

WIZ

#3, December 10, 1982, seems to be the Christmas issue of this improbable manifestation of fannishness in far off Puerto Rico. It's from Richard Bergeron who seems to actually be publishing it frequently -- as advertised. Can't imagine why. Must be this insufferable heat.

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Performance Recalled: Is fandom just a Dick nightmare dreamed up one dull night in Puerto Rico by Richard Bergeron? I wonder. Tappen #5 is at hand -- having crossed Wrhn 30 somewhere over the Atlantic; perhaps under a full moon which was also shining on Old San Juan while the radiant energy of my thought waves reached into the void and subtly altered certain passages on its pages. Take a look here at where Malcolm Edwards sardonically thanks D. West "for curbing his natural tendency towards verbosity and never using six words when 600 would do" and then check out page 52 of Wrhn 30 where I ask if West "ever wrote one paragraph when ten would do the same job?" (But West gets the last word in Tappen -- and welcome to it --when he says "the American version of a snappy rejoinder usually runs to at least 3 pages so I figure I may as well save my energies for the difficult task of staying awake through the counter-attack". God, I love this! It takes me back to the good old days when Joe Nicholas was going around accusing everybody of writing turgid prose and Chris Priest was pulling his leg for playing into other people's hands. Ah, nostalgia.) You'd be well advised to stock in a supply of No-Doz on entering Tappen at page 17 because there's no relief in sight until West finally gives up on page 52 and lets the more than slightly hung-over and bleary-eyed reader off the hook. That article, which runs on for 36 pages and may well be the prime candidate for the most amazing fan document since "Ah! Sweet Idiocy!", is titled, of course, "Performance". I wonder if Edward's and West's hair did an odd little crawling thing on the backs of their necks when they read the final paragraph of my comments on D. West in Wrhn 30 and saw the line I'd purposely concealed from them until the penultimate moment: "In a sense his performance is fascinating as theatre and remains fascinating if we remember that the aim of part of it is to elicit our performance in response." You'd almost think West had sent me a copy of his article for prior comment, but since I'm pretty sure he knows he didn't I should imagine he'll be setting a bobby trap at the window I sneak in to read his old drafts. West tends to get a bit paranoid at times -- and who can blame him? -- but I think it's only partly performance. After all, there is that bit in Wiz 2 where I mention that PNH's contribution in Wrhn 30 is "inextricably wed to a bomb dropped on the issue by D. West -- through some strange ESP intuition". Not so strange. I'd been trying to put that contribution of Patrick's into configuration with something very like what West sent in for three years (ask Ted White if you don't believe me, D.). Enough to make anybody a bit paranoid or, at least, D. West -- who now has additional reason to ponder his own comments on the mythologizing tendencies of US fandom and its strange preoccupation with Secret Masters. Sure.

"Performance" is an astonishing, er, performance and goes through almost as many changes as Palmer Eldritch...but, ultimately defeats itself: there's so much in it that can be twisted back against West. He is his own Achilles heel. For instance, a leitmotif of the piece is my imputation in Wrhn that the "aim of part of it is to elicit our performance in response" which West admits thus "I like to see good acting by others...so I do what I can to encourage a general raising of ambition" by playing "fannish games -- since I find it entertaining to be devious and manipulative". But how entertaining can this be when it's so obvious? I wonder how it feels to be so transparent while deluding oneself that one is being devious? Weird carrying on, indeed. Unfortunately, this is the Nicholasian frame of reference: "comment and you're walking into my trap" -- the final effect of which is the destruction of its author's credibility. Sometimes people grow up and get tired of playing with naughty little boys anymore.

