout — an obvious outgrowth of our never-ending weekends {{ed. note: for more on that, see part one of Jack's remembrance }}. Ed and JoAnn Wood met at a Baltimore '67 party at the 1966 Midwestcon, for example, and there were other such relationships formed in the wee hours as well, most others best left unmentioned because they didn't work out as well.

The schizoid club meetings showed how little club members really felt about all the formalities of a club. This was a social group that liked to party and existed entirely for its own sake because its members liked getting together. This meant that the club offices weren't all that important, either, although they sounded important to other clubs. The elections became just as silly as some of the rest of the party-oriented stuff, often involving passionate mock campaigns (although BSFS almost always re-elected everybody who wanted to run again in the end). The elections then became excuses to throw even more grandiose parties, and became so popular that fans from New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania (as well as a fair share of

WSFA) often came. This quickly made it impossible to hold election meetings in members' homes, and so, in 1964, we wound up renting a function room for the night at the Holiday Inn downtown. The attendance for that all-night election party was so large and had so many out-of-towners, we decided to have a relaxa-con-like convention the next year that wouldn't be limited to a mere room with its various restrictions.

Balticon 1, as it is now known, was held over President's Day weekend in 1965, at the Emerson Hotel in downtown Baltimore. The Emerson was across the street from the theater district, and so it was the hotel where visiting performers usually stayed. The entire top floor was an elaborate and ornate penthouse suite with a central master bar and tons of room. The modest BSFS treasury covered its rental, but not its stock nor other amenities, and at that time I was in my last semester of undergraduate college and had very little money to contribute. Roger Zelazny put up a fair amount of it, but pretty much got it all back at the end of the convention. That first Balticon was an enormous hit. There was no guest of honor, but it was a grand time with just the right folks there. I remember Randall Garrett leading his inimitable filk songs, and Lin Carter pontificating in another area of the suite, and half the convention going out for breakfast at dawn. One other thing that happened was that the Emerson security man got himself fired — he liked us so much he, er, oversampled our bar.



The next year, we moved a block away to the Lord Baltimore Hotel. It wasn't our choice — new owners had bought the Emerson during the previous year, and had it demolished to make way for a new downtown parking garage. It was a great loss...

The Lord Baltimore wasn't nearly as well laid out for us, but it was good enough. We used only

the lower floor halls and meeting rooms. The hotel management tended to look the other way on corkage but did insist on a minimum twenty-five rooms per night for Friday and Saturday. This time we had a token program and a Guest of Honor. It had occurred to me that our kind of convention was the right size to invite a single GoH and have him or her not only do whatever they wanted as program but also to interact one-on-one with the con attendees. As chairman, I also wanted somebody new who wasn't already a 'regular', and for this I picked Samuel R. Delaney, whose first couple of books had impressed me. This was also his first real con experience, and he and we all seemed to fit rather well.

The budget for the convention was not at all high, so we cut costs as much as we could (to give one example of economy, I remember Paul Schaubel coming back from Allied Chemical with twenty gallons of pure grain alcohol, which we then diluted 50-50 with tap water and poured into Smirnoff bottles — nobody complained, and we had all that 'vodka' for about ten bucks). I also rushed down and rented three rooms, which I gave away, when I discovered we only had 47 room nights. It was expensive, but cheaper than paying the facilities bill for not making our room night commitment.

I wasn't around for the next Balticon. Back then, with the Vietnam War near its peak, there was very limited protection from the draft, and I'd received a draft physical. Bill Osten, a local SF fan and BSFS member who'd wound up marrying my old girlfriend Enid, had gotten into the 135th Air Command Group, an Air National Guard unit where my cousin, WWII vet Laurence Volrath (from whom I get my middle name) was a colonel, and tipped me off that there were openings. I went down there, tested, and on the same day as a postcard arrived stating that I would be drafted within the next thirty days, I joined the 135th and went off to basic training on February 3, 1967 — two weeks before Balticon 3. Ted Pauls, with some help from Dave Ettlin and Ron Bounds (both 4Fs), ran it with L. Sprague de Camp as GoH; it reportedly went okay. I didn't get back into town until late August and remained on active duty for a while after that. I had gone through special forces training at Howard

Air Force Base in Panama and I also managed to make it to the 1967 New York Worldcon. I often commented that it was sometimes hard to remember which was which.

Having graduated in June 1966 from Towson State, I'd secured a junior high English teaching position with the Baltimore City Public Schools — but my interest was history and that was what I wanted to teach (preferably at the high school level). I had had a double major, so my teaching license allowed either one. After coming off active duty, I secured the high school history and geography position I'd been wanting, and concurrently entered grad school at Johns Hopkins. I also resumed my social fan activities, but not my leading position in the club. From the end of 1967 through 1969, Jay and Alice Haldeman ran the club and Ted Pauls ran the Balticons, with Don Sobwick and wife Debbie (a Philadelphia fan he'd met at a Disclave in Washington) still doing the late after-meetings.

It was also during the 1960s that Baltimore and Washington combined on what was to go down as one of the great hoaxes of that decade, the 'Bermuda in 1970' worldcon bid. This came about because of conversations with Dave Kyle at the '68 Worldcon in which he evidenced a lot of worry that the Heidelberg in 1970 committee could stay together or pull things off. He was on their committee but only in a titular capacity; they weren't listening to folks who knew worldcons, he said, and spent most of their time arguing with each other to the point of yelling, screaming, and resignations. Since there was no question they were going to win, he wondered if there wasn't something that could be done to scare the hell out of them. Back in 1964, Harlan Ellison and Bob Silverberg had almost won the worldcon for 1965 by bidding a joke Virgin Islands blast that would be held on the beach at Saint Croix. I suggested we come up with a more credible hoax that, considering the near win of the V.I. gag bid, might scare the hell out of the Germans and give them something to rally around and compete against. Dave suggested Bermuda because he had a relative there who could do remailings, and it was on.

Bermudacon was never real, and probably is unique in fannish history in that it was perpetuated

through the next year by both BSFS and WSFA, all of whom knew it was a hoax and none of whom blew the gag. The Kyles were living in England then, and gave credibility to us by asserting to the Heicon committee that it was real. Other than that, it was entirely a Baltowash affair. I remember Charlie Brown actually calling a WSFA meeting in the early summer of 1969 and, with everybody sitting there and keeping quiet, asking Jay Haldeman if Bermuda was real. Jay assured him it was and even talked it up; various 'news' items were being passed to him on slips of paper while he was talking with Charlie. After he hung up there was the longest group laugh I can ever remember. To this day, I'm told, Charlie insists that Bermudacon was real.

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In 1971, BSFS effectively fell apart in one of those personality splits, when it was felt that people who had little in common with the regular club members (and who had never contributed a thing to actually making the club go) had engineered a coup to take over the club. In protest to it Not Being Fun Anymore, almost all of the regular members resigned and, that evening at Don Sobwick's, formed the Baltimore Science-Fantasy Group. To avoid any more political problems, it was made a private group to which admission was by consent of the members. There was no constitution and a collection was taken up each meeting to cover expenses. The BSFG continued into the mid-1970s, meeting at the Sobwicks and other members' homes; it finally faded out after the Sobwicks moved away.

With the problems at BSFS, organized club focus for the area returned to WSFA. The insurgent BSFS types never even attempted to hold a meeting or to see if they could still have a solid club. That might have been possible if they had really been interested in running the club. Instead, they proved why folks didn't want them, and none of them were active in fandom after that.

Balticon continued, however, under Ted Pauls, although there were increasing complaints that it was rather dull and automatic and had become mostly a giant weekend fair for his TK Graphics book operation. Still, it continued, mostly at the Lord Baltimore, and did have some occasional memorable moments, such as when, at the Chinese

restaurant banquet one year, Harry Harrison leaped across the table and attempted to strangle Ted White over some dispute about how White had edited *Amazing Stories* after Harrison had left it.

BSFS was eventually re-started. Some newcomers such as Sue Wheeler, Shirley Avery, and Martin Deutsch got together with a few old vets of the original club, like Pat Kelly and Mark Owings, and began meeting in small rooms at the Johns Hopkins University and other available places. With another returned member from the 1960s, Charles David Michael Artemus Ellis (CDMA in print, Charlie to us), they also assumed control of Balticon from Pauls, whose own business had been having some problems that required a lot of his time and resources; the club asked Charlie, who had never run a large convention before, to run a big one.

Charlie did. Moving out of downtown to the Pikesville Hilton on the Baltimore beltway, Charlie started with heavy publicity, made lots of deals, and went beyond traditional con fandom to his own contacts with film fandom to create a short amateur film festival to run concurrently, and, as importantly, he moved Balticon from President's Day weekend to Easter weekend. Balticon suddenly drew almost 2,000 people, including lots of writers, editors, film people, artists, you name it... and it was off. The Hilton, however, was not as good; its franchise holder was in trouble and tried to stiff the con, forcing a move the next year to The Hunt Valley Inn even farther out in the suburbs. There it remained for more than a decade, until Hunt Valley management tired of Balticon and Balticon finally faced the fact that it had outgrown the place. Since then it's been mostly in the Inner Harbor, at various hotels there. Balticons had quite a reputation in the early 1970s as fun conventions; Wheeler even arranged to import a performing group to Balticon that she'd seen at the 1977 Westercon. We understand that The Flying Karamazov Brothers still remember us fondly.

The high attendance brought BSFS lots of money; in the early 1980s the club found and rented a basement clubhouse on Charles Street near the Johns Hopkins University. This remained the center of the club and its activities until, after a decade there, crime had increased to the point where every-

one decided we needed to move. At first intending only to rent, the club found and then purchased a former neighborhood movie house in the Highlandtown section of east Baltimore, then began to renovate and rehab the place even while it was being used as a meeting site. Only two other clubs that I know of, LASFS and NESFA, own their own clubhouses.

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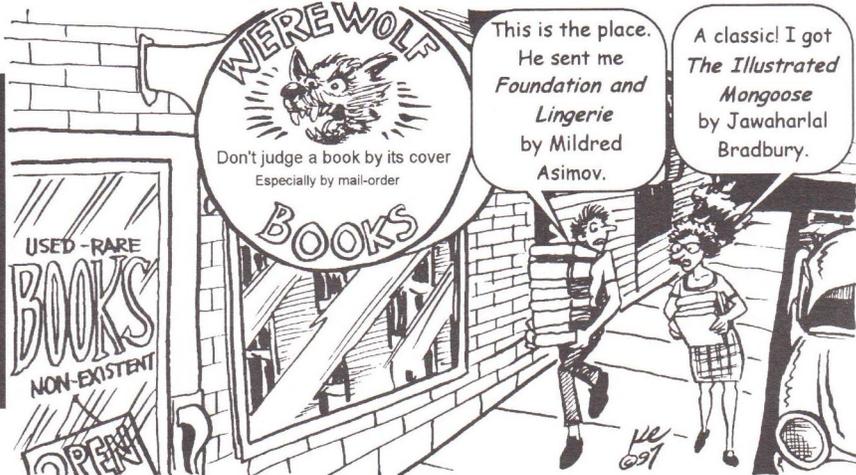
Sue Wheeler led a bid for the 1980 Worldcon, but was beaten after a good campaign by Boston. Three years later, however, a renewed bid under Mike Walsh won. ConStellation was held at the Inner Harbor in 1983 with John Brunner as Guest of Honor, Dave Kyle as Fan GoH, and me as Toastmaster. Overambitious and underinsured, the convention wound up with money problems but managed to settle with all its creditors over time with help from NESFA and Rick Katze in particular. Contrary to popular opinion, ConStellation did not declare bankruptcy, and those who worked on it simply note that its problems cost no attendee one dime and that everyone got more than their money's worth. Eva Whitley's crab feast for 1,200, the first food function at a domestic worldcon in many years, actually made money and became something of a legend. It was also the first crab feast she had ever thrown.

Today's Baltimore fandom continues quite active; a mixed WSFA-BSFS bid for the 1998 World SF Convention won, and next year another worldcon will be held in Baltimore. The World Fantasy Convention has been to the city twice so far, once at the Hunt Valley Inn in 1981, and most recently in downtown Baltimore, in 1995, under Mike Walsh. Balticon is still held every Easter weekend. BSFS continues to thrive and the clubhouse is a center of faanish social activity in the city; the club publishes a regular fanzine, is a participant in fan activities all over the country, and is in contact with fans all over the world. Recently it's again become the center of regional fan activity, although it is generally acknowledged that the completion of clubhouse renovations will be one of the Seven Signs of the Apocalypse.

Me, I still go to meetings whenever I can, and, after the meeting, I lead a number of others out to a 24-hour eatery where tradition is maintained. ✧

One of the things mentioned in Jack Chalker's previous article on Baltimore fandom was the Werewolf Bookshop of Verona, Pennsylvania. Jack mentioned that "it was just a book remainder house; you sent them money and they sent back lots of books, you didn't get to pick which ones." But it turns out there was more to the store's way of doing business than that, as the following article shows us...

Howard Way Down in Verona DeVore



In his article in *Mimosa* 20, Jack Chalker mentioned ordering science fiction books from the Werewolf Bookshop of Verona, Pennsylvania. Jack wrote that most of the batch of books he received were "worthless or uninteresting in the extreme," instead of what he had hoped for. Well, let me give you the rest of the tale...

I don't know when Robert Michael, the 'owner' of the Verona Bookshop, went into business, but I think he was advertising in *Weird Tales* by the late 1940s. He may have once been honest but by the late 1950s he had worked out a system for making money. If you answered his advert he would send you a mimeographed pricelist. His books were usually overpriced for that period so the customer would usually just throw the pricelist away.

Several weeks would go by, then you would receive a mimeographed letter from the Mr. Michael. He would tell you that he was going back into the Army, and that he *must* get rid of his inventory of books and magazines, one way or the other. He went on to say that rather than assigning them to a paper drive he was *giving them away* for the price of postage — for six dollars postage you could pick out one hundred dollars worth of books. The postage was far too high but it was still a very good deal, so, you picked out \$100 worth of books and sent him the six dollars.

Eventually, you got a package from him, but when you opened it, it did *not* include the books

you ordered. Instead, you got two or three old beat-up books, which were marked 'out of print, \$50'. For one specific case I'm aware of, the package consisted of *Songs of the Lone Star State* and *How to Raise Pigs for Profit*. You could buy similar books at the Salvation Army for ten cents. You figured you'd been taken, but when you complained, asking, "Where are the Shasta books I ordered?" all you got was an apologetic mimeographed letter from the seller's wife, which explained that Mr. Michael was already in the Army, the books you wanted had gone to someone else, and he had sent you the best of the books he had at that time.

You'd been had, Buster! You might see his advertising again but you were wiser now, and weren't going to give him a second shot at you. You wrote off the six bucks and forgot it. Michael was working so many suckers he didn't use individual letters, just form letters that could be used month after month. I've been a book dealer since 1948 and he was giving all the dealers a bad name. Mostly I just ignored him like everyone else — that's how he managed to stay in business.

By the early 1960s, I had become a Director of the National Fantasy Fan Federation (the N3F), and I began hearing complaints about Mr. Michael. These all followed the established pattern: every month he went back into the Army and a few more young fans lost six bucks. So I decided to do

something about it. At the 1962 Worldcon I approached Cele Goldsmith, who was editor of *Amazing* then, and asked her why she accepted advertising from a man who was practicing fraud. She told me they had never had a complaint, but if I could document any problem she would refuse future ads.

Given that promise, I asked people in the N3F to send me copies of their letters, and provide details about their complaints. I sent these on to Cele Goldsmith, and later she sent me a copy of her letter to Michael refusing to deal with him any more. I advised all of Michael's victims to contact their post office and file charges of mail fraud against him. Some of them did so, and at that point I dropped out of the loop.

'Science Fact' Ruined His Market
Soviet Sputniks Blamed
For Book Price 'Fiction'

A bookseller from Verona blamed his troubles with postal authorities yesterday on the fact that Russia's Sputniks had made his science fiction obsolete.

But Federal Judge Louis Rosenberg blamed the troubles of Robert H. Michael, 52, of 7059 Shannon Road, operator of the Werewolf Bookshop, on Michael himself.

Judge Rosenberg fined Michael \$300 and sentenced him to a year in prison and two years probation for mail fraud. However, the judge said Michael would be released in 30 days and would not have to serve the remaining 11 months if he stayed out of trouble.

Michael had advertised books worth \$50 for sale for \$3 and books worth \$400 for sale for \$12. He said in his ad

that he had to make a sacrifice because he was being called into military service.

Postal inspectors said that the books advertised by Michael could be bought at other stores for as little as 49 cents.

Michael, who pleaded guilty to mail fraud, said he could not sell his books readily because "the Sputniks had replaced science fiction with science fact."

As a result, said Michael, he had to resort to the promotion scheme to sell his books.

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE, SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 1961

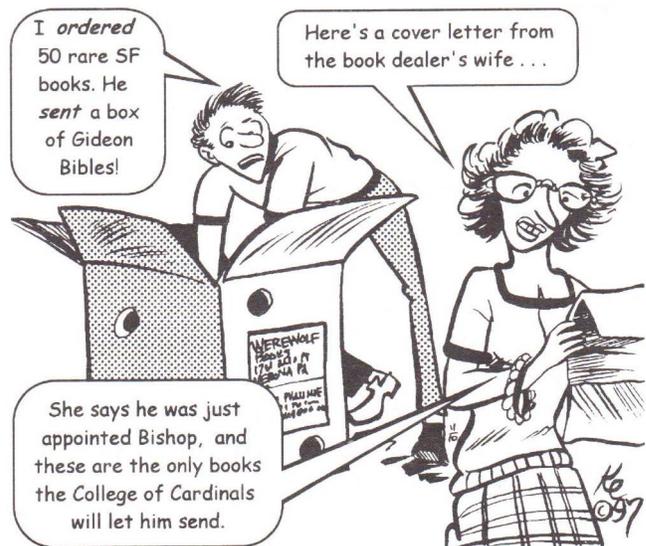
About a year later I received a letter from P. Schuyler Miller (book reviewer for *Analog*), with an enclosed newspaper clipping. It had turned out that Michael had, in fact, been caught by the postal inspectors. He had drawn a fine and one year of jail time, though I later discovered he had actually served only 30 days and then had gotten out on probation. Frankly, I didn't think that was enough. His defense at his trial had been that Sputnik had ruined his science fiction book business, and his actions were necessary in order to make enough money to live on.