Is it possible that "Performance" actually marks the beginning of West's descent into Nicholasism? I don't have my copy of Wrinkled Shrew 7 here so perhaps someone might check the ending of West's article in it for me -- the part summarized by Tom Perry and reprinted on page 37 of Wrhn 30: "Several grandiloquent paragraphs roll on from there -- stuff about mountains to be climbed, houses to be built, enormous important problems to be solved through the magic of Stefnal Type Thinking, and --yes!-- sense of wonder." There's an interesting attack on the same point on page 34 of Tappen when West says "Fanzines are often accused of being incestuous and inward-looking -- too concerned with the frivolous affairs of a small group of fairly obscure people rather than with larger and more important matters. This is an entirely pointless objection, since personal views and personal concerns are exactly what fanzines are for." Perry went on to say "this feeling that sf and fandom cannot be merely enjoyable but must also be important has evidenced itself before -- in the Gernsback Delusion, Michelism, /etc, etc/. West doesn't specify just what the goal of the crusade is -- but ghod is it important...it's no wonder that elsewhere in this essay West urges the 'throwing out of all the old rubbish that impedes advance'. Timebinding means remembering that we've seen these landmarks somewhere before...we might sit down and relax and get to know each other, swap stories and fanzines, and generally just have a good time" and not take so seriously "that guy who's screaming for everyone to get up off their asses and get a move on toward the New Tomorrow. Yes, and someone might laugh." Interestingly one of the culminating points of "Performance" is that fandom is fun, or, if you will, taking seriously the concept of performance. In Wrhn 30, West says he never

2 could figure out what Perry's reply was all about -- I think the opposite is closer to the truth; that West has totally absorbed Perry's argument and is now using it against himself -- even to the extent of recycling (in another but related context) Perry's punch-line: "Please, God, don't let them laugh." Is that Joseph, I hear snickering in the background?

Never have so many big guns of ratiocination been trained on so small a target of contention -- a point most of us had thought settled at least since Tucker was born: the idea that fandom is fun. But I forget: for West history in the fannish sense doesn't exist...all that stuff which went before "doesn't matter", so obviously it's necessary for him to go through all the fun of climbing up out of the slime of pre-history just so he can totter across the Tappen stage to wheeze out these obvious and oft Ancient Truths. It occurs to me that none of this stuff of West's would even be readable if the man wasn't possessed of a frenzy of creative energy that enables him to declaim with dazzling style his peroration under our proscenium arch in his own personal "Twilight Of The Gods". For those who want to play the game that way, fandom is performance -- "A combined mythology and microcosm...in which one can enjoy a sort of contemporary reincarnation... At the very least, two lives for the price of one" as Willis argued as long ago as 1952. This was a point I thought worthwhile enough to devote some 24 lines to (with a little help from Lee Hoffman) in "Curtain Up" (Curtain down.) in the last Wiz. West and I both see fandom as an opportunity to perform (creative relaxation or, if you prefer, fun) and so, come to think of it, does the very same Ted White who West spends so much time sneering at in Wrhn 30: "Pong is our artwork... done for the fun of doing something well" or as PNH put it in 1980: "play". Yes, the play's the thing -- in which "we clown about upon this stage" to quote myself again from Wiz 2. So it seems the distance between West and myself isn't as great as it might seem: the major difference seemingly being that while West is busy rediscovering the past ("refocussing my eyeballs" as he puts it) in a sometimes spellbinding search compounded of dismal angst and bad breath (the morning after, you know) I am quite content to remind people that it existed. There surely must be better things to do than go through all the bother of shedding our vestigial tails once again -- the only trouble is that the tail did disappear when we left the swamp and the one West thinks he is wagging is a twice told one.