With that, I thought I had heard the last of him,

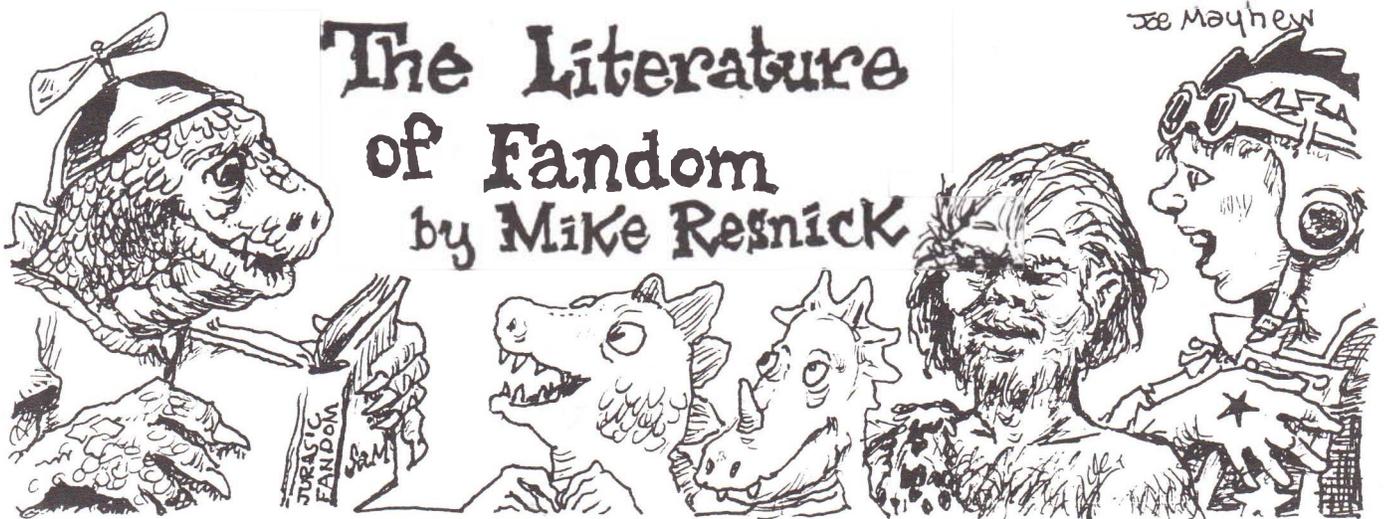
but no. A year or two later his adverts began appearing again in other magazines. He'd changed his operation — his list would say "Publishers Edition Sold for \$7.00. My Price \$2.50." What he was offering was a book club edition that originally sold for \$1.00. However, it was legal this time; you can charge any price you wish for an out-of-print book. The difference this time was that if you ordered a copy of *Zotz*, you got a copy of that book, not some cheap substitute.

I kept my eye on him for a few years, and eventually his adverts quit appearing. I suspect that he'd died, but I never really knew. I suppose that he's been roasting in hell these many years, and when I get there I'll be happy to turn the spit a few times. The old time book dealers never made much money, and most of them are gone now — from that period Don Grant and I may be the only ones left. We all looked after each other, which is maybe why I decided to go after Robert Michael. When I heard that Sam Moskowitz had died, I remembered that he was supposed to have gotten a disreputable St. Louis book dealer jailed in the early 1950s.

All this brings to mind a warning from a fanzine in the early 1940s. Buyers were warned never to pay more than ten cents for used monthly magazines and not more than twenty-five cents for the quarterlies of the 1920s and 1930s. You have to wonder if the writer of that advice had Robert Michael in mind! ✨



About a year and a half ago, Opening Comments in *Mimosa* 18 ("Lost in the Sixties") described an ongoing fan history project that may lead to a book about 1960s fandom. This would not, of course, be the first such fan history book; it's intended to be, if anything, a sequel to some of the other fan history books that have already been published. The following article describes some of these, so if you've been wondering what an ideal fan history library should look like, wonder no more!



The other night I was speaking to some eager young fans on one of the computer networks. They were curious about some aspects of fannish history, and I was regaling them with tales about past Worldcons and Claude Degler and Room 770, and one of them suddenly remarked that it was essential to get some of this stuff written down before the last of us oldpharts died and there was no one to codify fandom's history.

I explained gently that they had nothing to worry about, that we oldpharts had been codifying fannish history for the better part of sixty years, and that very few hobby fields were as well documented as science fiction fandom.

I even mentioned some of the book titles to prove my point. They'd never heard of any of them... which meant it was probably time for someone to write this article, so neofen will know where to look for the Holy Books of Fandom before the last of us oldpharts dies without telling them.

Now, this doesn't pretend to be a complete list of titles. It's just what I have managed to accumulate during my 35 years as a fan and a pro (which, I hasten to point out, are not mutually exclusive. I am, always have been, and always will be, a fan — the IRS's claims to the contrary notwithstanding). Anyway, I think it's not unfair to say that if you read every word of every book I'm about to discuss,

you'll stop being a neofan somewhere along the journey, and may actually be faunching for the secret handshake to Trufandom by the time you're done.

HISTORIES

The first book of major import has to be *The Immortal Storm*, by Sam Moskowitz (published by the Atlanta Science Fiction Organization Press in 1954, and later reprinted by Hyperion). It is nothing less than the history of American science fiction fandom, culminating with the first Worldcon in 1939, all described in incredibly minute detail.

Now, for those of you who may not know it, things did not go as smoothly at that first Worldcon as the participants might have wished. Moskowitz himself (a.k.a. 'SaM', just as Forry Ackerman is a.k.a. '4e') barred Don Wollheim, Cyril Kornbluth, Fred Pohl, Doc Lowndes, and John Michel from entering, and the latter part of *The Immortal Storm*, told in the third person (though with Moskowitz as a major player), is an account of events leading up to, and including, what has come to be known as The Exclusion Act. Sometimes it's difficult to remember that these are *not* Kissinger and Disraeli SaM is writing about, but just a bunch of acne-faced kids with delusions of grandeur.

L. Sprague de Camp calls it "An extraordinary

(if quite unintentional) study in small-group dynamics.” Harry Warner, Jr. adds that “If read directly after a history of World War II, it does not seem like an anti-climax.” An unnamed fan is quoted in *All Our Yesterdays* as calling it “Badly translated from the Slobbovian,” a problem SaM would have again and again with his prose over the years.

Damon Knight devoted a short chapter of his book of criticism, *In Search of Wonder*, to *The Immortal Storm*. The title of the chapter was “Microscopic Moskowitz.” How microscopic? Try this brief excerpt on for size:

“The membership never exceeded the original five, and since these five promptly split into two factions...”

I should add that there’s a companion piece of sorts. It’s Jack Speer’s *Up To Now*, available in *A Sense of FAPA* (which will be discussed later), or as a stand-alone chapbook published by Arcturus Press in 1994. *Up To Now* is Speer’s version of fannish history in the 1930s, and actually pre-dates Moskowitz’s book. Is it any gentler and kinder? Well, according to Joe Gilbert, it’s “As if someone had gathered up all the hates, prejudices and petty jealousies that have clogged the pipes of the stream of life since the world was first begun.”

So is it possible to write a history of fandom that *doesn’t* gather up all the hates, prejudices, etc.?

It is if your name is Harry Warner, Jr.

Harry took up where SaM and Speer left off, and covered the next two decades of fandom in two volumes. The first, dealing with the 1940s, was *All Our Yesterdays*, far better written than its predecessors, and without any axes to grind, since Harry’s primary interaction with fandom was through fanzines and letter-writing. It’s a fabulous informal history, covering all the high points, reporting on (for example) the initial meeting after the war between DAW (Wollheim) and SaM (the man who barred him from the first worldcon), filled with well over 100 photos, even indexed. It’s a true treasure of fannish history and anecdotes.

Advent published *All Our Yesterdays* in 1969, and was set to publish *A Wealth of Fable* (which dealt with the 1950s) a few years later when Ed Wood, who was editing Advent at the time, rejected

the manuscript unless Harry agreed to make massive changes. (Ed told me that his reason for turning it down was the feeling he got — rightly or wrongly — that if it wasn’t reported in a fanzine [and many things weren’t in the 1950s], the book assumed it didn’t happen.)

Anyway, it was Joe Siclari and his Fanhistorica Press to the rescue. Joe mimeographed *A Wealth of Fable* and turned it into three ‘issues’ of a fanzine in 1977, and that was the only form in which it was available until SCIFI Press finally brought out a fine-looking hardcover at the 1992 Worldcon. It’s not even a sequel, but rather a continuation of *All Our Yesterdays*, heavily illustrated, obviously written by the same hand, chock full of the anecdotes that almost instantly become fannish legend.

A fascinating, though very localized history, was written by F. Towner Laney back in 1948. It was called *Ah! Sweet Idiocy!*, it was about his few years in LASFS (the Los Angeles Science Fiction Society), and it pre-dated Sen. Joseph McCarthy in accusing almost everyone the author knew of being either a homosexual, a communist, or both. The villain of the piece seems to be Forry Ackerman — yet it was Ackerman who footed the publishing bill! *Ah! Sweet Idiocy!* appeared serially in FAPA, and was later included, in its entirety, in Dick Eney’s massive *A Sense of FAPA*.

Laney soon dropped out of fandom. He was married four times, and theoretically died on June 8, 1958. I say theoretically, because in the early 1980s I saw the name ‘F. Towner Laney’ on the masthead of a computer magazine published in New York, and how many F. Towner Laney’s can there be in the world?

Well, I’ve referred to *A Sense of FAPA* twice now, so I might as well tell you about it. Back in 1962, Dick Eney collected some of the most interesting items that had ever run in FAPA — fandom’s very first amateur press association (or ‘apa’), which is still going strong in 1997 — and published them before they could be lost forever. Included in its 370+ pages were tons of artwork and articles, as well as the Speer history and Laney’s idiocy. In a way, it’s a rival history of fandom, by people who had no idea they were contributing to fannish history until Eney put all their old articles and cartoons together in one fat fannish volume.

You'll also find "Mutation or Death," John Michel's propaganda tract that drew the battle lines between the Futurians and New Fandom, and some wonderful excerpts from Redd Boggs' immortal *Sky Hook*, Silverberg's *Spaceship*, and other now-classic fanzines.

DICTIONARIES AND ENCYCLOPEDIAS

The first fannish encyclopedia — a dictionary of fannish terms and their origins, actually — was Jack Speer's *Fancylopedia*, published in 1944 by Forrest J Ackerman. It ran over 100 mimeographed pages.

It was succeeded in 1959 by *Fancylopedia II*, edited by Dick Eney (and with co-editorial credit to Speer). *Fancy II*, one of my two favorite fannish books, runs 184 single-spaced pages, with nineteen pages of Additions and Corrections and 24 pages of The Rejected Canon. A fabulous book, which is equally adept at discussing the X Document, telling you how to mix an Atomic cocktail, or displaying the floor plans to the Tucker Hotel. Jack Chalker's Mirage Press printed a facsimile edition in 1979.

Eney also published the *Fancylopedigest*, which was to be a bridge to *Fancylopedia III*. When he ceased publishing, the project was taken over by some Los Angeles fans, who announced a pending publication in 1984. As I write this, it's only thirteen years overdue, barely half as late as *The Last Dangerous Visions* (also a Los Angeles project, now that I come to think of it), and I still have some slight hope of seeing it during my lifetime.

A much more recent and much less ambitious publication is Elliot Weinstein's *The Fillostrated Fan Dictionary*, published in two parts by "O" Press in 1975. It comes in two volumes, totaling 171 pages, and may even have more definitions than *Fancy II*. But the reason I prefer *Fancy* is that it gives anecdotes and histories of the terms, while *Fillostrated* simply gives definitions.

Halfway between a (small) dictionary and an (equally small) encyclopedia is *The Neo-Fan's Guide*, written by Bob Tucker back in 1955. It has been reprinted a number of times, to the best of my knowledge without ever being updated. The most recent copy I've seen was published by Mike Glycer in 1984, though Dave Truesdale tells me that Ken

Keller published the authorized 7th edition in 1996. I think its popularity is a combination of two things: Tucker's continuing status as fandom's most beloved member, and the fact that, unlike, say, the *Fancylopedia*, is it quite small and hence inexpensive to print. It really *is* for neofen; if you could find the fanzine in which this article appears, you're past needing it.

Finally, there's Roberta Rogow's *Futurespeak: A Fan's Guide to the Language of Science Fiction*, published by Paragon House in 1991, and much too limited and media-oriented for my taste.

PROCEEDINGS

For a while there, I had high hopes that I could revisit every Worldcon since 1962 just by reading the transcript, but alas, it was not to be. Still, three of them did see print.

The first was *The Proceedings: Chicon III*, the complete transcript of all the panels and speeches from the 1962 Worldcon, edited by Earl Kemp and published by Advent in 1963. To me, the highlights of this book are Bob Bloch's lecture on Hollywood, and Ted Sturgeon's Guest of Honor speech.

Then came *The Proceedings: Discon*, the 1963 Worldcon transcript, also with close to one hundred photos, edited by Dick Eney and published by Advent in 1965. The best thing in this one is a panel with Asimov, de Camp, Lieber, Ley and Brackett that addressed the question, "What Should a BEM Look Like?" There's also a fine Guest of Honor speech by Murray Leinster, who seems to have been forgotten a little faster than most of our giants, and if you never experienced Isaac Asimov as a toastmaster, this will show you what you missed.



Finally, Leslie Turek edited the profusely-illustrated coffee-table-sized edition *The Noreascon Proceedings*, the main-track transcripts of the 1971 Worldcon, which was published in a coffee-table-book format by NESFA Press in 1976. Highlights include a panel with Asimov and Cliff Simak, and another with Asimov, Marvin Minsky, and Larry Niven.

By then, Worldcons had gotten so large that it was impossible to glean even a hint of their flavor from a single track of the program, and to print the entire proceedings — which has occasionally run to fifteen and more tracks of programming, from eight to fourteen hours a day, during a five-day weekend — was simply not feasible.

PHOTO BOOKS

The continuing growth of Worldcon eventually spelled *fini* to a series produced by Jay Kay Klein, science fiction's unofficial photographic historian. Surely no one who has ever been to a Worldcon has been able to avoid Jay Kay and his flash camera — but not all that many people know that in 1960 he published his *Convention Annual #1, Pittcon Edition*, a memory book filled with hundreds of photos and captions from the convention, covering panels, speeches, masquerades, the Hugo ceremonies, lobby lizards, and dozens of parties.

This was followed in rapid succession by *Convention Annual #2, Chicon III Edition*, in 1962; *Convention Annual #3, Discon Edition*, in 1963; and *Convention Annual #4, Tricon Edition*, in 1966. Jay Kay was all set to publish a fifth book, from 1974's Discon II, but the Worldcon had grown so huge by that time that even with help, he could barely identify half the fans in the photos, and so he retired the series.

Looking back on them, I think the Klein photo books gave even more of a sense of what the conventions were really like than the various Proceedings did, since Jay Kay not only photographed every panel, but also thoroughly covered the art shows, the huckster rooms, the masquerades, and just about every party that was thrown on Worldcon weekend. Until we invent a time machine, these photo books are probably the closest you'll ever come to experiencing — or re-experiencing — those early 1960s Worldcons.

There were two more memory books, published only months apart — and both, while slickly produced, were far less thorough than the Klein books. In 1984, Steve Francis edited *Memories of North-American*, a photo book of the 1979 NasFic that was held in Louisville, Kentucky — and just a few weeks later, Massachusetts Convention Fandom brought out the *Noreascon Two Memory Book*, the photo book of the 1980 Worldcon, edited by Suford Lewis.

It's been well over a decade since the last photo memory book was produced, yet I know fans cherish them; hopefully some future committee(s) will reestablish the practice.

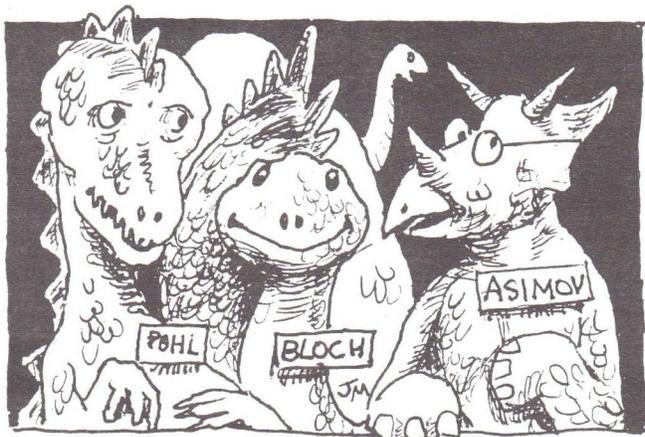
PRO/FAN MEMOIRS

As science fiction has reached larger audiences, and its practitioners have become more famous, it was inevitable that some of the leading professionals would be asked to write memoirs and autobiographies — and since so many pros came up through fandom, especially in the early days, many of their recollections also concern fandom.

The most important, and delightful, of these is Damon Knight's *The Futurians*, published by John Day in 1977 (and later brought out in mass market paperback). Damon chronicles the group of teenagers who banded together in New York in the late 1930s, determined to have an effect on the field of science fiction — and considering that their numbers included Don Wollheim, Fred Pohl, Isaac Asimov, Damon Knight, Robert Lowndes, Cyril Kornbluth, Virginia Kidd, Judith Merrill, and James Blish, among others, I think it's fair to say that they did just that. Knight chronicles their interior and external feuds (and one can be forgiven for feeling that, for their first couple of years of existence, they lived only to feud), follows them as Wollheim, Pohl and Lowndes nail down editorial jobs and begin buying from each other (and by 1943 they controlled more than half the prozines in the field), and then traces them to the present day, with Isaac becoming an international superstar, Wollheim metamorphosing from communist to capitalist and starting his own very successful publishing company, Kornbluth dying far too young, John Michel dying in almost total obscurity. It's a difficult book to put down.

There's a collection of six novelette-length autobiographies, edited by Harry Harrison and Brian Aldiss, entitled *Hell's Cartographers* (an editorial tip of the hat to Kingsley Amis's groundbreaking collection of essays about science fiction, *New Maps of Hell*). It was published by Harper & Row in 1975, and three of the six autobiographies — by Fred Pohl, Damon Knight, and (peripherally) Robert Silverberg — deal with fandom.

Fred Pohl also wrote a full-length autobiography, *The Way The Future Was*, published by del Rey in 1978, which covers much of his life in fandom before he turned pro. Isaac Asimov's *In Memory Yet Green*, published by Doubleday in 1979, does much the same, though Isaac was never as heavily involved in fandom as many of his contemporaries. Surprisingly, Robert Bloch's *Once Around the Bloch*, published by Tor in 1993, contains almost nothing about fandom, though Bloch himself was the best professional friend fandom ever had. (He wrote me that he had included a number of fannish anecdotes, especially about himself and Bob Tucker, but that they were later excised.)



Some passing references are made to fandom in some other memoirs, most notably Lloyd Arthur Esbach's *Over My Shoulder* and Jack Williamson's Hugo-winning *Wonder's Child*, but in truth these are so pro-and-publishing-oriented that they don't really qualify for mention here, despite their outstanding quality.

Finally, David G. Hartwell's *Age of Wonders*, published by Walker in 1984 and since reprinted by Tor, has perhaps the best analysis of the symbiosis between prodom and fandom that has ever been

written. It took a pro editor, rather than a fan, to write a general book for the sf-reading public that explained in simple, straightforward terms the historic connection between fandom and sf, the pervasive influence of fans on the literature through fanzines, conventions, awards, and the graduation from their ranks to professional status of dozens of writers. Anyone even mildly acquainted with the field knows this is true, but it wasn't until Hartwell's book that it was stated so clearly that people who weren't acquainted with fandom would know it too.

COLLECTIONS

My other favorite fannish book, along with *Fancylopedia II*, is Bob Bloch's *The Eighth Stage of Fandom*, a collection of 49 articles and poems, plus some hilarious filler ads. Bloch made his reputation as a writer of psychological horror, but he was also one of the field's master humorists, and that sense of humor was never on better display than here. The book was published in hardcover and trade paperback by Advent in 1962, and thirty years later Wildside Press reprinted it in hardcover.

Bloch's second fannish collection was *Out Of My Head*, published by NESFA Press in 1986. It contains 22 stories and articles, including the first new 'Lefty Feep' story in four decades.

Another fine fannish writer turned pro was the late Terry Carr. His most interesting collection was *Fandom Harvest*, a hardcover containing some twenty articles — including such classics as "The Hieronymus Fan" and "The Infinite Beanie" — and published in Sweden (but with English text) by Laissez Faire Produktion AB in 1986.

Terry also authored another collection of fanzine articles, *Between Two Worlds*, the flip half of a hardcover double with Bob Shaw's delightful collection, *Messages Found in an Oxygen Bottle*. This two-in-one book was published by NESFA Press in 1986, when Terry was the Worldcon's Fan Guest of Honor and Bob was its Toastmaster. Terry's half of the book has five pieces, including the classic "The Night of the Living Oldpharts"; Bob's has nine pieces, including the text of perhaps his most famous speech, "The Bermondsey Triangle Mystery."

Another Terry Carr product was *The Cacher of the Rye*, a parody by 'Carl Brandon'. Brandon was more than just a pseudonym; he was a fictional

creation — a black California fan — that Terry foisted on fandom in the mid 1950s, and at one time most of fandom believed Carl was an actual person. The book begins with a long article by Carr explaining how and why he created Brandon, then presents the story, and ends with a thorough index of every article and story ever credited to Brandon and who actually wrote them (Carr did the bulk of the writing, but he was helped from time to time by Bob 'Boob' Stewart, Ron Ellik, and a handful of others who were in on the secret). The story itself is a semi-loving criticism of fandom, which also manages to take a shot or two at Dianetics.

Another half of a convention double book was *In and Out of Quandry*, by Lee Hoffman. (The flip side is A. Bertram Chandler's *Up to the Sky in Ships*.) *Quandry* was the best and most important fanzine of the early 1950s; Lee was its editor, and this hardcover contains nine articles from it, including "The Bluffer's Guide to Publishing a Fanzine" and "A Surprise for Harlan Ellison." It was published by NESFA Press in 1982, when Lee was the Fan Guest of Honor at the Chicago Worldcon (Chandler was the Pro Guest of Honor).

Paranoid/Inca Press brought out a couple of Bob Shaw chapbooks back in 1979, each a sheer delight. The first is *The Best of the Bushel*, a collection of thirteen articles, and second is *The Eastercon Speeches*, containing his always-hilarious "Serious Scientific Talks" from 1974 through 1978. A later book, *A Load of Old BoSh* (published by BECCON in 1995) collected ten of Bob's Eastercon speeches. (A word about these speeches: Bob Shaw ranks with Bob Bloch and Isaac Asimov as one of the funniest natural talents ever to hit science fiction's Toastmaster circuit, and his collected speeches are almost a textbook demonstration on how to delight an audience, without let-down, for a full hour.)



Perhaps the most famous single collection of fannish writing ever put together is the massive *Warhoon 28*, published in hardcover by Richard Bergeron in 1978. This contains more than 600 pages, single-spaced, by Northern Ireland's legendary Walt Willis, arguably the greatest fan writer of all. This enormous tome contains, among other things, installments 1 through 44 of his classic column, "The Harp That Once Or Twice," the 36 chapters of "The Harp Stateside" (his memoir of his first American visit, in 1952), the 20 chapters of "Twice Upon A Time" (the story of his return visit to America, in 1962), and 21 segments of the mostly-autobiographical "The Subcutaneous Fan." There are also a number of convention reports, some fan fiction, and various other examples of Willis' literary art. A very worthwhile volume.

More recently, NESFA Press published a pair of fannish collections, both of which were nominated for Hugos. First came Teresa Nielsen Hayden's *Making Book*, in 1994, which included fifteen articles from fanzines; and then, in 1996, multiple Hugo winner Dave Langford's *The Silence of the Langford*, which includes more than fifty articles and reviews (and incorporates the earlier Langford collection, *Let's Hear It For the Deaf Man*).

Finally, there is a totally different type of collection, and a must-have for any serious student of fandom. This is *Science Fiction Fandom*, edited by Joe Sanders and published by Greenwood Press in 1994. The book contains 26 articles which cover fandom in various countries, its history, collecting, conventions, apas, Fanspeak, and just about everything else you need to know about science fiction fandom. It's not cheap — I believe my copy cost \$50.00 — but it's worth every penny of it.

I should add that some books consisting of fanzine articles, such as *The Conan Reader*, *The Conan Swordbook* and *The Conan Grimoire*, all from the two-time Hugo-winning fanzine *Amra*, have nothing to do with fandom. On the other hand, there is an on-going series of *Fanthologies*, which collect the best fan articles of the year, that would be of interest to anyone who enjoys fine fannish writing. (The *Fanthologies*, by the way, are sponsored by the annual Corflu fanzine fans' convention, with a new volume appearing every year. As I write these words, they're up to 1993.)

NOVELS

There have actually been seven professional novels about science fiction fandom. Six are set at conventions. Perhaps even more surprisingly, five of them are murder mysteries. Or maybe it isn't so surprising at all.

The two best — both of them quite brilliant — are by Barry Malzberg, writing early in his career under the pseudonym of 'K. M. O'Donnell' (his tribute to Henry Kuttner and C. L. Moore, who often wrote under the pen name of Lawrence O'Donnell; hence K(uttner) M(oores) O'Donnell.) The first is *Dwellers of the Deep*, half of a 1970 Ace Double, in which fandom must save the universe from alien invaders. The second, *Gather in the Hall of the Planets*, a 1971 Ace Double, takes place at a Worldcon, and for months after it came out fandom's (and prodom's) favorite game was trying to figure out who was who, because every pro and fan in this mordantly funny book has a real-life analog.

Gene DeWeese and Buck Coulson wrote a pair of murder mysteries set at Worldcons. *Now You See It/Him/Them...* (Doubleday, 1975) takes place at the 1974 Discon II, and *Charles Fort Never Mentioned Wombats* (Doubleday, 1977) is set at the 1975 Aussiecon.

Perhaps the most famous novel about fandom — or at least the best-selling one — is Sharon McCrumb's *Bimbos of the Death Sun* (Windwalker Books, 1987). The fandom is not one I much care for — the convention it's set at is mostly media and gaming — but it's a fine mystery, and in fact won an Edgar Award. She later produced a sequel, *Zombies of the Gene Pool*.

Finally, there's William Marshall's *Sci Fi* (Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1981), in which a murder takes place in Hong Kong at the All-Asia Science Fiction and Horror Movie Festival. Again, fandom — but not necessarily as we know it.

Peripherally, there's another novel — Niven, Pournelle, and Flynn's *Fallen Angels* (Baen, 1991) — in which thinly-disguised fans appear (even *Mimosa* itself is mentioned), but this, unlike those already mentioned, is not a novel *about* fandom and/or conventions, but merely a science fiction novel in which some of the characters are fans. I suppose if you stretch the definition far enough,

you could even include Frederic Brown's delightful *What Mad Universe?*, since the entire story takes place in a universe imagined by a goshwowboy-oboy teenaged fan (or, more accurately and confusingly, presumed by an editor to be a universe that this particular fan would create — and even that's not exactly right, but it's close enough.)

There are two more books that must be mentioned. Neither is a professional novel, but each was co-authored by a pro, and their place in the history of fannish literature is secure. I'm referring, of course, to the classic work of fan fiction, *The Enchanted Duplicator*, by Walt Willis and Bob Shaw (a Hugo-nominated writer as well as a fan). This completely charming allegory follows the adventures of Jophan as he sets out to find the Enchanted Duplicator and publish the Perfect Fanzine. It was originally published in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in 1954, and has been reprinted so many times I've lost track of all the editions.



Then, 37 years later, Willis teamed up with another fan-turned-Hugo-nominated-pro, James White, to produce *Beyond the Enchanted Duplicator...To the Enchanted Convention*. It was published by Gerry Sullivan's PROMote Communications in 1991, and to be honest, it's not up to the level of its predecessor, though it's still an enjoyable read.

FANZINES AND PROZINES

Remember a book called *Seduction of the Innocent*, by Frederic Wertham, M.D.? It's the study that suggested Batman and Robin did more together than fight crime, that the Phantom Lady was the logical successor to Gypsy Rose Lee, and that William Gaines of EC Comics was in league with the

devil. In the end, it was the prime reason the Comics Code was created. Well, that same Frederic Wertham began seeing his name reviled in one fanzine after another — the editors thoughtfully sent copies to him, since he couldn't purchase them on the newsstands — and lo and behold, a few years later he wrote a flattering, if shallow, study of them, called it *The World of Fanzines*, and sold it to Southern University Press, which published it in 1973.

The only other book about fanzines would be the *Fanzine Index* by Bob Pavlat and Bill Evans, which purports to list every fanzine "From the beginning through 1952." Assuming that it was published in 1952, I've never seen an original; but it was reprinted (I assume) and published (I know) in 1965 by Harold Palmer Piser.

A lovely, nostalgic book, one that demonstrates exactly what fannish enthusiasm is all about, is *A Requiem for Astounding*, by Alva Rogers, an issue-by-issue study of the golden days of John Campbell's *Astounding*, in which Rogers' less-than-scintillating prose is more than compensated for by his boundless enthusiasm. He imparts that sense of almost unbearable anticipation he — and so many other fans — felt while waiting for each new issue, the agony of not knowing the end of a Heinlein or van Vogt serial for weeks on end. It was published in 1964 by Advent, which tried to recapture the magic in 1986 with *Galaxy: The Dark and Light Years*, by David L. Rosheim, but while *Galaxy* was a fine magazine, in ways even better than Campbell's, the book is a failure. Far from being the adulatory fan that Rogers was, Rosheim didn't even read *Galaxy* during Horace Gold's editorship; and since he can't capture the sense of enthusiasm Rogers imparts, what remains is a simple recounting of the stories — which has been done better by many other writers and critics.

MISCELLANEOUS

A chapbook of absolute brilliance is *The Best of Elmer T. Hack*, by Jim Barker and Chris Evans, a BFA/Hack Press Publication, printed in England in 1979. Elmer T. Hack is a cartoon character, a science fiction writer who represents the hack of your choice. The comic strips are hilarious, and there are some mock biographical tidbits and an interview of

sorts. Delightful.

For completists, there's *Fandom is For the Young, or One Convention Too Many*, by Karen 'K-Nut' Flanery and Nana Grasmick, a vanity hardcover published by Vantage Press in 1981. It's not very well-written, and far too media-oriented for my taste.

Then there's a wonderful little chapbook called *Love's Prurient Interest*, by Cathy Ball, published by the Norman Oklahoma Science Fiction Association in 1983. I still don't know if it's a parody of fandom set in a romance book, or a parody of romance books set at a science fiction convention, but I do know I liked it enough to purchase it for my 1988 anthology, *Shaggy B.E.M. Stories*, where it appeared alongside parodies by Asimov and Clarke and didn't have to take a back seat to either.

Closing out the miscellaneous section are a pair of one-shots by Earl Kemp. Both are in symposium form (i.e., numerous answers to the singular question posed by the title). The first, *Who Killed Science Fiction?*, published in 1960, won the Hugo Award; the second, *Why is a Fan?*, is as valid today as when it was published back in 1961.

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

That takes care of my library, and should provide a sufficient answer to those neofen who were afraid we doddering old folk would take all this fannish history to the grave with us.

So what's next? Well, as fandom both grew and splintered, it became obvious that neither Harry Warner nor any other single author could do justice to an entire decade of fannish history. But we have three decades to catch up with — the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s — and in three more years we'll have a fourth.

Well, cheer up. Trufandom, never willing to let an opportunity to publish slip by, is currently, under the leadership of Dick Lynch, preparing the definitive history of fandom in the 1960s. And after he collapses and dies of overwork, I'm sure The Widow Nicki will be more than happy to take over and organize the authors who will codify the 1970s and 1980s.

As for me, I look forward to planting flowers on their graves (right next to Algernon's), and reading those soon-to-be-assembled histories. ✧

☛ Congratulations are due the writer of this next article, as he was the winner at LoneStarCon of the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer (and Michael's next story will be in the June 1998 issue of *Analog*). But Michael is also an accomplished fan writer; he missed making the Hugo Ballot in that category by just seven nominations. The topic of this, Michael's third article for us, is a remembrance of Isaac Asimov, who more than five years after his death remains one of the major influences on new writers like Michael, as well as the science fiction genre as a whole.



I first met Isaac Asimov on Wednesday, November 7, 1979. That date is very important to me, and it is only by sheer luck that I happen to know it so exactly. I was only nine years old at the time; it wasn't like I was keeping track of the importance of daily events in my life. Very little surrounding that date remains etched in my mind; and yet, I remember meeting Asimov very well. I don't remember the whole incident as if it were yesterday, but I do recall an image or two which I know were true.

My father, Joel, was completely responsible for this first meeting. He had noticed in the newspaper that Asimov would be appearing at Eeyore's, a children's bookstore, and for some reason he decided that it was important enough for him to drag my older brother Jonathan, my younger brother Joshua, and myself from our home in Forest Hills, Queens to the Manhattan store that afternoon to meet him. My father had not yet turned fifty years old on that day, and Asimov was close to turning sixty.

What I remember most about that afternoon was feeling so small, standing next to this great, odd-looking man with thick glasses and long sideburns, who was seated before me. I also remember that Eeyore's had not stocked many Asimov books for this appearance, which made very little sense, but my father found a copy of *The Best of Isaac Asimov*, a collection of science fiction stories, and

we bought it for Asimov to sign. Which he did sign — to my brother Jonathan, which today strikes me as delightfully ironic. Asimov also dated his signature, which is why I know the precise date.

###

The second time I met Isaac Asimov he was already beginning to influence me in ways I didn't realize, but soon after he began to influence me in ways that I fully acknowledged. This will require a little background explanation.

On Monday, March 19, 1984, I began to keep a diary. Amusingly, the first reason I did so was not to preserve my life story on paper, but to teach myself how to write. I was in 9th grade at Hunter College High School, and a group of friends and I decided that we wanted to write a book. To make it official, we formed a school club called 'Book-writers' which met every week, during which meetings we would plan out characters, chapters, and decide who would write what.

For some reason during this year, I picked up *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, and devoured it. I was impressed with the way he wrote it as a series of letters and diaries; not realizing that this was a standard epistolary technique used in many gothics, I saw it as an innovation used by Stoker to make the fantastic elements of his novel seem more real. After all, it's one thing to read a story, obviously written as fiction; but it's quite another thing to

read someone else's mail, telling a friend of these fantastic events which would seem untrue were it not that the writer is asserting them so vehemently.

So I decided to practice this form of writing by beginning a journal, which I kept with increasing irregularity over the next few months, especially over the summer. It looked like an experiment of mine which would fade out as quickly as it begun, with no real impact on my life.

And then, on Sunday, September 16, 1984, I met Asimov again, at the annual "New York is Book Country" street fair on Fifth Avenue, the first one my father took me to, but not the last. I had been reading and enjoying a lot of Asimov's work, both his fiction and nonfiction, and wanted to meet him again now that I had come of age, as it were. My father and I toured the fair for a while, and then he left me at the booth where Asimov was appearing.

There wasn't a line, really, just a small group of people milling around, and yet I couldn't bring myself to approach Asimov. I felt a lump in my throat of fear and trepidation. Would he even be willing to talk to me, I wondered. I stared at Asimov's face; he looked impassive and bored.

As I stood there, trying to get up my courage, a man tapped Asimov on the shoulder. Asimov looked at him, and his face lit up and his voice became animated in greeting. They exchanged a few pleasant words loudly, and then the man went on his way.

Something suddenly occurred to me. Earlier that afternoon, my father had said hello very casually to Jimmy Breslin at a book promoting Breslin's new book. They both worked at the New York *Daily News*, and knew each other from there, so it wasn't unthinkable for my father to say hello to him and exchange a few words.

The same thing had just happened in front of me. Whoever this man was, he was a friend of Asimov's, and I realized that this great writer was, after all, just another human being like any other, with friends, and family, and a life of his own. Still feeling a little hesitant, I approached him and introduced myself.

He was very pleasant, very friendly. I probably had something for him to autograph but I don't remember. What I do recall was telling him how

much I enjoyed his books, and asking him if he might need an assistant in a few years when I would be a high school senior and need a senior project. Although he never used assistants, he told me to write him a letter about it, and he gave me his home address. When I finally got around to writing the letter, he replied in a very kind manner that he was sorry but wouldn't have anything for me to do.

I also remember one other thing I told him at the book fair, and this is what ties into the above discussion of my diary. I mentioned how much I was enjoying his two volume autobiography, *In Memory Yet Green* and *In Joy Still Felt*. I had been reading them all summer, and I finished them in November. Now, perhaps *Dracula* had started my journal, but it was Asimov's autobiography that kept it going. I read about how he started a diary when he turned 18 years old, and because of his diary he was able to write his autobiography in such detail. I decided that my diary might one day be just as valuable a resource to me, and I resolved to keep it with more regularity. Since late 1984, I have managed to keep my diary religiously. In fact, it is because of this diary, inspired by Asimov, that I am able to relate my interactions with him so accurately.

#

Over the next three years I would interact with Asimov in a variety of ways. I look back at some of it now, astonished at my gall and some of the things I did. Some of it was courage, but a lot of it was idol-worship, and I am now in a better position to realize that perhaps Asimov did not appreciate all of it. Throughout, however, he always remained friendly and warm.

My friend Charles Ardai played a vital role in my interactions with Asimov. Charles was already a writer, doing articles on computer games for some of the national magazines, and he managed to get Asimov's phone number for an article on science fiction computer games. This gave us the opportunity to call Asimov, should we wish, but it was a resource that we realized had to be used as sparingly as possible.

Charles used the number to interview Asimov for a few articles, and then to ask him for an introduction for an anthology of short stories we had hoped to edit. I, on the other hand, called Asimov

to find out how to join the New York Gilbert & Sullivan Society, since he mentioned it with fondness in his writings often but never gave contact information. Asimov put me in touch with one of their officers, and starting in June of 1985 I became a member, thus allowing me to have more frequent contact with Asimov.



In fact, it was because of the G&S Society that I got to know Asimov a little better; and he, in turn, got to know me. Once I was doing a recitation of a Bab Ballad at the beginning of a meeting and I lost my place, and he cheerfully called out the line. Another time, I told him that I needed to locate an essay of his for a school paper I was writing, and he thrilled me by suggesting I call him up so he could look up the essay in his own files. Probably the pinnacle of my interaction with Asimov happened when he agreed to write a short recommendation for my father's application to the Journalist-in-Space program. As he signed the letter on January 13, 1986, for my father's application to be the journalist to ride on the space shuttle, he exclaimed, "Better him than me!" Of course, by the end of the month, the program had been put on indefinite hold.

I must admit, however, that as much as I interacted with Asimov, my friend Charles interacted with him much more. As I said above, Charles was already a writer, and in our senior year of high school Charles got a job working at Davis Publications, the owners of *Asimov's* and *Analog* magazines. Since Asimov tended to visit the offices once a week, he got to know Charles much better, as a writer and a person. In fact, when Charles began selling mysteries at the age of nineteen,

Asimov would often refer to Charles as a younger version of himself. When we would go to the annual book fair or to autographings together and see Asimov, he would always remember Charles, but would usually have to have his memory prodded to remember me.

###

In September 1987 I started Harvard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which took me away from my home and family in New York City for the first time in my life. On Sunday, October 11, wanting to make a connection to my life in New York, I wrote a letter to Asimov, telling him about my studies and other inconsequential matters. He was kind enough to write a reply, dated October 16, which I received on Tuesday, October 20. In the letter, he asserted that "I remember you well," and expressed his interest in my desire to study Physics. Ironically, this letter was partly preserved by his brother Stan on page 127 of *Yours, Isaac Asimov*, not because of anything Asimov wrote about me, because of these words he wrote to me about my friend Charles, whom I probably mentioned in an attempt, once again, to jog Asimov's memory about myself: "Charles Ar dai is a very bright young man, and I expect great things of him. I'm glad we're not the same age, in fact. I'd hate to have been in competition with him. I would surely have lost out."

On that same page, there are letters that Asimov wrote to Charles in which he expresses his hope that Charles's writing will keep the memory of Asimov alive. Charles has written quite a bit of fiction, mostly in the mystery field, and has even been nominated for the Shamus Award. But it saddens me sometimes to think about how Asimov would never know of the writer I would become, and how he inspired me to pursue this career. For all of his life, Asimov would only know of me as another one of his many fans.