West says "Anyone who reads fanzines for their prose style is a halfwit" but for those of us who can pretty well figure out what he's going to say next (and, indeed, virtually predict it) is there any other reason to read West? The fact of the matter is, perhaps, that if you're coming out of a closet called British fandom it's entirely possible you haven't heard all this stuff before and one fan's "given" is another's titillating scoop hot off the underground press. Yawn. Does West seriously think we read everything he writes for substance? Really. Sure, the local library is full of books which in their own fields may be better written than what we'll find in fandom but none of them comes to us in the mail in the personal idiom (a point made by both West and Eric Mayer) in which we may find ourselves unexpectedly the star of the show. This is the fascinating thing about fandom when done with wit and style (by such people as Langford, Gibson, and Kettle) or to quote, again, PNH from 1980 on this aspect of the fascination of fandom as a play with "the language, with fan's self-images and facades, with myths, reputations and notorieties, and above all with words, in a manner impossible to find in the non-fannish media." That participatory thing simply does not exist in the public library or the commercial print media. The personal element is what West himself exemplifies to a high degree and which would make a retrospective reprint of his fanwriting quite worthwhile; West himself notwithstanding -- though his reaction to the suggestion seems to be he thinks he'll find himself buried in a pyramid: "the Complete Works/Anthology idea is strictly death and petrification". Not so. It's all in how it's done. A properly structured pamphlet (complete with context, interview, the earlier insights of "Ann West", Case History, testimonials from Lord Alfie Douglas, embossed cover with penis which un-zips to reveal a banana...you know: spare no expense --the works!) illustrated by S. Clay Wilson would doubtless carry it off quite well. Death and petrification? Well, I can only cite some 500+ copies of Wrhn 28 sold at prices ranging from \$20-\$25 per copy (indicating an urgent level of interest in death and petrification, I presume) and some hundreds of letters telling me the readers could barely put the thing down until they'd stopped reading. (Idle thought: has West read or even seen a copy of Wrhn 28?) Since it must be the ultimate example of the kind of tomb he's terrified I'm trying to push him into I might as well take this opportunity to quote a bit from a letter Mike Glicksohn wrote me in December, 1981, which I edited into a filler I haven't got around to using yet. I titled it "The Bed-side Willis" and it went like this: "I could add to the plethora of egoboo that has rightfully been showered upon you but I won't except to quietly thank you for a monumental undertaking which has enriched every fan lucky enough to get a copy. I will mention, though, that when Ben Zuhl drove me from Chicago to New Jersey to be Best Man at his wedding a year ago, he took Wrhn 28 with him. And during the week I spent with him as he ended his bachelorhood, regardless of how late we partied or how worn out or drunk we became, he always ended the evening by reading a few pages by Willis. And inevitably, he'd share them with me. 'You asleep, Mike' 'Christ, Ben, it's 5AM. You're getting married in a few hours: get some sleep!' 'Just this one more, Mike, here on page 124...it's from 'Willis Discovers America!...' I find that a hell of a testament to Walt's writing and to the issue itself!" Surely, D., you know that I'm a good enough editor to see that the readers are kept awake -- could it be you're not so sure about the power of your writing to do the same?

3 Clearly the implication of the reactions of US fans of taste to the better British fanzines indicates something very wobbly in the structure of Don's indictment of reprints. For most of us it couldn't matter less if the entire contents of Tappen 5 were reprinted from 1940 -- we're not part of the social context (of which West makes so much) and most of the names are meaningless to us...but none of this makes the slightest bit of difference. In fact, if we delete a few dates and remove the topical references to Ted White and myself you could say "Performance" was written 10 years ago and we'd have no way of knowing. Therefore shouldn't we find West's confessions as stale and uninteresting as yesterday's reprints? No. Not if the writing is good enough to create its own context and I expect most of West will still be as interesting in 10 to 15 years as it is today (not damning with faint praise) as Henry Miller's writing about Paris before the 50s and as Willis on the 1951 LonCon still are although most of the people have long since departed the scene in both cases. If we accept his argument that one has to be personally involved then "Performance" is already anti-climatic and probably shouldn't have been published as far as we're concerned. West gives us the key to his attitude concerning print fanac and personal contact very early on: "What is the use of all this crap... if you can't get to screw the people you like anyhow?" And if fandom is little more than a surrogate sexual encounter, he's right. I suppose, though, there must be fans quite content with their sexual lives who view the opportunity to inter-react with their friends as something other than prelude to jumping into bed with them. This may come as high revelation to West.