#

I last met Isaac Asimov on Thursday, November 8, 1990, and once again my father played a pivotal role. My father had died six days before, on Friday, November 2, 1990.

Because of this, my family had gathered in the house in Queens. At the time, Jonathan was in medical school and Joshua and I were both in col-

lege; but we took that week off to spend at home, sitting our own version of shiva and trying to make sense of this catastrophic event.

Jonathan and Joshua were not my only brothers, however. My father had been married to someone else before my mother, and so I had two older half-brothers, David and Daniel, who were also mourning our father's loss that week, although not living with us.

Daniel called me on Thursday morning, to say that he saw from an advertisement in the *Times* that Asimov would be signing copies of the new *Nightfall* novel collaboration with Robert Silverberg at the B. Dalton's bookstore on 53rd Street and Fifth Avenue. Our father's death was hanging over us heavily, and Daniel decided that we ought to go out to the bookstore and get a bunch of copies of *Nightfall* autographed. For one thing, we knew that Asimov himself might not be around much longer, but for another thing, it would serve as a distraction.

So I took the subway to Manhattan and met Daniel at the bookstore. We waited in a line with five copies of *Nightfall* that Daniel bought, so that Asimov could autograph one for each of the five Burstein brothers.

When we got to the table, I exchanged only a few words with Asimov. He did remember me, and he was sorry to hear of my father's death. But I noticed an exasperated look on his face before I told him of my recent tragedy. He seemed rushed, and I felt that something deep was bothering him. I have no idea what his thoughts were that day, but perhaps he felt the acute waste of the time he was spending at a booksigning, time much better spent in writing.

Daniel and I got the books autographed, and I took three copies home with me to Queens. In retrospect, I know now that I never saw Asimov again, that that would be the last time we would ever interact. But on that day itself, I remember looking back at Asimov as we left, feeling melancholy. Somehow, I think I knew even on that day that we would never meet again.

###

On the morning of Monday, April 6, 1992, I was getting dressed in my Brookline, Massachusetts apartment, listening, as always, to WBZ news on the radio, when I heard something about *Fantas-*

tic Voyage. I suspected what had happened, but I waited to hear the stories cycle through again before leaving for my graduate school classes that morning. And what I had feared was true.

Isaac Asimov had died in the early hours of the morning, and as far as I was concerned, the world would never be the same.

Over the next few days, my friends and family made sure that I received every published obituary and tribute they could find. I was at Boston University, so I spent a few days haunting the Asimov archives in Special Collections and re-reading his autobiography. At this point in my life, I had started a serious effort at writing science fiction, and I joked with one of the staff about wanting to read Asimov's letters in the hope that some of his success might rub off on me. We laughed, but it was a laugh tinged with bitterness and sadness.

#

On Wednesday, April 22, 1993, I cut graduate school to be in New York City for Asimov's memorial service at the Society for Ethical Culture near the apartment where he had lived his final years with his wife Janet Jeppson. Charles Ardai had managed to find out the time and place in advance, and so we went together.

I sat in the middle row, studying the faces of some of the greatest luminaries of science fiction, and trying to recognize everyone. Oddly enough, I felt as if I already knew Asimov's family and friends through his writing. The personal tone of his essays always made him feel like an uncle to me, and from what I gathered, to the rest of science fiction fandom as well.

The memorial service honored Asimov greatly. Many of his relatives and friends spoke of their appreciation of having known him, and members of the New York Gilbert & Sullivan Society sang in his honor. It was the first and only time in my life that I ever saw his daughter Robyn or heard her speak, and when she mentioned how she never felt like she was 'Isaac Asimov's daughter', but rather, simply, her father's daughter, there were tears in my eyes.

Janet was the last to speak, and in my diary I noted her final comments about Isaac: "He was a joyous man. Please remember him that way."

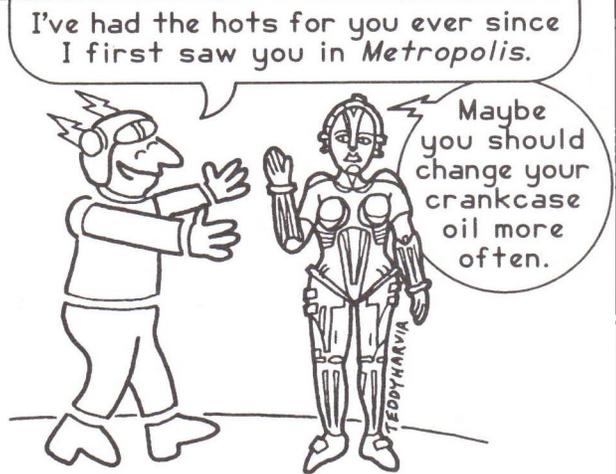
I do, Dr. Jeppson. I do indeed. ✨

A friendly presence at LoneStarCon was Forrest J Ackerman (arguably the number one fan of all time), who has attended every worldcon ever held except one. In *Mimosa 20*, Forry described events that made him famous outside of fandom with the publication of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine. This latest installment of Forry's series of autobiographical essays also deals with the movies, in particular with two of the most revered cinematic legends of the science fiction genre.

Through Time and Space with Forry Ackerman

PART VI

by Forrest J Ackerman



I have now seen *Metropolis*, my favorite film, a total of eighty-eight times. I hope to hit a hundred before I hit 100! I've been a movie fan for almost as long as I can remember. My dear maternal grandparents started me off on movies at the age of five-and-a-half. When I was growing up I was seeing films like *The Lost World*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and *The Thief of Bagdad*. I enjoyed them immensely, but back then I wasn't paying any attention to the directors.

That changed when I was about thirteen years old. The year was 1929. I had seen *Metropolis* for the first time, and of course was thoroughly thrilled by it; soon afterwards I began hearing about another film from Germany called *The Woman in the Moon*. I was living in San Francisco then; unfortunately the film never got closer to me than Chicago. But in the meantime I'd seen yet another German film, *Siegfried*, and I suddenly realized, wait a minute, this one name keeps turning up — Fritz Lang, Fritz Lang, Fritz Lang... I found out he lived in Berlin, so I decided to write him a letter. Quite some time passed, but eventually, I think in 1931, I received a nice, inscribed photograph of him and some stills from *Die Frau im Mond* (*The Woman in the Moon*) and *Metropolis*.

After that I kept up a correspondence with Mr. Lang. He eventually emigrated to America in

1934, and soon after that he made his first film here, *Fury* with Spencer Tracy and Sylvia Sydney; that is one of my great favorite *non-science fiction* movies. Some years later, during World War Two, I was fortunate to be stationed only about 25 miles away from Hollywood, and I read in the morning paper one day that he was to appear that evening about eight o'clock in conjunction with a private screening of a couple of his films. I managed to wangle a pass to leave the army base, just for the evening; I got up to Hollywood and I went to the address. Today that address is Ron Borst's science fiction and fantasy film shop, but at that time it was just a little meeting place for a film appreciation group of about thirty people. So there I arrived and the lady at the door said, "Oh, I'm sorry, sir, this is members only. I can't let you in." Well, I threw myself on her mercy: "Oh, *pleee-ease* let me in! I've got a one-night pass and I've come all the way from Fort McArthur today just to meet Mr. Lang. Mr. Lang even knows me — I've been corresponding with him!"

Well, it must have worked. She said, "All right, I'll tell you what we'll do. When the lights go down, you just sneak in and find an empty chair." And I did.

After the showing, Mr. Lang lectured for a while. I was in awe of him, and when he and his

lady secretary left, I followed for a couple of hundred feet along Hollywood Boulevard before I worked up enough nerve to approach him. Finally I caught up to him and introduced myself, and we stood in the doorway of a storefront to be out of the way of passing pedestrians while we talked for a while. I had brought with me a copy of the book *The Woman in the Moon*, and he inscribed it, 'To Forrest Ackerman, in memory of the day that we first met'.

After that, we became very good friends, and over the years I was frequently invited to his home. In 1969, he and I were in that fabulous ten-day affair in Rio de Janeiro, the Fantasy Film Festival. Robert Heinlein was there, as was Arthur C. Clarke, Roger Zelazny, Sam Moskowitz, A.E. van Vogt, Robert Bloch, George Pal, Yvette Mimieux... There were so many luminaries of the science fiction world there. One of the most flattering occasions in my life happened the evening they showed *Metropolis*. Fritz was about 95% blind at that time, so he and I sat in the front row. When the lights went up, they wanted him to come up on the stage and fend some questions about *Metropolis*. But as he stood, he put his hand on my shoulder and addressed the audience, saying "Anything you want to know about *Metropolis*, ask my friend Forry Ackerman. He knows more about it than I do."

I remember on one occasion during that film festival that Fritz Lang told me that originally he had planned an ending for *Metropolis* where the boy and girl had got sick and tired of the whole situation in the big city and had gone off on a rocket to Mars. That obviously never happened, although it turns out that, through repeated takes, he photographed *forty-nine times* as much footage for *Metropolis* as ever reached the screen. His very favorite shots he made into a version that was released in Germany. Then he took the second-best, and made those into the version that was released in England. Other versions were made specifically for France, Australia, etc. I have chased that film all around the world; I've seen five or six different versions of it. The one I saw in Australia I call the 'vitamin-enriched version' because it seemed like scenes would start a minute or so before I was used to seeing them and would go on an extra minute or so afterwards. There's one version that I just can't

wait to get my hands on, in videocassette, so that I can slow it down and look at it frame-by-frame. In that version, for one mad moment, we see citizens of Metropolis walking along a city street, and they go right past a magazine stand. There appear to be *dozens* of magazines available in the year 2027. I want to freeze that and zoom in on it to see each and every magazine; I want to have a print of that frame to see just exactly what those magazines were all about!

###

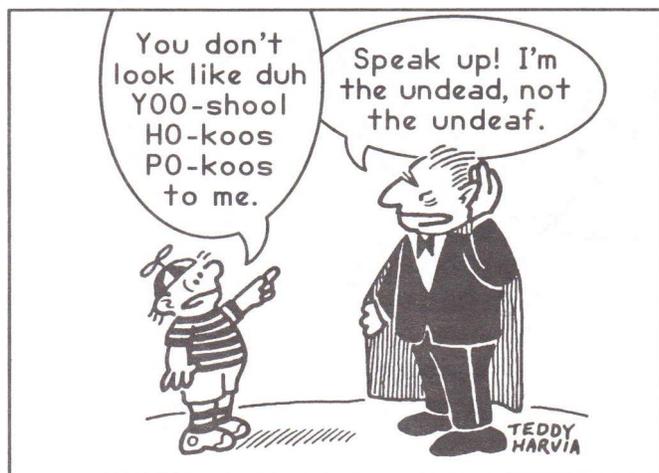
In 1932, my father did me a big favor, he got me a ticket to see Bela Lugosi live in San Francisco, at the Erlanger Theatre as I recall, doing *Dracula*. I never forgot that; I never *dreamed* that after Lugosi died I would inherit the cape that I saw him wearing on the stage, and which he wore for the last time in that infamous film, *Plan 9 from Outer Space*. More than twenty years later, there was a young boy, fifteen years old, who after he saw his first Lugosi film was so entranced by Bela that he went home and stood in front of the mirror putting the whammy on himself, doing his best to talk like Lugosi. And then this young chap, Dick Sheffield, to his great surprise and pleasure, discovered that Bela, who was more or less forgotten by the world by then, was actually living in a nearby apartment house!

Well, the youngster didn't have the nerve to ring the doorbell of *Dracula*, so he got his aunt to call up and pretend to be a journalist who wanted to know if she could interview him. Once he said yes, she asked, "Can I bring my nephew along?"

She could. Well, after Dick Sheffield met Lugosi, he saw that Bela could use all the help he could get, so for the last three years of Lugosi's life he was quite devoted to him. He would go to the store for him, get his shoes re-soled, and buy his favorite cigars for him — just do anything he could to make Bela's life easier. So he proudly called me one evening, and he said, "Mr. Ackerman, Bela Lugosi is a friend of mine. Would you like to meet him?"

I said, "Why, I certainly would!" So my wife and I — and at the time we had a house guest, Tetsu Yano from Japan — the three of us went over there. I had the theater sound disks from Lugosi's film, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, so I took one

of them with me and played it for Bela. He was rather deaf; he cupped his ear and smiled as he heard himself say, “My NAME is Dr. Mirakle, and I am not duh YOO-shool sideshow charlatan. So if you’re looking for duh YOO-shool HO-koos PO-koos, just GO to duh box office and get your money back!” He laughed and left the room; when he came back he was wearing his Dracula cape. He put the whammy on Tetsu Yano, and I took a photograph of it.



After that, I realized, like Dick Sheffield, that Mr. Lugosi could use all the help he could get so I volunteered to take him a last time to get his shoes re-soled. Anybody else but Bela would have thrown them away seventeen solings before, but they had come from Hungary and had sentimental value to him. As he got out of the car, he put his arm on my shoulder and said, “I don’t understand why you young people are so good to me.”

I said, “Well, Mr. Lugosi, you were good to us. You entertained us for so many years of our young lives.” He shook his head and walked away.

I happened to be with him two weeks before he died; there was no intimation at all that in fourteen days he’d be on his deathbed. We were at the premiere of what was actually his final film, *The Black Sleep*. They had him play a deaf mute in it; because, frankly, he couldn’t remember his lines anymore and they didn’t want to pressure him or embarrass him. I sat up in the mezzanine with him and young Sheffield. In public Bela was very vain and would not wear glasses, so everything must have been a big blur to him as we were coming

down the stairs. We knew they were set up in the lobby to interview him for television, so when we got Bela to the bottom of the stairs, he said, “Boys, point me in the right direction.” After we squared him around, we told him, “Now take about six steps forward and you’ll be in the perfect position.”

I hope that a kinescope of that still exists, because it was kind of a minor miracle to see. Here was this dear old man who looked kind of like a concentration camp survivor (he was still on withdrawal from the morphine drugs that had been prescribed for him because of terrible sciatic pain). But the world wanted him one more time, and this frail old man, just two weeks away from his deathbed...well, it seemed like he underwent a change before your very eyes. He straightened up and filled out, took command of the situation, and strode toward the waiting television cameras — a tall, proud figure, Count Dracula one last time.

Lately, whenever I mention Lugosi, I’m always asked my opinion of the movie *Ed Wood*. I take exception to the way Lugosi was portrayed in *Ed Wood*. First of all, he was a real European gentleman; I never heard him say so much as a ‘hell’ or a ‘damn’, much less those dreadful scatological things. Everything was wrong about Lugosi except his appearance and the way he spoke; Martin Landau certainly deserved the Oscar for that. Lugosi never ‘fought’ with the prop octopus in the movie *Bride of the Monster*; that was done by George Becwar, a stunt double. He never walked into a theater of screaming maniacs tearing up the furniture; he didn’t go out to find his automobile half destroyed, because he was in the hospital when all that was happening.

They didn’t premiere *Plan 9* on Hollywood Boulevard at the prestigious Pantages Theater; the premiere took place out about 48th and Vermont, at a little theater that doesn’t exist anymore. The two dogs they showed in the film were nothing like his. In particular, the funeral scene from the movie was all wrong. It showed only about eight people in a tiny little room. Actually, I was the 101st person to walk by his coffin. I stood there alone, for about five minutes in silence; nobody else was around at the time. I thought, well, if you’re looking over my shoulder in spirit form, Bela, I think you’ll be very pleased with your final appearance. ✧

Walt Willis returns now, with another installment of the best from his correspondence files, this time about some of the events from his visits to North America in 1952 and 1962, including tales of bottomless ashtrays, man-eating elevators, and more. It was during that second trip that Walt made a memorable stopover in Wisconsin where he visited another notable fan from that era, Dean Grennell, who, as we'll see, was an accomplished photographer as well as fan writer.



I have a confession to make. I have come to the end of my correspondence files for the 1950s. All I have left are the gutted remains of 1954. I don't have the slightest idea of where the rest of the 1950s have gotten to, but I suspect they are in the garage in a bookcase behind the old wardrobe which was too big for the auctioneer to sell. I don't feel like shifting it myself so I'll just have to wait until the next visit by my son, Bryan. Meanwhile, I can only offer you some vestiges of 1952/3/4 from an envelope marked 'Interesting Pages From Pre-1954', which my hand had refused to destroy.

The first is a carbon of a letter to Shelby Vick, written a week after I had gotten back from my 1952 trip to America. It's dated, retrospectively, September 1952, but it must surely have been written in October of that year.

I got back just over a week ago and I've hardly had time to look around. I've started on the report, but I just don't seem to be able to write. I guess it'll come eventually though. After this, however, I'm going to cut down on that form of crifanac...I don't like the way people were beginning to talk about WAW in every zine. I've got a sort of mental bloc (not to be confused with Tucker's father) about writing about the U.S. trip till I've got the report done, so I won't talk about

that. It was wonderful, though. I would like to say something about this suggestion that Lee [Hoffman] 'monopolized' me. Must say I didn't notice it. I don't suppose Lee and I were alone together for more than a few minutes from the beginning of the con until the end except for an hour one night — we went out on the observation tower for some fresh air and a rest, and talked quietly for an hour about Life and similar subjects. The rest of the time I was either roaming around talking to people or sitting quietly watching the convention. Admittedly, Lee was at the same table, but since when have fans been frightened by girls? Anyone could have come along and talked, and plenty did...

From what little I've heard of reactions to me at the con, it seems I was quiet. Well, of course I was, but not as quiet as all that. Since it's in all our interests to make out that I not only enjoyed myself at the con (which of course I did), but that I occasionally said something above the 'duhhh' level, I have screened my memory banks for remarks that you might like to quote as fillers or something:

 In the coffee room, Tucker: "Well, how about some mush?"

WAW: "What's that? Eskimo hotdogs?"

 In the penthouse, Bea [Mahaffey]: "He

was a good writer until he began to think his stories ought to have significance."

WAW: "He sold his birthright for a pot of message?"

In [Robert] Bloch's room, BeaM: "You want an ashtray?"

WAW (tossing his ash out the window over Chicago): "No thanks, this one isn't full yet."

Ten years later, Terry Carr bet me \$1,500 that that last remark was to be found in *The Harp Stateside*.

Now here, completely out of place, is what looks like a carbon of part of a letter from Dean Grennell and me to Chuck Harris, written in 1962 in the Grennell house...

S'funny, the last time I wrote a letter in the States it was on an Underwood, the one [at Lee Hoffman's home] in Savannah, Georgia, and it was probably to you. It's not one of the cream of contemporary typers (like the electric portable in [Dick] Lupoff's flat, which is terrifying — imagine it, power-operated typos) but a solid satisfying affair. Madeleine and I have been having a wonderful time since our plane landed, but I think here is the nicest of all. Isn't it wonderful you can come a quarter of the way round the world and meet people for the first time, and feel among old friends?