I was going to comment on West's ideas of what constitutes "fun" but as a devout believer in different strokes for different folks I'm poorly positioned to sniff at anyone who might like to be walked on by men wearing black high heel shoes, fish net stockings and nothing else. He doesn't actually admit to this -- probably just never considered it -- but his catalog of kinky enthusiasms makes me wonder if conventions aren't more interesting than anyone has let on. "Performance" even contains a Rocky Horror Show version of, what?, "Willis Discovers America"?, set in a dungeon and for a moment we feel we might be back in the good old Chateaud'IF -- though come to think of it, Willis in drag in the original is still one of my treasured memories. Maybe I should make plans to attend the next convention D. West shows up at: it must be something to see him beating dead horses and then eating them alive.

Anders Bellis: would like it known things are coochy-moochy between himself and the NHs, that they've sent him all those wonderful fanzines of theirs, and is mildly bemused the misunderstanding took so long to be resolved. Fact is, Anders, I had a period of lack of contact with those estimable people 'bout the same time you did and it had virtually nothing to do with my body odor -- seems they suffered a very harrowing time of both physical and financial strain (alluded to a couple of times by Teresa in those fanzines but actually a lot more painful than one would assume from the text). Anyway, it's all love and kisses, now...between AB & P&TNH, I mean. The NHs and I are still speaking, though. By the way, AB, I'm awaiting with bated breath (and good thing I used a lot of bate -- thanks for the joke, Malcolm) news of Another Project. When?

The Good Old Double Bind (well, at least it's a theory): "What's the use," I whimper, "when I know there's no reason why anybody should be interested in reading the sort of thing I want to write, and I know I don't want to write the sort of thing anybody would want to read?" --D. West, agonizing in Tappen 5.

Faunchings: Where is Nicholas' GUFF story? And what's this about a 50,000 word NovaCon report by Joseph? Will these epics appear before Revenge of the J?

Ted White: wrote me a 19pg letter (I gather he rather liked Wrhn 30) from which I extract these thots: "I don't think it's fair to call Rob Hansen 'chauvinistic' when he is one of the few Brit fans to make an active effort to participate in US fandom, has made a point of remarking on the good US fnz (in contradiction of the usual Brit stand that only Brit fanzines are fannish and good), and in general is one of the least chauvinistic fans around. /I agree -rb/ :: But is it chauvinistic to sub-divide our activities for occasional convenience? Is there anything wrong with an annual anthology of Best Brit fanwriting? I don't think so, and I think it's silly to criticise the idea on the basis of chauvinism, especially when it comes from Hansen of all fans. :: I see John D. Berry feels 'the editorial dialogues' in Pong 'hardly ever justified their own length.' This is the kind of meaty, to-the-point criticism we hardly ever got, and I'm obliged to John for citing so many examples. Seriously, just what did John mean by 'editorial dialogues'? As I recall there was exactly one editorial dialogue in Pong -- the review of the Heavy Metal Movie in 25. Aside from that, what was John talking about? Pieces Dan or I wrote which used dialogue? Which ones? Some were quite short. Others ran as much as a page and a half, virtual epics I suppose. But none of the ones I wrote failed to 'justify their own length,' at least in my opinion. Those were dense pieces, with every line packed with meaning and allusion. Perhaps John just skimmed them and didn't notice what was in them? (I might add that all but a very little in Pong was second-drafted, and often condensed in the process.) Or was it just the light, frivolous air imparted by the use of conversational dialogue which convinced John they were too long? So easy to criticize, so hard to do. Nothing John has put into Wing Window after #1 has struck me as more than amiably bland apahack stuff of the sort John used to do in his sleep for the apas he used to be in, low on content and gossip in style. I-went-for-a-walk-today stuff." /I'd agree (for me, at least) that it's very hard to write convincing dialogue. Is it that a sensitive ear for the sound of conversation is required? -rb/ (1014 N. Tuckahoe St, Falls Church, Va. 22046)

Leigh Edmonds: I liked your comments on the proscenium arch of fanzines. Good fan-

4 zines seem to be performances of prestidigitation where the final fanzine which is presented to the reader is a work of illusion based upon a lot of hard work and practice. It is a performance which does not expose the framework upon which it is based if it wants to attract and keep the undivided attention of the reader. And, like some magic shows, it is even more effective when the magician says that he is going to show you how this or that trick is done and then leads you into an even finer series of deceptions which amaze the instincts and the intellect. I get the feeling that some of the more inspiring segments of *Wiz* are in this category although you may lead us into them more through displays of the well practiced mind and hand than through deliberate intention. /Ah, feedback! But what are you talking about? More from Leigh's excellent letter next issue.-rb/

Chris Priest: recieved *Wrhn 30* well ahead of you all (I enclosed a note to the effect that since he'd been kind enough to send me *Deadloss* by airmail I was returning the, er, compliment). He replied with an utterly gracious note of acknowledgement -- making me feel quite the heel. Class will tell. I could learn a thing or two from Chris. One of the things which ocured to me while posting *Wrhn 30* was the thought that to be bothered overly much by being called a boring old fart was, in a sense, to give confirmation to the charge: the essence being, of course, to take one's self too seriously. While I don't dwell overly much on the charge in the eight pages devoted to *Deadloss* in *Wrhn 30* (there were so many other things to discuss) I will admit that it provided the impetus which carried me through all that (very) unflattering verbiage (unflattering to me mostly, I'm afraid) and fueled its tone. So what we have is partly a battle of the tones -- my own reading of *Deadloss* being colored by a red haze. This I do regret and would hope that Chris and I can put unpleasant resonances behind us and concentrate on matters of substance rather than tone.

The Accomplice Of *Wiz*: I've hit upon the scheme of airmailing the British copies of *Wiz* to someone Over There for forwarding. This idea cuts months from the transit time before a Very Important Part of the readers get their *Wiz* fix and substantial sums from the postal penalty. The scheme I hit on is named Dave Langford. Trouble is what with the impetuosity with which this thing materializes I just dashed off the addressed copies to him without letting him know what I was up to. Cheeky, no? I knew with that exquisite fannish mentality (he found it in a thrift shop) he'd figure out what to do with them and, anyway, with the second one I asked if he'd mind (tremulously speculating that my temerity probably rated just tossing them into the *garbage*).

Langford reacts: "Your increasingly alarmed letters and increasingly bulky parcels have at last touched my heart. Let me explain what happened (he mumbled, shifting unconvincingly from one foot to the other, no mean feat while lurking at the typewriter) (Hazel says my size 11 extremities are indeed no mean feet, but she's just jealous). I wasn't infuriated last time round, indeed barely annoyed at all -- went out and shot a few cats, and after jumping up and down for mere minutes on the corpses I felt quite calm again. However, *Wiz 1* arrived about a week before *Wiz 2*, which arrived on the same day that I finished up *Ansible 30*. So the good news is that *Wiz* rode out with *Ansible*, and the total extra postage incurred came to eight second-class stamps -- £1 precisely. (Parlour game for you. Which eight fans over here don't get *Ansible*? Who so depraved, so stingy with their cash, so steeped in baseness and isolation? My lips are sealed.) The bad news is that because I was busy and didn't rush out *Wiz 1* at once, the poor suckers will mostly have got the two issues together. Those titles on the back pages, '*Warhoon 30*' and 'Not Warhoon 30'... how will this logical universe have burst on British fans? We all know that A plus not-A equals the whole universe, leaving all fandom driven out to low-rent accommodation in the sleazy Excluded Middle district. :: As for the colossal £1 you owe me, I think we can let it ride for a bit. My chance to do a *Sleeper Wakes*, gafiating for several years of compound interest and returning to find I own all of fandom plus large areas of Seattle and Puerto Rico."