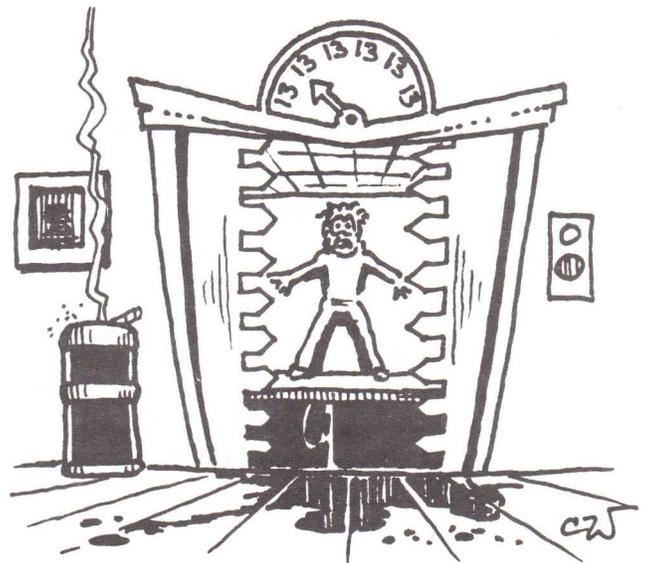
Well, briefly, what has happened so far is that we landed in New York on Monday evening and were, in accordance with a fine old tradition, met by two rival groups of welcomers. The immediate problem we solved by splitting ourselves into two cars, the marriage-disruptive influences of NY fandom thus operating immediately, and found ourselves eventually in the Wollheim flat on Clyde Street (you remember, "When Wolls Clyde?") with Terry Carr and Ted White. They told us they had met Ethel [Lindsay] too and taken her home immediately and given her a bath, but miraculously they didn't insist on this with us. Next day we roamed around NY and to a dinner party in Greenwich Village. Next day a party in the Lupoff's luxury flat, and on Thursday by bus to Chicago. Then the Convention, a vast sprawling affair where Madeleine had a wonderful time and I enjoyed myself nearly as much. Then in Dean's vast luxurious

Oldsmobile at speeds up to 100 miles per hour to Fond du Lac and the fabulous basement, where we are now.

This is a fabulous place, a bit like the Oblique House attic and three workshops rolled into one. Only thing wrong with it is that you could hardly play ghoominton in it, with all the stuff that's down here. Dean is still developing photos, about 200 of them since 7:30 this morning, but I think he's ready to take over now...

Well, yesssss...for a bit anyhow. Some of the film we developed early this morning is dry and ready for printing. A couple of fannish things happened at the con and you might as well be filled in on them at this point: Bjo Trimble (My Favorite Chipmunk) saw some poor chap, far gone toward blotto, whimpering and cringing in an elevator car gone berserk. This thing would close its door, give a couple of ruminative jiggles, slip its door open again, and jolt a couple of times. The poor cove would make a despairing lunge for the door and the robot brain of the mad thing would emit a couple of sardonic clicks as the door slid shut once more. So Bjo went down to the lobby and amid a crowd of faans and mundanes, leveled a petite forefinger pistol-wise at the desk clerk and proclaimed in her voice (a thing of astounding stridency which has made her the absolute dictator of LA Fandom):

"Your Elevator EEEATS People !!!"



Dean has just heard the tocsin from his timer and gone off to do whatever he does. Bjo is a dear, a little freckled ball of fire, and I'm glad we'll be meeting her again in LA. The other thing we were going to tell you... well, you remember how last time in '52 we were persecuted by Catholic girls, the ones who were doing Nameless Things in the Convention Hall? Well, they were there again this year, no doubt looking for Harlan Ellison, and including some ladies dressed in long black frocks who would have been a sensation at the Masquerade Ball. The sf convention must have puzzled them a bit. The last morning, one of our lot collapsed in the main lobby, either from a mild epileptic fit or from just having looked at his hotel bill, and a little crowd of these MABLA people (Midwest Association of the Society of the

Lay Apostolate) gathered round. Passing by, Dean heard one of them make this sinister and unsettling remark:

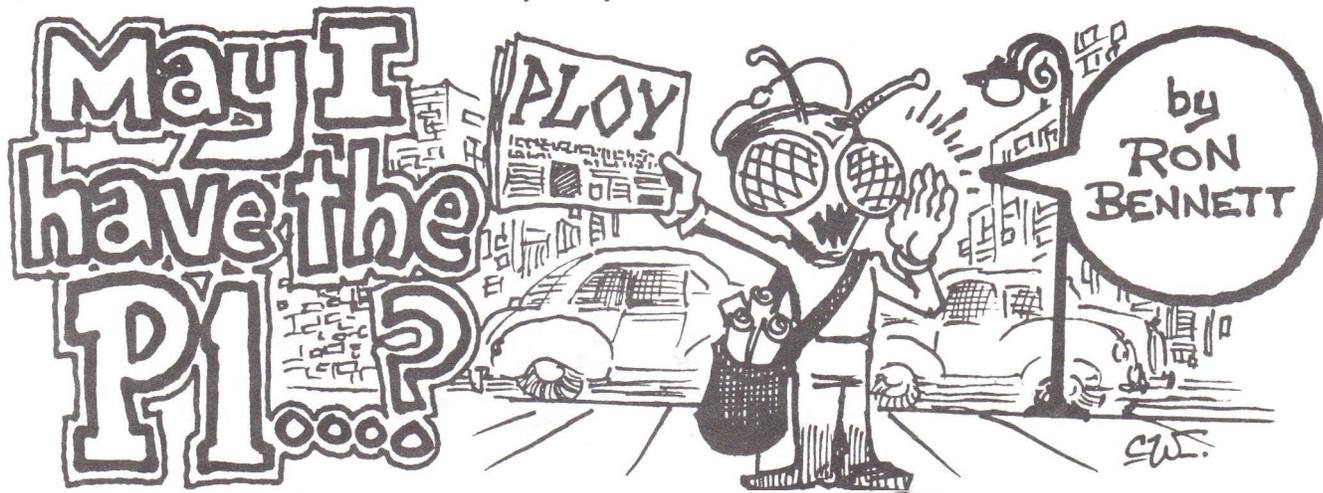
"He's One of Those World People."

Well, we've been off trying to do a mock-up of a Flying Saucer photo. We just got the film out of the developer and stole a peek at it, and I'm happy to be able to say that it looks as though it will make a fairly deceitful print. We are going to terminate things for now and dash off for a bite to eat. You have not heard the last of this, Chuq 'arris, nor you, Sue 'arris, but we wanted you to know that whenever trufen get together, the name of Harris is on everyone's tongue, amid the fur and such. ✧

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☛ LoneStarCon wasn't as 'international' a convention as last year's L.A.Con, but there were still many foreign fans there, including some from the United Kingdom. One of the more famous British fans is Ron Bennett, who returns to our pages with a new fanzine article about an old fanzine. In *Gamesmanship*, Stephen Potter defined a 'ploy' as a strategem that would put a Gamesman in a one-up position. The term was introduced to fandom in 1954 with Bennett's fanzine *PLOY*, which started with issue no. 2, letting readers think they had missed the first issue. But it's a better story than just that...



My first attempt at publishing a multi-copy fanzine was a tortuous affair with a flat-bed duplicator, or duplocator if you prefer, in the garage at the side of my parents' house.

I'd produced magazines previously, when I was aged about ten or eleven. These were single-copy hand-written affairs called *Outlook*, full of items gleaned from the newspapers of the day and circulated around the extended family of aunts, uncles, cousins and other assorted suckers.

I liked magazines. Certainly the magazines of the day. The *Strand Magazine* was my favourite, with its stories by authors like H de Vere Stacpoole, Rider Haggard and Somerset Maugham. I missed the earlier issues with the Sherlock Holmes stories, though I did have the issue which dealt with Conan Doyle's treatise on the Cottingley fairies.

I liked the departments and features, too, the odd little fillers and the puzzle pages. And there was something satisfying, comforting and secure about the monthly cover picture of a bus cruising along the London thoroughfare I knew at that time only from a name on a Monopoly board's British version.

I can't think off-hand which American magazine I could cite as a comparison. *Liberty* springs to mind, but the issues I managed to pick up were much smaller than *Strand* which had a format very much like that of the *National Geographic*.

I also liked the weekly *John Bull* once it had taken to sporting colour painted covers, many with London scenes by the excellent Roland Lampitt, who always depicted his views looking down from a high angle. Without doubt this was the British equivalent of *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Colliers*.

The world of the science fiction fanzine might, then, have been created especially for me. Not only were there like spirits out there, who also liked magazines and liked producing magazines, but the door had been opened to producing magazines which had more than one copy. Gosh and gee whiz!

I'd recently joined a local band of worthies who called themselves the Leeds Science Fiction Association, whose advert I'd come across in an issue of *Authentic* which I'd bought for, naturally, its Ray Bradbury story. This little band was in the process of producing its own fanzine. *Orbit* had a hekto cover and the interior was produced on a flat-bed. I restrained myself for a couple of issues and then rushed out and picked up a second hand flat-bed of my own.

Within minutes I had a duplicator, stencils, a typewriter, ink and even a title. Wowie! I was almost a fan-ed.

The title I chose was *Bem*. Bug-Eyed Monsters were really big in those days, and, besides, I could

run it as a Bennett Edited Magazine.

I went along to the next Leeds SFA meeting to tell the gathering.

When I got there everyone was thumbing through a pile of copies of a new fanzine produced by two out of town members, Tom White and Mal Ashworth. You're ahead of me... "You've stolen my title!" I screamed. Yes, their magazine was called *Bem!*

They based it, throughout its all-too-short run, on the superior, magical Northern Ireland fanzine, *Hyphen*, which was produced by Walt Willis, and, though it irks me to admit it, *Bem* wasn't too far behind *Hyphen* in the humour stakes.

After dithering around for a new title, I came up with *PLOY*. After all, I was a Stephen Potter fan and even own a couple of his books, signed too, which is a nice bit of One Upmanship on its own account. This title gave me the opportunity of inserting the magazine's name into every word in which 'Pl' was followed by a vowel, not only in the magazine itself but in every piece of correspondence I wrote in those days. And always was the device emPLOYed in capitals to make the name stand out.

I'd have expected fans to have come round it droves and lynched me for this but everyone seemed happy to patronize me and go along with the gag and write back in similar vein.

Fans were kind enough, too, to answer my requests for material and so it was nose to the typewriter and eventually out to the garage with the flat-bed.

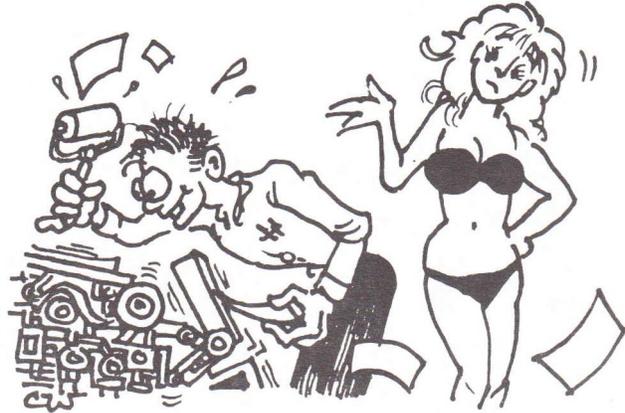
Whoever had sold it to me must have seen me coming. The quality of reproduction was appalling. At best. Looking back from the vantage point of forty plus years down the trail... Ah, Hindsight, thy name is... er... Hindsight, I suppose... I don't know how I had the gall to do it to the contributions sent me by those kind fans.

And... you'll like this... while I was busily rolling to and fro... the roller that is... I was joined by the luscious young lass from a house two or three doors along the street. Our paths rarely crossed as she was working in some other part of the country and was home for a short break, as I was from college.

Wait! I haven't finished. It was late August. It

was sunny and hot. Exceedingly hot. She was dressed accordingly. At a time not too long after the Bikini Atoll tests.

She tried to make conversation but soon left. Poor girl. Didn't she realise that she was competing against Tru-Fanism!



So, *PLOY* appeared. The logo comprised four Greek letters to form the word 'PLOY'. Well, hoi PLOY, y'know... And the cover was printed on salmon Gestetner stock, which was slightly larger than the normal quarto size in vogue in the U.K. at the time, so that the covers overlapped the interior pages, a small homage to the old pulps.

I'd remembered hearing the first episode of a radio comedy series in which the chief comic (Arthur Askey, I think it was) mentioned that as the first in a series isn't usually very good, they were commencing with show number two. Which seemed an idea worth steal... borrowing, and I labelled *PLOY*'s first issue Number Two. I'd mentioned this to a few people and they kindly sent me comments so that I could have a letter column in the issue, praising that non-existent first issue. Terry Jeeves and Mal Ashworth, each of whom contributed to that 'second' issue wrote such letters. Mal mentioned that he liked the title and might have considered using it himself but didn't want to steal *too* many titles from me as I might get frustrated.

The gag, however, actually worked against me. Despite the atrocious reproduction of 'Number 2' a number of fans wrote asking for a copy of number one.

And worse....

In this country a copy of anything published has to be sent, by law, to a university libraries' agent in

London. In those days the lucky gentleman with what must therefore be the country's largest fanzine collection was a fine fellow with the impressive title, The Principal Keeper of the Printed Books. At the British Museum, no less.

I received an official looking letter from him. It was official looking because it was *Official*. With a capital letter. It detailed all the penalties which might.. Might? Hell's teeth... *Would...* be incurred if I didn't cough up a copy of *PLOY* Number One pdq. I seem to remember the Tower of London and St. Helena being mentioned even before I got down to the *small* print.

I wrote back exployning (warned you, didn't I?) the gag.

I had a replot by return.

He didn't believe me.

Eventually, the matter was sorted out. I think I offered to produce a one copy number one especially for him. It wouldn't have taken me long to staple up a few left-over sheets.

Michael Rosenblum was a giant in British fandom in those days. He'd virtually held together British fandom during the war years with his contact magazine and newsletter, *The Futurian*, and happily, Michael was also a member of the Leeds SFA and was sufficiently inspired to revive his fanzine under a slightly different title, the highly qualitative *New Futurian*.

Also worthy of note is that Michael was an estate agent who had an office and in that office was...

A rotary Gestetner! And he was kind enough to allow me to disrupt the office and run off subsequent issues of *PLOY* (a marvellous, generous service also carried out at different times by Don Allen, Alan Dodd and Dave Newman).

PLOY #3 appeared just after I'd left college and included contributions by such as Terry Jeeves, Vince Clarke and even John Brunner. It should have been a fine issue, but I ruined it with a piece of unforgivable stupidity, which, looking back, I find difficult to believe that anyone would even contemployte.

It was not only stupid, it bordered on the criminal.

Mal Ashworth's contribution to *PLOY* #2 had revolved around a character called Mickey. I wrote

a second Mickey story and ran it under Mal's name.

I can't remember whether or not I hoped that readers would actually believe that Mal had written this piece of rubbish and praise *my* writing, but I do remember that it was my intention to run off two issues of *PLOY*, numbers three and four and mail them just a few days apart.

PLOY #4 would contain a retraction and the essential exploynation and apology. I hadn't intended to cause Mal any lasting damage. Like the non-existent story, *The Invisible Witch*,* in *PLOY* #4, it was one of my little ploys, but, as you'll have realized and appreciated by now, hardly one of which to be proud.

It was even worse than you might imagine, if that's possible. I suddenly up-and-awayed to take up a post in Liverpool so that *PLOY* #4 didn't appear until almost a month later and during that interval Mal had plenty of time to let me know what he thought of the trick. Ever a gentleman, he was remarkably restrained about the whole thing. Other fans rightly criticized me, but again all in a remarkably gentle fashion. Chuck Harris, for instance, wrote to say that he only hoped that the piece "gets the recognition it deserves" and Harry Turner asked, "Do we address you as Yngvi henceforth?"

With *PLOY* #4 I also acquired an art editor, whom I met shortly after arriving in Liverpool and who was a student at the College of Art there. This was Bill Harry who later not only produced his own fanzine, *Biped*, but who found fame in a wider publishing field by becoming editor of *Mersey Beat*, the weekly Liverpool newspaper which charted the career of the Beatles. Bill produced some fine illustrations for *PLOY*, most notably a back cover send-up of *Confidential* and a superb reproduction of the poster for the movie *Sweet Smell of Success* in which he blended his face and mine into those of Tony Curtis and Burt Lancaster.

By *PLOY* #7, I'd acquired a regular columnist. Michael Rosenblum's *New Futurian* had folded and its constant contributor, who is still active in fanzine fandom and who wrote under the pseudonym of 'Phoenix', kindly agreed to ensure that I'd have at least one item of quality around the magazine by

* This was listed as appearing on the equally non-existent page 21. One fan did write to say that he thought my writing improving and that this was the best thing he'd seen from me.

moving over to *PLOY*.

Other worthies who contributed columns on a regular basis were Arthur Thomson (whose initial offering was illustrated by John Berry), Sandy Sanderson, Dennie Tucker (another *New Futurian* regular) and Pete Daniels, the lead trumpet with the Merseysippi Jazz Band who was also a member of the Liverpool SF Group.

PLOY #12, which appeared early in 1958, was given over almost entirely to a twenty-four page fannish whodunnit by Vince Clarke. The setting was a convention (this was only a few months after Britain's first WorldCon) and drew in references to just about every fan of the day. If ever a piece deserves to be reprinted, or published in an updated version, *The Case of the Convention Cadaver* would have to be it.

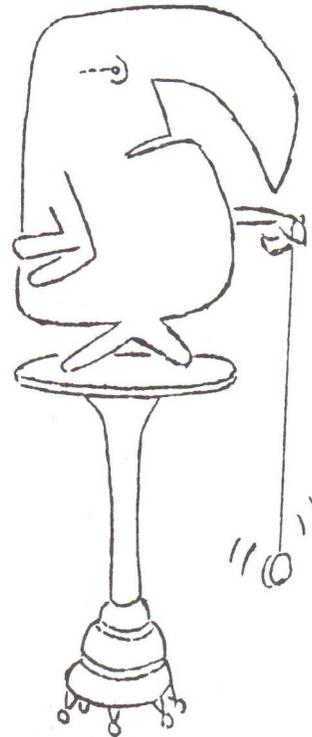
PLOY #14, published in 1958, turned out to be the final issue. (Well, the latest issue, for one never knows...) This was the Bob Tucker Appreciation Issue; I'd been a Bob fan — and am still — since I'd read *The Long Loud Silence* (actually the first SF novel I'd read, my introduction to SF having been via the short story). This issue ran tributes from Gregg Calkins and Bob Bloch and also reprinted some of Tucker's fanzine writings. The cover featured a fine Bill Harry stencilled picture of Bob, copied from a photograph.

Towards the end of *PLOY*'s run, one fan accused me of not having matured editorially. He was probably right; it surprised me then and it still surprises me now that in spite of my terrible gaffs, so many worthy people were willing to support, and continue to support, the magazine. Still, editorial maturity or not, fans didn't read *PLOY* for me.

After all, where would *PLOY* have been with only me? The enjoyment, the readability, was provided by the contributors, and what high quality there was, provided by Don Allen, John Ashcroft, Mal Ashworth, Eric Bentcliffe, John Berry, Sid Birchby, Bob Bloch, John Brunner, Greg Calkins, Terry Carr, Vince Clarke, Bob Coulson, Pete Daniels, Alan Dodd, Paul Enever, Cliff Gould, Don Harley, Bill Harry, Lee Hoffman (with a pithy "Why I Can't Write for British Fanzines"), Dave Jenrette, Terry Jeeves, Keith Joseph, Brian Lewis, Nigel Lindsay, Stuart Mackenzie, Archie Mercer, Ken Potter, Pete Reischer, Peter Rigby, Sandy San-

derson, Laurence Sandfield, Jim Sharman, Jack Smillie, Arthur Thomson, and Dennis Tucker.

The covers were drawn (several straight on to stencil) by Don Allen, Bill Harry, Dave Jenrette, Eddie Jones, *Nebula*'s Ken McIntyre, Arthur Thomson and Jack Wilson and the interior illos were drawn, in addition to those who provided the covers, by John Berry, Juanita Coulson, George Matzger in his pre-Underground Comix days, Lynette Mills and Bill Rotsler, who provided a sheaf of filler illos which were then captioned by John Owen, such as this one from *PLOY* #13...



"I, Arthur Crunge,
being of ninety-
eight, ninety-nine,
a hundred! sound
mind, do hereby
bequeath..."