Correcting *Warhoon*: This is ridiculous. I keep babbling on about *Wrhn 30* as though you had all read it and by the time you do you'll think you had or be driven to such a state of exhaustion that you'll join Ted White on that bed of 1000 up-turned styli. Sad. I'm so delighted with the installment of Langford's trip report therein that I threw caution to the winds (caution completed the mss on 9 Dec 81) and told Dave I'd very much like to run another if he wasn't completely miffed by my interminable delays. Dave replied: "I told myself I wouldn't mention this, but it has become inescapable now that you've spoken of a further TAFFrep installment for a further *Warhoon*. It doesn't really matter, not all that much, honestly. Didn't want to have to point it out, you understand, but I was reading this fanzine called *Warhoon 30* and -- you really must excuse my mentioning this really quite inconsiderable defect -- well -- not to put too fine a point on it, some hidden hand has left out a paragraph near the end. It wasn't a particularly big paragraph, you understand, nor even a particularly good paragraph, but one is fond of the smallest of one's offspring. I'm sure you won't mind re-typing that really quite thin issue of *Warhoon* and mailing out corrected copies to everyone in fandom. No, no, I must insist; your reputation as a faneditor is too precious to me; I'll donate a sum of money towards the *Warhoon 30* Revised Edition. Say, a pound?"

I could put a false face on this and strike down Langford as I did his paragraph: like "some things fen were not meant to know", but he might never speak to me again, I am interested in doing my bit to see that he actually completes the damned thing, and you, gentle reader, would be missing the Key Which Gives Sense And Rhythm To The Entire Epic. So come. Help me complete *Wrhn 30* by cutting out the next Langford quote and gluing it into *Wrhn 30* on page 24 between the paragraph which ends with "misd-

5

meanour" and the paragraph which begins with "Chris":

"We don't know the room number of the caller and we'd like either the name or number for our records."

There. Now, doubtless, he'll drop it out of the Collected Edition anyway. Langford goes on (doesn't he, though?):

"Only one further bit of the 'orrible thing has been published, by Skel in his Zine That Has No Name, probably already hurtling towards you by ftl seamail. (In fact I know it's heading your way since Skel prints his mailing list again this issue, not omitting the sacred name Bergeron.) That was the sixth bit. Am writing the 7th for Mainstream if all goes well; don't know if there'll be more than a couple more, but you shall surely have another if one's available -- if only as tribute to the resilience of a man who having typed a Langford episode can still come up crying for more. (You probably won't want it after all when my pal Anders Bellis has written in proving irrefutably that I am not John Berry, a criticism which he appears to think damning.)"

Fascinating. Vis-a-vis nothing at all (or maybe with reference to my lust for Langford TAFFtrip Report Installments) I might add that I did, once upon a time, write a little letter to Greg Pickersgill commenting on his wonderful diatribe on TAFF in Stop Breaking Down 7 that while I wasn't much of a one for detailed political analysis on the question whether TAFF was now bed-ridden and saddle-sore I was quite willing to overlook all the lumbering and vaguely invisible manchinations in the face of something so totally redeeming as "The TransAtlantic Hearing Aid." S'truth.

Eric Mayer: writes about standards but since this seems to be a discussion dealt with in many another fanzine I'll quote these remarks: "Half the zines to hit my mailbox lately require longer locs than the zines themselves. No doubt it is possible to condense a lot of ideas into a brief space and desirable for the most part, for my taste. I like a fanzine I can read at one sitting. :: I learned from my newspaper column, where invariably some verbal gem or other had to give way at the last moment for a late arriving funeral home ad, that particular words and phrases are not so important to the whole article as they might seem when one is composing them. The last second deletions from the column were always made, more or less at random, by the paste-up people, and never made the slightest difference. /I trust this isn't falling on deaf ears, Langford? -rb/ :: I will readily accept that most of the words we fill our pages with are not necessary, at least when it comes to expressing ideas. But there lies the problem. It is not so certain to me that a writer can adequately involve a reader in a particular experience in a very brief number of words. Writing is an art-form extended in time to the extent that a reader moves through it word by word. He can read faster or slower, as he chooses, but to some extent the amount of time he spends with the writer, in the environment created by the writer, depends on the number of words. More densely constructed writing demands to be read more slowly. But I think there is a limit to how dense one's writing can become. You can't convince anyone to read a paragraph in the same amount of time he will take to read a novel no matter how dense you try to pack the words. So these small zines are likely to succeed as zines of ideas rather than experiences, though someone may well prove me wrong."

More Langford: Dave's letter (which I've managed to squeeze most of into this issue except for a compliment for Avedon Carol) posed a logical quandary which I've resolved by Disclosing All. Dave says "You have my permission not to print any of this, Dick." Sounds of sizzling synapses and fumes of burned out relapses fill the ozone. Ohm. The editorial department of this fanzine is programmed to recognize only brief symbols such as DNP or DNQ (as intimated last issue) and my slannish perception of Dave's instructions are that it's all left to my discretion (Nicholas is duck soup compared to this). Anyway he does send me a loc on #2 (and what are they for?) and the rest (quoted above) is so innocuous it can't possibly drive British and US fandoms further apart than they are already. I give you the rest of this mad man. Do you prefer breast or thigh?:

"Speaking of Anders, of shoes and ships and blackballs...the tale of Oasis is a mite more complicated than the version which so rends the heart in Wiz 2. What happened was that Taral wrote to me one day and asked whether I'd like to be in Oasis; 'Gosh, yes, triffic, marvellous,' I replied: 'But I'm up to my orbital ridges in work now, so maybe if you ask me again in six months' time?' Abrasive, hard-hitting Taral, who had apparently made himself a bit unpopular in Oasis by then, pitched into the membership telling them that they should fall over themselves to invite the very wonderful Langford who however would not deign to accept any invitation until a time convenient to his lordly majesty... or words to that effect. 'Who is this Langford' they not unnaturally asked. (I'd had no contact with anyone then in Oasis, except Taral.) General resentful reaction at feeling that evil Taral was trying to put something over on them. Maybe not much of a reason for wielding the dreaded blackball, but -- as I discovered in a moment of searing epiphany when Joe Nicholas first fell over and went to sleep on my feet -- fans are only human. The Oasis affair, like a certain nose-tweaking incident, is deeply deserving of oblivion: am still almost embarrassed to recall Taral's subsequent Oasiszines (he sent me copies) reproving the blind membership and invoking the Ultimate Retaliation: in tones suitable for the excommunication of whole countries, Taral wrote 'I'm minacing Oasis.' I misread it as 'menacing' at first (showing how little I knew of apas in those days), but the same air of doom came over in either reading. :: D. West's 36pg article in Tappen 5 is full of a number of things, among which is a reiteration that fnz reprints are Bad Things. His theoretical fireworks about fandom-as-performance are jolly triffic reading but seem to diverge somewhere from reality: I remember very well that fanzine articles in my early fannish days

6

which should (according to D.) have baffled and repelled me (as stale dead relics of a bygone performance) were uncannily able to conjure up, all on their own, the context which D. insists is necessary for true understanding or enjoyment. I'd better get some sleep and expand that tiny nubbin of thought into a 36pg loc to Tappen. :: I think D. West could probably publish some of the most brilliant 50,000 word postcards in fandom."

So. You see how it's done. All you have to do is make reference to postcards and I'll publish anything someone says I have permission not to. But how could I resist? In those 9 last lines Dave exemplifies much of what Teresa was talking about in Wiz 1 and renders redundant my own pages on six-gun West. But let's not take this too far: at this rate all fandom will be boiled down to a few aphorisms and such things as 86pg Wrhns and 36pg articles will be completely unnecessary. And you. Now we wouldn't want that would we? Would we?