These are the worthies who made *PLOY* what it was. Their support was in the fine spirit of the time. Good grief! I hadn't really realized what a loss fanzine fandom suffered when *PLOY* went into its forty-year hibernation. They certainly gave me a tremendous amount of... you know it's coming, don't you?... *ploysure*. ✧

One of the best rooms at LoneStarCon to sit back and watch the convention was the fan lounge, a gathering place for fans of all eras. At previous worldcons the fan lounge was the place to meet prominent fans like Don C. Thompson, Bob Shaw, and Sam Moskowitz. They are gone now, and we've all been diminished by their passing; the unfortunate truth is that the list of those absent is getting longer all the time. We're closing this issue with a three-part remembrance of another prominent fan who will be missed...



Joni, They Hardly Knew Ya'

by Mike Glicksohn

When my friend and *fan extraordinaire* Joni Stopa passed away at the end of 1996, the two fanish news sources I rely on to maintain my tenuous contact with fandom (*Ansible* and *Apparachik*) reported on her death in a single sentence. I thought that was sad, but understandable. It's quite possible that neither Dave Langford nor Andy Hooper ever had the good fortune to meet Joni. Which was most definitely their loss but that's what the growth and diversification of fandom has resulted in.

But Joni was too good a person and too important a contributor to fandom to allow her passing to be encompassed in a single sentence. At least, she was in *my* eyes...

I'll leave it to others to document the impact Joni had on science fiction fandom in general but I venture to guess that there are literally *tens of thousands* of fans who've been active over the last four decades and/or who are active today who owe a great debt to Joni Stopa even though they may never heard her name.

For it was Joni who helped Bjo Trimble establish the first Art Show held at a science fiction convention and it was Jon and Joni Stopa who, through their participation as award-winning contestants,

judges and organizers, helped raise the Worldcon Masquerade to its current position as one of the three major spectacular/extravaganza events that delineate our annual gathering.

Had Joni not been there to establish the ground rules for two of the most important events in fandom's year, someone else would undoubtedly have done so. But the simple historical fact is that every fan who simply enjoys looking at or buys artwork at a science fiction art show or participates in or enjoys watching a masquerade owes a nod of thanks to Joni Stopa.

But I'm not here to write about Joni's influence on fandom-at-large, large though that may be. I'm here to pay homage to Joni's influence on fandom-at-small...or at least "short"... Short, that is, as in *me*. And, through me, a small but I like to think not insignificant part of today's fandom.

Fandom being the way it is, I have no clear memory of when I first met Joni Stopa. But it was undoubtedly in the early-to-mid '70s and she and Jon were undoubtedly considered by most active and knowledge fans to be BNFs. Since we were fellow residents of what was some years later to be known as "The Wimpy Zone", we probably met at a

Windycon or a Minicon or possible a Midwestcon. And since Joni and I shared a love of fandom, parties, booze, parties, conversation, parties, fanzines, and parties I doubt it took long for us to become friendly fannish acquaintances.

Over the next twenty-five years we became friends. Not close friends, which is odd considering the profound influence Joni had (and still is having) on my life, but good friends. Two people who respected, liked and admired each other, always enjoyed each other's company and spent many dozens and possibly hundreds of hours in enjoyable (if frequently somewhat inebriated) conversation.

We met at conventions all across the midwest, at occasional worldcons, and Jon and Joni once visited me here in Toronto. But many of our most memorable encounters took place at the Stopa's beautiful house amidst the vast acreage of the ski-lodge they managed in southern Wisconsin, at the eventually-legendary annual Fourth of July party known as Wilcon.

Wilcon 20 took place in 1982 so apparently the first party was in 1963, a little over two years before I even knew such a place as Science Fiction Fandom ever existed. By the time I attended by first Wilcon, number 14 in 1976, the Stopa's annual "come-if-we-ask-you/pay-and-work-if-you-want-to-come-back" picnic was the stuff of fannish legend.

In winter, Wilmot Mountain was a ski resort. In summer, it was a party animal's wet dream. Acre after acre of rolling hills, grass, trees, even a lake, with the mountain dominating the skyline, a ski lodge with a full professional kitchen a few minutes walk from the Stopa's large and beautiful home, all supervised by two of the most charming and generous hosts any party could possibly hope for.

And the guest list (most or less invitational but whatever the criteria for inclusion were they weren't all *that* difficult to meet) was pretty well a Who's Who of mid-west science fiction fandom and prodom which made for a *very* big, *very* crowded and *very* enjoyable weekend-long gathering of many of the most enjoyable and interesting people I've met in over thirty years as a fan.

This is, I'm afraid, not a history of Wilcon. If it inspires someone to write one I'll be delighted. But the eight years during which I was a regular attendee at Wilcon's — which went on, in various forms, for many years after circumstances forced me to stop

attending — coincided with one of my "wild and crazy" periods of being a fan so what memories remain to me of my many enjoyable hours at Wilmot Mountain are suspect indeed...

But I'll always remember smoothing with Bob Tucker on the enclosed porch, poker games with the likes of Joe Haldeman and Gordie Dickson and Phyllis Eisenstein on that same porch, playing "air-hockey-poker" with Bill Habel and Suzi Stefl on the very same porch (don't ask!), chasing frisbees all over the tent-covered lawns with Ben Zuhl (and watching Madman Riley running into *large* trees in his single minded pursuit of said plastic disks), scaling Wilmot Mountain to enjoy an intimate moment with a fellow fan and wondering if my deliberate scream of "Rosebud" reached Tucker at the house below, the time I tossed one thousand dollars in traveler's checks onto the poker table just in time to hear a (very young) Phil Foglio at the low stakes table right behind me cry out, "Five cents! You're raising *five cents!*", Joni rendering me speechless with the gift of a bottle of Chivas Royal Salute because in her eyes I'd done her a favour by treating her as a normal person, working the breakfast *and* lunch *and* dinner work-crews all three days of the weekend to make up for keeping some people at the thirty-eight hour poker table the year before so they missed their work shifts and, of course, watching Madman make an important point by thrusting his hand vehemently into the air...right into the fully operational overhead fan.



I attended eight straight Wilcons from 1976 to 1983 and every one was a wonderful party and a memorable experience. I learned to put up with the

up-to-twenty cats Joni could have any given year, with Madman getting up at six in the morning and waking up the many fans sleeping in tents all around the Stopa house by cranking up the stereo and blasting hard rock through Jon's magnificent speakers. I learned to enjoy helping those who knew how to cook or helping clean up after sixty or seventy always-hungry fans had descended like locusts on the ski lodge dining room. And most of all I learned to enjoy being with fans I liked to party with and learned to appreciate how important it is to maintain contact with the people you love (or even like.)

So in 1980, in a blatant steal from Joni's Wilcon, my dear friend Michael Harper (whose parents had the good sense to give birth to him at the end of May just eight days after my own birthday) and I decided to invite our friends to a fannish party in Toronto at the end of May. And since the name 'Torcon' had already been used but we still wanted to follow Joni's convention for naming a Damned Fine Fannish Party, we decided to call it 'Mikecon'. (Because neither of us had a house that could accommodate around twenty sleeping guests or a couple of hundred acres of land where people could pitch tents or a full-sized commercial restaurant/kitchen to call upon, our party was substantially different in style from Joni's. But in *feeling* it was the same, and over the next few years the guest lists overlapped more than just a little.)

Later that same year I attended Wilcon 18. And just two weeks ago (as I type) Mike and Mike held Mikecon 18 and a few of us who are old farts and have long memories got together for a quiet moment and raised a glass and toasted Joni Stopa and acknowledged that if it hadn't been for Joni we might

not have been there roasting a pig and playing cards and drinking beer and talking about every subject under the sun and enjoying being with our friends, many of whom happen to be award-winning science fiction fans and writers but so what, they're *still* nice people.

That's the sort of person Joni Stopa was. By caring for people and by giving of herself completely without restraint she touched the lives of all those who knew her and a great many who did not.

Most of the people enjoying a worldcon masquerade don't know what they owe to Joni. Many of the people having fun at a Mikecon don't know that it all comes down to Joni. And that's just the way Joni would have wanted it.

But *I* know what a debt I owe her and so do all the people who ever attended a Wilcon or went to a party she and Jon had at a convention or attended a wedding held at Wilmot Mountain or received a care package from her or benefitted from her amazing and unexpected generosity. (There are still remnants of jars of jam Joni gave us in the cupboard and every day Susan looks after plants grown from bulbs Joni sent us just weeks before she died and some of the empty bottles that sit on the plate shelves in our living room some from Joni and will be there for Mikecon 20 and 25 and 30 and...)

Fandom would not be what it is today were it not for Joni. And my life and my fannish history would be *very* different from what they are were it not for her.

Which is why a single sentence could never encompass all that Joni was or all that she gave to the fandom she loved so much. ✧

Tribute to a Dear Friend

by Martha Beck

It is very hard to write about someone who was so close and important in our lives. Joni was more than a dear friend for thirty-four years — she and Jon and Deb became family.

My husband Hank and I were very fortunate that Jon and Joni came to see us in September 1996. In the first five years we've lived in Arizona, they made many trips out to visit. But this time it was

different — somehow I knew I would never see her again, and we spent more than a week, just lazing around, talking old times, and telling her how much we loved her.

Some early memories... The 1961 Pittcon. There were two beautiful women, each wearing very little, being chased by pros and fans alike. Someone told me the girl with the grapes attached to the chif-

fon was Joni Doyle. Pappa Villy (Willy Ley) and Isaac Asimov were in front of the long line of admirers, undoubtedly trying to prove they *loved* grapes! That was just my second worldcon, and my introduction to two of my favorite Ghods. However, even though we were both at the convention, I didn't actually meet Joni for two more years, when she married Jon and moved to his ski lodge in Wisconsin.



I have so many memories of Joni at cons and parties. She and Jon would kidnap me at least twice a year and take me to Midwestcon and Minicon. And of course, there was Wilcon — their very own convention held at the ski lodge, usually over the Fourth of July. If you attended, you were expected to help, cook, clean, bring food & drink. Those who didn't received a gold 'brick' on their invitation the

next year. They had started Wilcon before their house was even built (they lived at the lodge at the time). Back in 1963, Jon and Joni were still in honeymoon state and didn't go to a party at Earl Kemp's place in Chicago, so we decided (in the middle of the night) to go up to Wisconsin (leaving the Beck and Kemp kids back in Chicago with an excellent babysitter: Fritz Leiber!) and skinny-dip in their nice sized pond — two cars full of happy fans! When we arrived we pounded on their door, but being sound sleepers (ha!) they wouldn't come out and join us, so we went swimming without them. To this day, Jon does not believe we were there!

Over the years I watched Joni become a gourmet cook and a professional gardener (she would forget the common name from plants, but never the Latin ones). By the time I got to know her she was already a professional commercial artist, and fine writer. Joni's secret charities were numerous, and for every one I was in on, there were dozens I didn't know about. Over the years, I have found many other fans and pros that very quietly helped fandom. But until they like Joni, are gone, I will not tell of them.

Maybe someday I will try to write about the many and varied jokes (some taking years) we were all a part of, but now I must close; Jon is here and we are leaving tomorrow for San Antonio and the Worldcon. So if you see a fat old lady being pushed by a young good looking man at the convention, say hello — it won't be Jon!!! ✨

I Remember Joni...

by Bill Mallardi

...But then, once anyone met Joni, how could you forget her? If memory serves, she was the first or second fan I ever met in fandom. Joni Stopa, as she's been known for more than 30 years, passed away in the early morning hours of December 4, 1996, of complications from a heart problem, plus a stroke and staph infection. The heart problem caused her to collapse on Friday, November 8th, at Windycon. She was 56.

When I first met Joni, she was Joni Cornell, 18, recently divorced with a two-year-old child, Debbie, and living in Monessen, PA. I had been reading

science fiction for more than six years, when in 1958 I picked up a prozine and saw an ad in the back from a female named Marijane Johnson asking for correspondents, and mentioning a club of SF fans, the N3F. Being 21, I wrote to her thinking she was a young, pretty single gal, kind of hoping to start a friendship with a bit of romance to it. To my surprise, it turned out Marijane was a bed-ridden woman in her '40s, with a severe form of childhood rheumatism, a bad spine and occasionally even on oxygen. She had an electric wheelchair with all kinds of straps and gizmos on it, plus an intricate

metal lift that got her in and out of bed, etc. She called the chair 'Mr. Clancy'. Janey had a personality that wouldn't quit, so everyone called her 'Sparkle-Janey'. She conned me into joining N3F, and one of the welcome letters I received *was* from a pretty, young gal, and of course it was Joni.

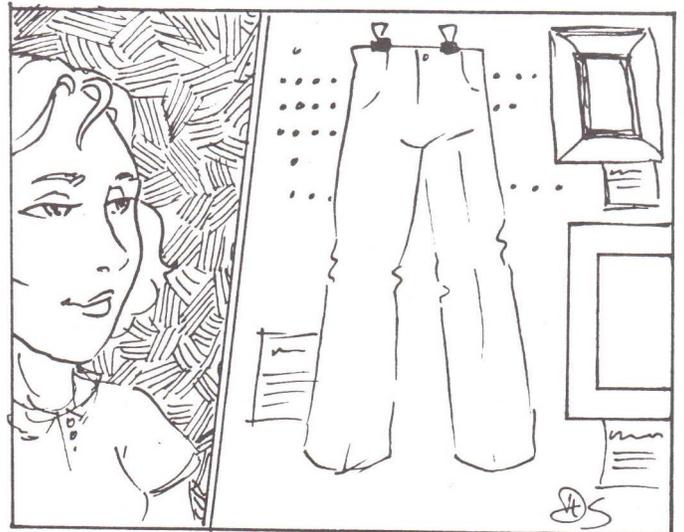
When Joni sent me a picture of herself, my heart flipped. She was not only attractive, but also intelligent with a great sense of humor. In our letters to each other we always stuck funny quips, etc., inside. So one night while watching TV, I spotted a commercial with a great line. It was animated (I think for Mr. Clean detergent) with the talking drops stopping in mid-air on their way into a bucket of hot water, and with a distressed look at the camera asking: "Do *you* know what it *means* to be Emulsified?" In my next letter I used it as an interlineation — and Joni loved it! In letters, even in person at cons, all we had to do to break each other up was to turn suddenly to the other and say that line. Another time she mentioned that her cat got outside and had a tryst in the fields, ending up pregnant. I countered with: "What?! Your cat had kittens at her age? Whatever in the world got into her?"

Both of us missed the '59 Detention, but Pittsburgh got the bid for 1960 — so Joni and I planned on a big welcome from each other when we met. (She promised to give me a big kiss, and I was looking forward to it.) I took two weeks vacation and a non-fan friend and I went to New York City for five days. He was to drop me off at the con hotel on the way home, and I would find my own way back to Akron. (I met Ray Schaffer of North Canton, Ohio, who brought me home afterwards).

1960 was the first year for Project Art Show, started by Bjo Trimble and Dirce Archer. Instead of having Bjo transport all the artwork from California, Dirce drafted Joni to be the 'mail drop' — which meant that all the bundles of artwork were shipped by the artists to Joni's small apartment. When Bjo knocked on Joni's door to get it, Joni said, "You're here! You can get this art out of here!" There was art filling up the hallway, so you had to sidle sideways to get through, and artwork was in every available space throughout the whole apartment! I certainly didn't help matters any, because in my haste to leave for New York it was inevitable I'd miss something. This time it was three pairs of pants I'd forgotten to get at the cleaners. I remembered them

too late though, since I was in New York at the time! Not going to be there long enough for my folks to send them to New York, I hit upon a devilish plan. I wrote home and had my folks send the pants to Joni in Monessen. At the same time I wrote Joni, telling her to expect their arrival, and she could give them to me when I got my kiss.

The great day came and I arrived late Saturday. Checking into my room, I dumped everything down and rushed up to the 17th floor to find Joni. Hurrying into the room where the Art Show was being set up, I looked frantically around. I asked someone if Joni was there and he pointed out a slim, 5-foot 2-inch tall beautiful blue-eyed blonde, who was behind some tables talking on the phone. She looked up at me, and I stretched my arms out wide and yelled, "Joni, baby!" Hurriedly, she hung up and yelled back, "Bill Mallardi!"...and she leaped over the table. (Well, no, actually she ran around from behind it). She threw herself into my arms, her arms encircled by neck, and as I held her completely off the floor she gave me *two* big kisses!! "Goshwow," I thought, "What are all these other fans thinking?" Then Joni did it...she pulled the clincher. The Perfect Squelcheroo! "Bill," she said loudly as I set her back down on the floor, "I've got your *pants* right over there!" You should have seen the fans look our way with arched eyebrows. "C'mon," she said, taking my hand, "Let's go up to your room and I'll press them for you. I brought an iron." So Al Lewis, Dave and Carol Prosser, and Gregg Trend all trouped up to my room, and Joni and I explained it on the way, much to my relief! Thus ended the Saga of "The Great Pants Scandal."



Jon Stopa also first saw Joni at Pittcon. It was just outside the door of the Art Show, which she was setting up. "I need volunteers," she said forcefully, aiming her words at Harlan Ellison. "Do you know who I am?" he asked. She said she didn't care who he was. At that point Jon ducked out! Another story from the con was that she had sat on Isaac Asimov's lap while wearing her costume ball outfit, a gown with grapes tied to it. Asimov obligingly ate the grapes, one by one.

Pittcon was so much fun Joni and I made plans to make Seattle in 1961. Al Lewis also liked Joni, so when he took his teacher's vacation he drove from L.A. to Pennsylvania, picked up Joni and Debbie, then went back to California. She stayed at Al's house until time to leave for Seacon. The Plan was for me to join up with a caravan of two other cars with my white, 1960 Valiant at Earl Kemp's in Chicago. On the way back Joni would ride east with me and whoever else was in the car from the Chicago group. During the trip west, Al and Joni stopped at many fans' abodes to stay for the night. The first stop was in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, adjoining Akron, to visit with the president of the N3F, an older fan named Ralph Holland. With my parents permission, they then drove to Fairlawn to spend the night with us.

Unfortunately, when I left later for the hook-up with Earl and company in Chicago, I mis-timed it badly. I thought it took six hours to drive, but it actually took eight! When I arrived there was a note on Earl's door: "Bill, we had to leave with two cars. Try to catch up to us if you can." Great! Here I had worked all night, had no sleep for 24 hours, and had to keep driving across the country alone. By dint of continuous driving and finding small motels that let me sleep five hours for \$5, I finally caught up to them in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. I was totally exhausted when Earl Kemp pulled me aside and said, "Bill, the only driver/rider for you is a Jon Stopa, but don't let him drive more than two hours at a time, he's got a bad back." Groan. It turned out though, that Jon could only drive Kemp's big Buick two hours before his back started hurting, but my little Valiant was so easy to drive that he drove it four, five, six, and seven hours straight, both coming and going, before it bothered him. That model had a long hood, but a short, 'bobbed' rear end with one unusual styling feature: the trunk lid had the

imprint of a false tire cover stamped into it.

Meanwhile, back in the N3F, many Neffers, including Joni and I, had taken up a collection to get the aforementioned Sparkle-Janey to attend Seacon, since she lived in nearby Spokane. (This was in addition to the TAFF fund, won by England's Ella Parker that year.) Our fund was large enough to buy Janey plane tickets, etc., and she said later she only spent \$10 of her own money the whole time. (It would be Janey's first and only con — she passed away a few years later.)

After the plane tickets were bought, unknown to us, Janey's protective parents talked her into not going, fearing for her care and safety. It so happened that Bjo and John Trimble were coming back from Billings, Montana, and decided to stop in and see if Janey needed anything for the trip, but her parents almost didn't let them in the house! Talking persistently and promising that we fans would give Janey 24-hour-care or hire a professional care-giver, plus the fact that the plane tickets were already purchased, they finally succeeded in getting them to agree, much to Janey's delight.