Patrick Nielsen Hayden: I think you over react just a teensy bit to Rob. World Culture is all very fine, but in practice it often seems to mean levelling. I ride a pretty thin line on this issue -- 'Canadian' fandom usually seems to me a ridiculous idea, considering how much more Vancouver has to do with Seattle than with, say, Newfoundland; and both fannishly and mundanely I take a dim view of culture being used to justify heavy-handed applications of Power, as in Québécois language laws suddenly forcing Hungarian immigrants to employ quotas of Francophones in their restaurants in all-Hungarian neighborhoods, or nonsense like Robert Runte disqualifying American immigrants to Canada from winning the Canadian SF award until they acquire citizenship (thus nicely eliminating an entire spectrum of Canadian SF authors from Spider Robinson to Bill Gibson). On the other hand, I like cultural eccentricity, oddness, divergence, sovereignty, and approve all to hell of small groups preserving their quirks. Yes, it would be a Shame if UK fandom as a whole wanted nothing to do with the rest of us. The fact that that isn't at all the case is a good argument for the idea that you're starting to take a few xenophobic ravings from over there as more representative of the whole than, perhaps, you ought. :: Mention of ravings naturally brings me down the page to D. West, whose 36 pages in Tappen 5 certainly let you off the hook, as he makes abundantly clear how appalling the idea of reprinting any of his stuff seems to him. Too much to be borne: he is all agog. Funny stuff. In case you hadn't noticed: in Wrhn all fandom is boiled down to power-plays and status-mongering, and in Tappen the theme is simply elaborated further. Unlike Cantor and Brown, who simply accuse others of this stuff without stopping to reflect on what that says about their mindset, West at least admits to playing the game that way himself, and certainly he's dead right about a lot of the game. Not right enough, though. Something that didn't show in the work of his I praised in Wrhn, and which is showing a lot lately, is that it's a pretty flat and joyless world he seems to live in -- or at least write about. Not nearly enough depth. Jeez, Don, actually & really there are a lot of ways to play the game, and a lot of other attitudes possible -- like that of Lucy Huntzinger, local neofan who's been gobbling up our fannish reprint anthologies as fast as we can loan them to her and thus reacted rather strongly to reading West's assertion that nobody could possibly be interested in old fannish artifacts out of their context. Someone should introduce a new element into D.'s mental model, one that might help the poor fellow understand how American fans can occasionally be vaguely interested in the doings of people they haven't even thrown up on. It's called 'curiosity', I think. :: Mention of thin lines I seem to wind up treading, however, brings me several pages forward to your comments on Oasis, which I somehow feel impelled to quibble with despite essentially agreeing with the sentiments you express. Langford was not barred from Oasis, he simply wasn't invited in. There's a bit of a difference. I'm not going to go heavily into the arcane politics of the situation but as one of the nay-sayers myself I will recall that feelings against Taral's proposal of him were a mix of a certain irritation with Taral combined with a feeling that what started as a comfortable group of social acquaintances was rapidly becoming, in a few people's eyes, a merit badge to be awarded to Good Writers. Remember: nobody knew who Langford was, except someone who Taral said was a Good Writer. Well, triff, but just because someone is a good writer doesn't mean I automatically want them in every social situation, intimate conversation, whatever, I'm in. Well, water under the bridge. Oasis' problems were several: an ambivalent attitude towards keeping quiet and private, and an inability to decide whether it wanted, indeed, to be a refuge for Good Writers or merely Friends. In any case, the whole affair, silly as it was, was a long way from being a 'blackball'. (4337 15th NE #411, Seattle, Washington, 98105) /Next ish: Hansen, AVClarke, Tucker, Warner, Edmonds, Deindorfer./

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