Dick Eney picked Janey up at the Seattle Airport, and from then on Joni, Phil Freedman, Jane Jacobs, Ralph Holland, Al Lewis, Gem Carr, and I plus many others, took care of her at Seacon. The hotel also furnished a babysitter for Debbie and Janey while Joni went to some of the con affairs and nighttime parties, plus Mr. Clancy and the lift were constantly in use.

Joni even made a costume for Janey for the Masquerade Ball; she went as "Queen of the Cats" — Joni dressed her in a long green robe, with a silver cat's head on her bosom and a crown on her head. Even Mr. Clancy was dressed up with a coat of foil feathers on the sides. (Joni was in big demand by others, too, to help them with their costumes.) I volunteered to push Janey the three times around the Ballroom with the other costumed fans; she grinned like a Cheshire cat. Joni ended up winning the prize for 'The Most' category, which means she had on the *least*.

Janey missed a lot of the con activities because she tired so easily, so she missed the banquet and Heinlein's Guest of Honor speech. Joni had put her to bed, leaving some money for Ralph Holland to use to buy her a big dinner. Later, Joni came rushing in before Janey fell asleep, saying she had a

visitor. To her surprise in walked GoH Robert Heinlein himself! Joni and Phil sat on the floor, while Heinlein sat in a big chair. Soon Buz and Elinor Busby, Poul and Karen Anderson, Sylvia White, and others walked in.

Heinlein stayed almost three hours talking and relaxing until 2 AM, and told Janey he felt more "unwound" than he had all day. It thrilled Janey no end, and just like a lot of things at the con, I'm sure Joni was involved in some way or another. The last day of the con Joni packed Janey's luggage for the flight home, but we still had her birthday to celebrate; Phil brought the punch makings, and Bjo showed up with a cake. We lit the candles and sang "Happy Birthday", then Sandy Cuttrell and Ted Johnston brought guitars and folk songs were sung. Rumor has it that Forry Ackerman even had an alcoholic beverage!

When we packed to leave for home, there was not only Jon, Joni, Debbie, and myself, but two sort of fringe-type fans from Chicago, boy and girlfriend, who asked to come along! I only recall his first name, George, but his lady friend's name I've forgotten completely! We took turns driving on the trip back and shared expenses, gas, food, lodging. Everyone had sleeping bags, so most of the time we camped out along the way. Jon, George, and I packed that small trunk with as much stuff as we could, including some unsold artwork of Joni's. The rest was shoved onto the shelf inside the back window. Every stop at night we had to remember *exactly* where everything went. When we left next morning, if we put something else in that spot we couldn't close the trunk lid! Last to go in were the sleeping bags, since they were so pliable. The next time we opened the trunk, the bag on top actually retained the impress of that false tire cover! That trunk was *full*.



When Joni drove she loved to kick off her shoes and drive barefoot, which I didn't mind until we got

into the beautiful mountains of Glacier National Park in Montana. It scared the hell out of me, because every time we went *down* the mountains, she'd put the car in neutral! "Joni," I said, "If our brakes fail on these steep grades we're goners! We won't even have the engine's compression to help slow us down!" "Bill, don't worry, I'm just trying to save gas! We'll be all right!" Luckily, we had no car problems at all.

During the trip I knew that Joni and Jon were attracted to each other, but Joni knew what she was doing, and if it turned serious everything would work out for the best. As it turned out, they were made for each other, even their names were similar. But Joni held off marrying Jon for a year and a half before consenting and joining him in Wilmot, Wisconsin. When Bill Bowers and I started *Double:Bill* in October 1962, Joni was a life recipient, and contributed covers, articles, and interior illustrations. She appeared in our last issue, *D:B #21* and illustrated her own article, "The Iron Womb and I," a humorous piece about the ads in back of the old pulps...like: "Ruptured?"

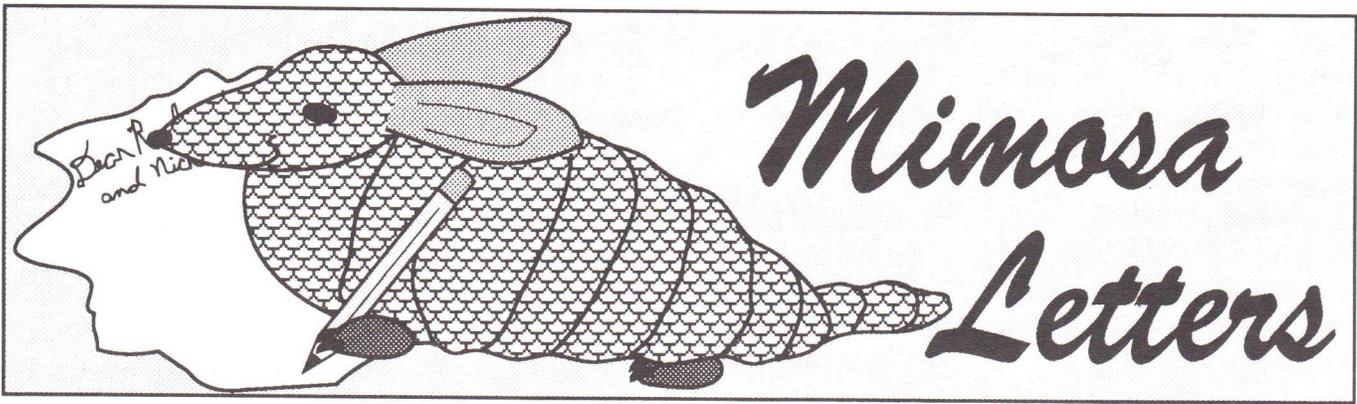
Of course, Joni and Jon went on to many good things: winning eight costume ball prizes over the years, holding Wilcons, etc., culminating in being Fan Guests of Honor at Chicon 5 in 1991.

I will miss Joni very much, she was a beautiful person inside and out, and fandom is the lesser for her leaving us. Very talented in many ways, she never turned down anyone who asked for help, from costume making to volunteering for anything fan-nish. Her kindness to Sparkle-Janey was also a tribute to her that not too many fans of today knew about. She was definitely *special* to me..I knew her almost 40 years, and my only regret now is that I was Gafiated the whole time she grew ill, and I knew nothing of it...thus I never saw her ever again. Yes, I guess in my own way I loved her, and a song I heard on the radio recently barely expresses my feelings:

It was an old song by Kris Kristofferson, and it said, "She's not ashamed to be a woman to afraid to be a friend, and lovin' her was easier than anything I'll ever do again..."

G'Bye, Joni...you were loved more than you know... ✨

(Many thanks to Jon Stopa and Bjo Trimble for their help to me in preparing this article.)



Everyone by now has heard that renown fan artist Bill Rotsler died in October. We had heard about his cancer treatments, of course, but living a continent-wide away from the Los Angeles area where Bill lived prevented us from knowing what his health really was. So it was a shock when the news of his passing came to us. He'd seemed so strong and full of life a year ago at the L.A.Con; indeed, perhaps our lasting image of him is the dinner expedition with other fan artists that turned into a cartoonists free-for-all, much to the bewilderment of the waiter who maybe thought we were speaking in pictographs instead of English.

We're going to miss Bill Rotsler. He was a ubiquitous presence in *Mimosa*, and always went out of his way to make sure we had a plentiful supply of his lettercol illos (as he did with many other fan publishers). He was a generous man. We'll begin this time with some comments about "Rotsler Traces," the multi-part words-and-pictures celebration of Rotsler by his fellow fan artists. Most of these were written and sent to us before Rotsler died. The first letter is from Bill himself.

William Rotsler

My God, what egoboo! What a conspiracy! It is unique, fun and flattering!

I was very touched by Alexis Gilliland's bit {{☞ "Beginnings" }}, for he quite accurately outlined our personal history. I think Alexis is a Great Talent and drawing with him is the most fun I ever have in fandom! It was developed that I'm the straight man, and I try to push us into areas and attitudes that neither one of us might go well by ourselves, as well as keeping our own individuality, and I think I do that well.

But I must make corrections in Teddy Harvia's version of my story of house-hunting with Marilyn Monroe {{☞ in "My Dinner with Rotsler" }}. I had a

date to meet Andre de Dienes — to help pick out photos from one of his books, I think. Andre was the "photographer's photographer." He had taken photographs of a young actress when she was still Norma Jean Mortensen, and remained close.

Anyway, it was 1951, and I arrived at his Hollywood Hills home to find him waiting in the blue Cadillac with a young blonde I recognized immediately as the girl from the recently released *Asphalt Jungle* (1950). "Get in the car," he said in his heavy Hungarian accent. "We are going to help Marilyn find a house." (She had just signed her first big contract.)

I climbed in. Marilyn had the remnants of last night's makeup, her hair was disheveled, she wore capris and a man's white shirt tied in the middle. She turned to me and turned on the sex. Never before or since have I had such an experience. It was like being blowtorched. Oh, I've had women come on, sexy women, but there has been nothing like that.

She soon realized that I was no one important, i.e., could do her any real good (at least that's my take on it), so she turned it off and was pleasant for the rest of the day. We looked at a house the Marx brothers had built for their legendary mother and several others.

To this day, every time I pass a certain corner on Crescent Heights in Hollywood, I think of letting off Marilyn there.

Thank you for that article. I am delighted.

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I've seen collaborative Rotsler cartoons before, mostly with Alexis Gilliland, but not so many as in

Mimosa 20. The ones in the letter column featuring the Rotsler character holding the thunderbolt over his head are especially good. It's like reading *Partners in Wonder*, only shorter and funnier.

Sharon Farber's memoirs of ob-gyn work {{☞ "Tales of Adventure and Medical Life #14" }} may not be funny, but they are very interesting to me, especially as my father was in that line of medicine. His views on women's place in the home were pretty Victorian, but his patients regarded him highly. For his part, my father told me he was originally attracted to ob-gyn because it involved less surgery and cutting people open and that sort of bloody mess than other well-paid specialties, though I can't guess how many episiotomies, not to mention C-Sections, he performed in his career. He also told me of his discovery of the same rule that Sharon learns at the top of page 21. As he put it, "Never let a woman in labor go to the bathroom: newborn babies are lousy swimmers."



"Poor devil, that's as far as he ever got in *Philosophy 103*."

Darrell Schweitzer, 113 Deepdale Road, Strafford, Pennsylvania 19087

Does anyone remember the fanzine phenomenon of 'fake Rotslers'? Around 1970 there were lots of imitation Rotsler cartoons in fanzines, which deliberately deflated themselves by admitting they weren't the real thing. I drew one once which showed a very grumpy pseudo-Rotsler figure, whose thought balloon read, "Rotsler should sue."

Your cover by Kurt Erichsen suggests that in the year 3000 A.U.C. (i.e., A.D. 2247) the Romans will have a major nostalgic return to old-fashioned modes of dress. Or maybe this is the Roman SCA

we see here. Very little of what we think of as Roman dress (or military gear) survived as late as A.D. 400. The rigid 'muscle' breastplate was obsolete by around the year 250. Army headgear looked like a Davy Crockett cap with no tail. Or propeller.

Dave Rowe, 8288 West Shelby State Road 44, Franklin, Indiana 46131-9211

Nice tribute to Rotsler. About twenty years back *Punch* did the same thing, using a cartoon by Larry of a standing naked man seen from behind and giving it to all their cartoonists to complete. They included ffolks, Hewison, and Bill Tidy, who also appeared in some British fanzines in the '60s, a fact that few fen are aware of.

Steve Stiles {{☞ in "The Last Time I Saw Rotsler" }} must have a sadistic streak! He comes out with that line about Rotsler helping to "apprehend a dangerous criminal" and just leaves it dangling like that! Now *there* is a tale worth the telling; any chance you can get Steve to write it up for you?

{{☞ Steve tells us that it happened in June 1957, when Rotsler was living near Ventura, California. A prisoner had escaped from jail and Bill was deputized to take the searchers through the canyon behind his house where the escapee was holed up. Nothing very unusual happened, except for the prisoner accidentally wounding himself with a gun as he was recaptured. }}

Also, a good tribute to Lynn Hickman from Roger Sims {{☞ "Lynn As I Remember Him" }}. It's just as well Midwestcon moved to the Blue Ash Hotel this year; can you imagine if it was still at the Marriott? The fen would have been sitting out on the patio and every so often you'd see a head look around trying to find if Lynn had arrived. He's missed.

Finally, Nicki's conclusionary piece on the media coverage of SF and its lack of coverage of fanzines {{☞ "No Apostrophes Please, We're Fanzines" }} brings to mind the TV coverage at Archon 20. The main draw was the guest of honor, Ray Bradbury, who is just as well-known outside of our clique. So how did the Fox network affiliate new program cover the convention? They totally ignored Bradbury and used it as a promo for the new *X-Files* series! Given coverage little that, do you *really* want the media to discover fanzines?

**Linda Bushyager, 24 Leopard Road,
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I enjoyed Jack Chalker's history column {{☞ "A Short History of Baltimore Fandom (Part 1)" }}. I remember when I first moved to Philadelphia in 1971, he and a couple of other Baltimore fans were doing a east-coast meeting circuit. They would apparently drive up and down the coast to whatever local club meetings were going on, so he was a member of Philadelphia's Group, NYC, Baltimore, Washington, and maybe even more. Such activity must have required tremendous energy.

All the Rotsler stories and artwork were made more poignant since I know Bill has been quite ill recently. I've only had the pleasure of meeting him a couple of times, but he's been great influence on my fannish life. When I did my first zine with Suzle Tompkins in 1968 (*Granfalloon*), we got most of our artwork by contacting the N3F. And of course most of what they sent were Rotsler drawings. After that, Rotsler illos were a constant in my zines. Bill also had the habit of generously producing con name badges throughout the years — often showing up at a Worldcon with a box of pre-made badges for as many people as he could. I was the recipient of several; I would treasure them and wear them at most cons I went to. When I did actually have a chance to sit down and talk with Bill (really more me sitting with a group of people who were talking to him with me just listening), I found him to be extremely interesting to listen to in person. So all the stories in *Mimosa* about him really had an impact on me.



Can I have
my shadow
back?



Actually, I enjoyed many of the articles in *Mimosa*, but Sharon Farber's was really scary. I don't think I ever want to see a doctor again (of course, now that I think about it, I don't think I really wanted to see a doctor ever again *before* reading her story...but the discomfort level certainly has been increased now!)

Thanks for all your hard work. The issue was really great, and the Rotsler stuff really made it special to me.

**Joseph Major, 1409 Christy Avenue,
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Really funny Erichsen covers. Yes, I fear "Denarius Magnus" rules in Roma of AUC MMM or America in AUC MMDCCL. The various details add spice and wit to the overall impression, but a couple of minor nitpicking points... On the front cover, the leftmost standard should say 'Legio XXXI', and more to the point, it is a hand, which is the standard of a maniple (pun on manus, 'hand'), not a legion, and so should have a further assignment, e.g. 'Legio XXXI, Cohors II, Hastatus'. Also, on the back page, should they not be calling those exotic roots from the Mundus Novus 'Tubers'?

Jack Chalker's article provides a type example of 'missing the point': "When you included Mayhew, Studebaker, Haughey, we were more of a kind of gang of nerds than a real club." Ah... I thought that "gang of nerds" was the basic description of a SF club.

And finally, Nicki's justified complaints about the way we are being perceived: "Apparently, the SciFi Channel's idea of SF fandom seems to be limited to male teens whose sole interests are comic books and video games." Here we run into demographics. "Male teens whose sole interests are comic and video games" have a lot of disposable income, more so than middle-aged married couples whose interests include but are not limited to books and fanzines. To gain advertisers the channel produces shows that (supposedly) appeal to "male teens, etc. etc." on the grounds that if people watch a show they will see and be influenced by the ads on it. The problem seems to be, therefore, that the executives now believe their own network.

{{☞ We've watched a number of shows on the Sci-Fi Channel, but we really don't think the commercials are more geared toward male teens. For instance, for weeks it seemed like Pepto Bismol was the prime sponsor of every show, with an antacid commercial at every break. Lately there has been a spate of 'Call-a-Psychic' commercials. Not really things you'd think would interest teens, unless things have *really* changed in the past few years. }}

**Gay Haldeman, 5412 NW 14th Avenue,
Gainesville, Florida 32605-4414**

I really enjoyed Jack Chalker's "A Short History of Baltimore Fandom (Part 1)", especially since it covers some of our own history, too. But I wanted to correct some minor factual errors. Joe and I didn't meet at a Washington Science Fiction Association meeting — we were already dating at the time of Discon in 1963 and discovered fandom together. (We're both in Jay Kay Klein's masquerade photos in the Discon Memory Book, though he has my name wrong.) We discovered WSFA later, when Alice Krieg fell over the copy of *Analog* Joe had next to him on the floor in a class. She invited us to WSFA and changed our lives forever. Joe's brother Jay (not nicknamed Jay because Jack was already taken at WSFA, but because his father was named Jack) came with us and met Alice. Alice (Krieg) Haldeman, by the way, is the head librarian at the Edgewater, Florida, library if anyone would like to contact her.

Anyway, thanks, Jack, for writing about that period. It was great to see so many familiar names and remember some good times.

**Ted White, 1014 North Tuckahoe Street,
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I read Jack Chalker's "Short History of Baltimore Fandom" and was fascinated by this look at early-sixties Balto fandom. But I was a bit surprised by what was left out, and by some errors concerning Balto fandom in the fifties.

What was left out: that fandom thrived in Baltimore well before Jack discovered it. He totally omits all mention of Baltimore's leading fanzine editor/publisher of those days, Ted Pauls. I'm as-

tonished at that. Starting in 1959, a teenaged Ted Pauls (using a typer he borrowed from me for a couple of years) began a whirlwind of publishing activity, using several titles and publishing most of his zines quite frequently — monthly or more often. His best-known fmz was *Kipple*, which started as a fannish monthly (had Marion Zimmer Bradley as a columnist/fmz reviewer), and evolved into a political-discussion zine (one of the first). It was published regularly throughout the entire decade of the sixties. I'm startled by Ted's omission; maybe Jack intends to deal with him in Part Two.

{{☞ We agree that Ted Pauls certainly was a prominent Baltimore fan. We were saddened to learn news of his death, which reached us while this *Mimosa* was being put together. }}

John Magnus and John Hitchcock were friends of mine throughout the fifties, and, living just outside D.C., I drove to Balto to visit them for weekends, usually staying at Hitchcock's house. During that time I met Raleigh Multog and also George Wetzel. I would say those four — Hitchcock, Magnus, Multog, and Wetzel — pretty much were Baltimore fandom in the second half of the fifties. (And I joined them in 1958.)

In 1958 we discovered that a fan named Marian Cox, who had contributed to *Vega* in the early fifties, had married, was now Marian Oaks, and was living in Baltimore. We formed a club (including the neofan Ted Pauls) and met at the Oaks' trailer regularly for several months — but I cannot recall what we called our group. (Throughout this period most of us also attended WSFA meetings regularly.)

In all the time I knew Hitchcock and Magnus, I never heard of the Baltimore SF Forum, and I strongly doubt it was "dominated by John Hitchcock, John Magnus, and Raleigh Multog," if it was a Johns Hopkins-associated club. Magnus went to Oberlin. Multog was mentally impaired and never went to any college. Only Hitchcock, a child prodigy, went to Hopkins, graduating at 18. If there was a club at Hopkins, it was too insular to have any association with general fandom. Magnus, Hitchcock and I were fanzine editors, involved in *apas* (like *FAPA*), and went to conventions (what few there were then). We never met any other fans from Baltimore beyond those mentioned above.

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As usual, Sharon Farber's med school piece managed to be informative, entertaining, and scary all at the same time. Her unromantic comment about delivering babies ("a long screamfest followed by the arrival of a slimy conehead") reminded me of a comment from Eva Whitley when she was largely pregnant and someone was going on and on about the joys of motherhood: "I feel like I swallowed a gigantic live fish."

As for Guy Lillian's piece {{☞ "It Pays to Advertise?" }}}, you have no idea how weird it was to casually thumb through an issue of *Sports Illustrated* one week (I have a subscription) only to find a squib on the ad Guy and Dennis put in *The Florida Flambeau*. If I had to bet on fans whose names might appear in *SI* one day, theirs would probably be last on the list!

WISH IT HAD ANOTHER
SETTING BESIDES "WHO"



John Boston, 195 Kane Street, Brooklyn,
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<jboston@mindspring.com>

Guy Lillian's Tale of Legal Life is a fit companion piece for Sharon Farber's articles, and makes me

hope that we can expect further inroads into the professions now that you have done medicine and law. Begin the search, I say, for the Sharon Farber of the clergy.

Maybe Nicki should think some more about the implications of her metaphors. In her closing comments, she analogizes SF fandom to a tribe, and wonders if it will be "acknowledged by the world at large." For most tribes, acknowledgment by the "world at large" has been an unmitigated disaster. Cultivate obscurity.

Gene Stewart, HQ USAFE/SCXP, PSC 2
Box 6151, APO AE 09012

"Rotsler Traces" is the kind of idea that works but keeps things insular all at once, as it excludes neos and perpetuates legends. But while the remarks are welcome and interesting as retrospective, the toons stand on their own. And it's amazing how well WR's keyhole people merge with so many other styles. Harvia's point that he's a performing artist reveals worlds; fandom has been sitting back digging the performance for decades now. But isn't Ian Gunn's "Along the Limpopo With Canoe and Felt-Tip" fanfiction? Gasp! It's my favorite among what you pubbed.

{{☞ Yikes! We've been found out! Seriously, though, much of fan history can be probably considered 'insular'. Popularizing it seems a good way to pass along this type of 'insider' stuff. }}

Guy H. Lillian — or GHLIII, the *fifth* fannish ghod, apparently — keeps his tone perfectly pitched to his content. As a long-time GHLIII-ful fan, I've urged him to *finish that book*, and this latest sample of his writing only strengthens that feeling. This is my favorite piece in *Mimosa XX*.

{{☞ Guy as a fannish ghod?? We're not sure the world is ready for that yet! If there's got to be a fifth fannish ghod, Chaz the Armadillo has our vote. }}

Roger Sims's reminiscence of Lynn Hickman is sterling and leaves me feeling that a good man's life has been honored by a good friend's attention. May we all be even half so lucky. Celebrate while we can, eh?

Finally, I agree with Nicki, but isn't Fandom defined by what it's *not* as much as by what it is? If

so, mundania can never co-opt it. By definition, Fandom is invisible to mundania. That's why the Sci-Fi Channel uses an insulting term to identify itself. That's why TV idiots & other post-literates can't grasp the concept of a literary con. Et cetera. Fandom will always require a POV simply not that of the majority. Otherwise, it ain't fandom.

So get out there and write locs, draw fillos, and pub that ish -- it matters to Fandom, and holding your breath waiting for the mainstream to 'discover' us will only turn one blue.

Of course, blue *is* a nice fannish color...

**Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road
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You are wrong in saying that science fiction has become acceptable in the United States. What the country has accepted is 'sci-fi' which is a horse of a different color. And it is a long way from being science fiction.

{{☞ At the recent Philcon, Dan Simmons had the same point in his Guest of Honor speech. While it's identifiable, what we can do about it is not so clear. }}

I'll use the SciFi Channel to prove my point. Their coverage of last year's worldcon is a case in point. Your description of what they imagine a typical fan to be is 100% correct.

I don't know what a GenXer is but I do know that fanzines began to fade when the Trekkies made the scene with their four to five dollar zines which they hoped to sell at a profit. Our type of zine is still around but you have to look in the apas for them. Art Rapp still publishes *Spacewarp* for the apa SAPS and is up to issue number 200. But you'll only find it in SAPS. It is the same with any other zine you can think of.

{{☞ We're not here to defend *Star Trek* fandom, but it obviously has an entirely different view of fanzines — as outlets for fiction from aspiring writers. (Actually, it wasn't so long ago that most people in 'our' fandom aspired to be professional writers.) As you noted, these *Trek* zines are usually expensive, probably in part due to high production costs. It may be the increasingly high costs of producing fanzines that's resulting in fewer of the kind that interest you. }}

On the recognition of fandom by the media in general — it will never happen. There are not enough fans to make a difference. I doubt that you will find a thousand trufen in the entire United States; we're not about to get any larger. Remember it is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan.



**Harry Andruschak, P.O. Box 5309,
Torrance, California 90510-5309**

Ron Bennett's article {{☞ "I Spy With My Little Eye" }} reminds me of the many 'security briefings' I had during my ten years in the U.S. Navy. We were always being shown films that showed how Soviet agents would try to subvert us, usually with money, sometimes with sex and drugs. Well, why not? As a Data Systems Technician First Class, I had access to oodles of top-secret-and-above documents and information, such as [censored], [deleted] and even [do you have a need to know?].

To the best of my knowledge, I was totally ignored by the Soviet agents. During my two years in London (1970-2) I was warned that they might pretend to be British agents and play on the fact of my being born in the U.K. In spite of these warnings I had an active sex life anyhow, which might have left me open to blackmail. But no, nothing happened, except that I used many a bottle of bourbon whiskey for seductions. None of the women seemed to be interested in the fact that I could supply critical information on things like **** and ##### and even @@@@! I got more comments on my foreskin than on my Top Secret/ESI/NFE/Crypto/Cosmic clearances. Truth is, nobody was really interested about where B-52s were flying, nuke subs lurking, or anything else really interest-

ing. London was supposed to be a hotbed of Soviet agents but they all seemed to ignore me. I guess they were too busy on their various projects, such as cleaning out MI5 and MI6, which they did quite thoroughly.

I also enjoyed Guy H. Lillian III's article, although I shouldn't. I really ought to have an attitude problem toward lawyers, based on my always being pre-emptorally challenged on jury duty (mostly because my IQ is above 80 and I refuse to dumb down my act and pretend to be a gullible sheep just to sit on a jury). But Guy is such an excellent story teller that I can forgive him. And if I ever do return to New Orleans and need a lawyer for any reason, at least I know who to turn to.



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I liked all the different takes on the cartoon in "Rostler Traces." It's always interesting to see how different people will caption a cartoon, and occasionally add additional material to make the gag even funnier (I remember one in which there were over nine different versions of a cartoon of a man sitting at an exploded computer). And Ian Gunn's commentary, done as a diary of an expedition, was truly hilarious — once I realized that it was a joke (I first saw it while glancing through the zine and didn't realize the context, and got rather alarmed until I thought to read the rest and see that it was a joke).

The latest installment of "Through Time and Space with Forry Ackerman" was another excellent window into a period of fandom before my time. I

especially liked the co-incidence of Bob Greenberg finding the roll of film that Walt Willis had lost at Disneyland half a year ago. It's truly a wonder that it was found by someone who'd recognize the people on the pictures and be able to route them to their proper owner.

And Dave Kyle's "Farewell, Teens, Farewell!" was a wonderful piece of fan history, including an account of the very first sf conventions. Somehow it's not surprising that there are no comprehensive accounts of those events — we generally don't realize that things like these are significant while they're happening. They're just something to do. Only afterward do we realize in retrospect that this was an important event and try to remember just exactly what did happen and write down what memories remain, blurred as they are from the intervening events.

Nicki's closing comments were yet another proof that mundanes really don't understand our community, even when they are trying to act like it (i.e., the SciFi Channel's media-oriented coverage of L.A.Con III). I've spent the last several years trying to educate my terminally mundane parents on just what cons are like (they still have the idea that a sf con is something like a professional conference for writers), and finally gave up when I realized that they Just Didn't Get It.

**Lloyd Penney, 1706-24 Eva Road,
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As do many fans, I enjoy reading fan histories of individual cities, and Jack Chalker's fond remembrances make me faunch for my own neo-ish days, when fannish follies were true adventures into the unknown. However, Canadian fanhistories usually read as relatively neutral or negative; I don't know if this is an indictment of Canfandom, or of those who wrote the fanhistories.

Dave Kyle's stories of his beginnings in fandom are always a delight to read, to see who fanned before us. And now, we have a few more details of the Great Exclusion Act of 1939. Dave mentions that he'd like to publish a book of fannish reminiscences such as this article...well, those two books I'd be looking forward to, Dave Kyle's and yours, Dick. How about a progress report on your book in the next issue? Ghod, I'm a pest.

{{👉 Richard's 1960s project is moving along, but a bit slowly lately due to some other things taking up available time. Probably another man-year of research is needed, mostly sifting through source material like amateur press association mailings, fanzines, and the like. After that, the *real* work will begin. }}

**Martin Morse Wooster, P.O. Box 8093,
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907**

What is striking about both Jack Chalker's and David Kyle's pieces is that people don't realize the mighty fans of yore who founded clubs and worldcons were teenagers. We tend to forget that Moskowitz was 19 when he organized the Worldcon and Frederik Pohl was 20 when he was expelled from it. Donald Wollheim was 25 in 1939 — and he was regarded as an old man.

I liked Nicki Lynch's editorial. The notion in the press that sf fans are nothing but a bunch of weirdos is of course, not new. But what I believe separates true fen, both fannish and sercon, from mediaoids and mundane zine producers is that we care about our past. The mundane zines I've seen may obsess about the trendy and hip, but they are nothing about previous generations. But history lasts; evanescent popular culture does not. Fifty years from now, I bet very few people will care about nose rings and today's pop stars. But I bet there will be some fen still interested in the 1939 Worldcon, who sawed Courtney's boat, or why Dave Kyle won't let you sit down.

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Dave Kyle's "Farewell, Teens, Farewell!" covers one of the most talked about period in early fandom. I've already read much about the Moskowitz-Wollheim controversy, or whatever you want to call it, but I don't think I can read enough. The first Philadelphia convention, or whatever it was, is also a matter of controversy. The British, of course, claim their first con (in Leeds, I think, in early 1937) to be the first true sf convention. I think I agree with them, and mostly for one simple reason: a true sf convention must be pre-planned and pre-announced. You must somehow announce your

intention to have a get together (to *call* it a convention might not be important), so that other people that are interested might come. A convention should also, in principle, be open for 'outsiders'. But here there is room for endless debates!

Nice obituary for Lynn Hickman. Unfortunately, we are now in a period where we can expect many obituaries. Many of the well-known fans and other sf people, those who shaped sf fandom, are now old. Someone should write about Sam Moskowitz (I guess he died to late for you to fit it into this issue). Our movement will probably change when all the people who created it aren't with us any more. I fear it might change for the worse. Many of the young fans today don't have the same fannish spirit as the old guard. But, of course, I hope my fears are unfounded.

Which moves me to the closing comments on page 51. Nicki is absolutely correct. Fandom, as we know it, has difficulties getting outside recognition. Mundane media simply don't understand what our fandom is. They have no problems with trekdom or flying saucers or so called New Age, but they can't comprehend that people a) may be interested in a literary genre, and b) beside this have a lot of funny and interesting activities without obvious connections to science fiction.

All other literary fans seem to be very serious. I think media has their problems with moving from a) to b). If all sf fans were extremely serious they would understand. If all sf fans were extremely silly, they would also understand. But a movement that is sometimes serious, sometimes silly...that's incomprehensible.

**Ben Yalow, 3242 Tibbett Avenue, Bronx,
New York 10463-3801**

<ybmcu@panix.com>

For me, the most interesting article was in the issue Kyle's — with the death of SaM, it seems more important than ever to get all of the different perspectives on the early years into print, and generally available via not only the printed version, but the web version.

Of course, in its description of Philly, it adds yet another voice into the Leeds/Philly question. But, in this case, it's not a question of 'research' — these are the memories of what took place by someone who was there. And it supports the idea of Philly

not being called a convention to take the 'first convention' title from Leeds, but for other reasons (specifically, in honor of the national conventions). And since he was the one who proposed calling it that, he's probably in a better position than anyone to know.

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

In this *Mimosa* I learned a great deal about Baltimore fandom I never knew while these things were happening in it around mid-century. I was on the mailing list for Ted Pauls' *Kipple* and that was about it. Curiously, Don Sobwick whom Jack Chalker mentions several times was working for the Hagerstown newspapers for a while before he moved to the Baltimore area. I never guessed that he had much interest in science fiction during his stay here and I doubt if he knew I was active in fandom.

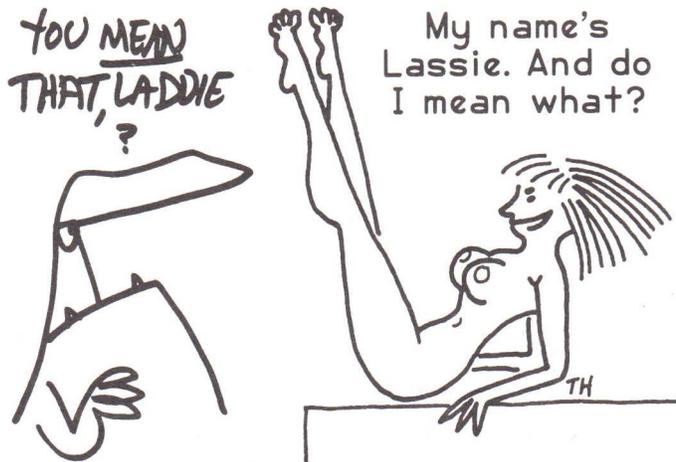
Dave Kyle supplies some nuggets of knowledge about early fandom in the New York City area that I don't recall seeing in print before. But I do feel unhappy about the habit of calling the first few meetings between New York City and Philadelphia fans 'conventions'. Sam Moskowitz did it in *The Immortal Storm* and Dave does it here, but it's confusing because they were not conventions as the noun is usually understood, just visits of a few fans to another city's fans. There were no efforts to persuade fans from everywhere to share in the meetings. Elsewhere in fandom, small get-togethers of this sort came to be known as 'conferences'. If the New York City and Philadelphia events were given the same designation, it would help to eliminate the confusion that young fans must suffer when they try to understand why the first 'world' convention was not the first 'convention' in fandom.

Steve Green, 33 Scott Road, Olton, Solihull B92 7LQ, United Kingdom

Much as I'd rather avoid taking issue with Dave Kyle on matters of fanhistory, I really cannot let pass without comment his attempt in "Farewell, Teens, Farewell!" to resurrect the fannish folklore (on your side of the pond, at least) that a casual gathering between nine fans constitutes a 'convention'. Was it pre-publicized? No. Was there a

formal programme? No. Was it even dubbed a 'convention' till it was already in progress? No. Sorry, Dave, but over here we call that a party. (And before I'm accused of being partisan in my support of the 1937 Leeds convention for that honour, I would remind readers of Mike Glycer's article in *The Story So Far* supporting the UK stance.) Hey, you're a young country: you can't always be first.

{{☺. Well said, but we're more inclined to give the 1936 First Eastern the benefit of the doubt and call it a convention. There are lots of conventions, for instance, that do not have a formal program, a good example being the Midwestcon. As for being pre-publicized, obviously it was, or Dave Kyle up in Monticello, New York, wouldn't have learned of it. And certainly there have been many conventions recognized as such that have had fewer attendees, examples being the first two DeepSouthCons, which each had only six. As for being exclusionary, well, it's unlikely that it was; it's hard to believe that any fans from other locales would have been turned away. But it's an irrelevant argument in any event, as there have been other exclusionary conventions held, such as the LASFAPAcon of 1979 for members of that amateur press association. Both the Philadelphia convention of 1936 and the Leeds convention of 1937 were breakthrough events, immensely important in the history of fandom. Even if the Leeds convention can't claim to be the first, the organizers of that convention can be credited for coming up with the idea first, and that may be of greater significance. }}





**Marty Cantor, 11825 Gilmore Street
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During the past seven years I have really not been completely gafia, just out of touch with fanzine fandom — mostly I have been producing small zines for LASFAPA every now and then (although with greater frequency since I acquired a computer) and some minimal contact with LASFS. Looking at the fanhistorical material you are putting in *Mimosa* reminds me of some of what I did in *Holier Than Thou*. Terry Carr’s “Entropy Reprints” column had its last incarnation in *HIT* and Harry Warner, Jr. regularly sent me his “All My Yesterdays.” I have sent Harry a letter requesting a renewal of that column for *No Award*. I do hope he takes me up on my offer as I consider the timebinding of such a column an important part of a modern genzine — our portion of the cosmos should not forget its roots. But you know all the arguments.

Your article by Forry has an interesting computer-type typo. “In 1957, fifty-five of us chartered a **plant** to fly over to London...” A Venus flytrap, perhaps?

{{☞ Either that or an airplane plant.}}

Nicki, science fiction *may* be more ‘acceptable’ now than it was when I started reading it, but I believe that mostly people still do not understand SF, fanzines, cons, fandom, and other things which constitute fandom — and I still feel uncomfortable telling non-fans that I am a fan, etc. Possibly this is because I grew up at a time when, in public, one hid what one was reading in a large magazine or newspaper.

**Alan Sullivan, 30 Ash Road, Stratford,
London E15 1HL, United Kingdom**

It’s a bit sad, really this sudden media interest in SF fandom. They had an out-dated distorted view, and largely treat fans as just the latest group to be displayed as “eccentrics” at best and pilloried as “sad weirdo nerds” at worst. However, that said, I suppose it is an improvement on the days when the free-thinkers, independent questioners and imaginative souls used to be burned at the stake for heresy...

We Also Heard From:

Eve Ackerman, Ray Allard, Chaz Baden, Martha Beck, Ron Bennett, John Berry, Mark Blackman, William Breiding, Michael A. Burstein, Dennis Caswell, Russ Chauvenet, Vincent Clarke, Buck Coulson, Chester Cuthbert, Richard Dengrove, Moshe Feder, George Flynn, Mike Glicksohn, James Hall, Teddy Harvia, Debbie Hughes, Ben Indick, Terry Jeeves, Steve Jeffery, Cris and Neil Kaden, Dwain Kaiser, Jerry Kaufman, Robert Kennedy, Irv Koch, Ken Lake, Dave Langford, Roy Lavender, Hope Leibowitz, Rodney Leighton, Shinji Maki, Catherine Mintz, Yuri Mironets, Murray Moore, Julia Morgan-Scott, Anthony Shepherd, Fred Smith, Steve Sneyd, Dale Speirs, Will Straw, Mae Strelkov, David Thayer, Bjo Trimble, Lauraine Tutihasi, Lennart Uhlin, Roger Waddington, Taral Wayne, Henry Welch, Kevin Welch, Walt Willis, Kate n’Ha Ysabet, and Joe Zeff.

Thanks to one and all!

Artist Credits

- Sheryl Birkhead: pages 2, 3, 46
- Kurt Erichsen: pages 15, 16
- Teddy Harvia: pages 6, 29, 31
- Joe Mayhew: pages 11, 12, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23
- Julia Morgan-Scott: covers, pages 25, 27
- William Rotsler & Brad Foster: pages 51, 55
- William Rotsler & Alexis Gilliland: pages 50, 52
- William Rotsler & Teddy Harvia: pages 48, 54
- William Rotsler & John Owen: page 38
- William Rotsler & Steve Stiles: page 47
- Diana Stein: pages 7, 9, 39, 40, 42, 43, 45
- Charlie Williams: pages 32, 33, 35, 36



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