

WIZ

#13, August 16, 1986, is the special Just-When-You-Thought-It-Was-Safe-To-Go-Back-Into-The-Water-Issue. As usual it comes to you from far-off balmy Puerto Rico, where fans have been known to shift from the corporal to the not so real at the whim of Richard Bergeron. Do Thou Likewise.

.....
Just Between Friends: Ah, fandom, where would we be without thee?

When I break out of this padded cell Patrick Hayden has booked me into, I'll answer that question. In the meantime, a penchant to annotate the recent past drives me to conclude that many things in the garden are unlovely.

I imagine you'd rather not think about such things -- as Eric Mayer wrote to me a while ago, "Fandom doesn't want to know." -- but I find it all rather amusing. Sort of like Bernadette Bosky's reaction that The Taff Wars section of Holier Than Thou 21 had "all the morbid fascination of something multi-segmented, black, and glossy crawling out of one's sandwich," or my own inclination (mentioned in Warhoon 31) to view fandom "as a study in moral and intellectual delinquency..."

(Actually, it's the sleazy hypocrisy that makes me laugh, but that's quite another story.)

If Mayer is right (and I suspect he is), no matter. I write for generations yet unborn. In Wrhn 31 I attempted to entertain you with the tale of AussieWorldConFanGoH Ted White threatening to sue Marty Cantor and Dave Locke -- presumably over some statements about White made by Avedon Carol (!) which Dave tactlessly quoted and Marty tactlessly published. Laying it on the line, I inquired if fandom considered the use of "intimidation" as honorable conduct? Particularly by a Worldcon Guest of Honor. The implied question underlying was whether this is the sort of conduct new fans should be allowed to perceive as day-to-day fanac? In other words, should we go out of our way to, in fannish terms, corrupt the young?

Evidently, my little item caught the attention of AtlantaFanGoH Terry Carr, who in Gilgamesh #69 asked Ted, "what happened with that lawsuit you threatened against Dave Locke? You know about lawsuits in fandom: the person who files a libel suit or anything like that always comes out looking like an asshole, even if he wins the suit."

According to Terry, Ted replied, "Sure, I realize that. What I did was send letters to Dave Locke and Marty Cantor saying I was sending their fanzines to my lawyer and if he agreed with me that there was anything actionable in them, they'd be hearing from him. At the end I wrote, 'This is not a joke.'" Ted chuckled. "But of course I didn't really send anything to my lawyer."

Terry ruefully observed, "The subtle art of lying for the encouragement of fanish morality, I see."

Ted chuckled.

About what, I wonder...the image of Robbie Cantor waiting several weeks for the process server to arrive at her place of work effectively dampening my appreciation of Ted's sense of humor. Actually, the true black comedy before us is the spectacle of one Worldcon Fan Guest of Honor calling another a 'liar,' while recognizing that the humor of the situation obtains only if one accepts the notion that the ends justify the means. However, perhaps Ted wasn't chuckling about Marty and Robbie at all, but rather, because Terry was calling him a liar (as well as pointing out that litigious fans are considered 'assholes') for the wrong reason.

You see, the fact of the matter is that White's letters to Marty and Dave read, "This is to inform you that I have given my copy of Holier Than Thou #21 to my attorney to read. ... I suggest you retain an attorney. This is not a joke."

Ted's idea of a joke, apparently, was to tell Terry he had said he "was sending" whereas he had actually written "I have given my copy of Holier Than Thou #21..." And White hadn't referred to "their fanzines." Only to HTT. (White in his conversation with Carr, was probably alluding to Locke's Time And Again, the only recent fanzine he's published in which he comments on The Taff Wars, but which Locke hadn't sent to White and which contains no mention of White -- though perhaps Ted thinks Locke's editorial on ping pong was a veiled attack. What Ted was telling Terry is that he didn't send his lawyer a fanzine which makes no reference to himself at all. I guess in this fantasy world of legal subterfuge and Macho Fansmanship in which White has an alternate life, White has his lawyer check out fanzines he doesn't receive which don't mention him to see if his lawyer can find something White missed. Only S. J. Perelman could do justice to such a plot line -- or possibly Hazel Ashworth.)

Even Richard Brown, White's best friend, reports having heard someone tell White, "If this were true...it was fanac-by-intimidation; if not, it was a lie..." Brown admits, "I'd previously said much the same to Ted myself..." These quotes are from a letter written by Brown to Cantor and myself.

An oblivious Terry Carr refers to this as "the art of lying for the encouragement of fannish morality."

Ah, Terry. Who was really being lied to?

Is there no honor between Worldcon Fan Guests of Honor? Or between friends?

The Emperor's New Clothes: In a letter (4 February 1984) denouncing D. West's Taff candidacy, Ted White wrote, "I can't help wondering if West mightn't hide in his room, Pickersgill-like, leaving him with nothing but lies to report. Since he dislikes American fandom and fans, this does not seem unlikely..." I never did get around to asking Ted what he has against lies, but did recognize his oblique reference to Pick-

2 ersgill's attendance at Noreascon II, the 1980 Worldcon. Noreascon inspired Pickersgill's confession in Stop Breaking Down #7, August 1981, in reply to Dave Langford's urging he stand for 'Taff', that he had "already been to an American Worldcon and found it one of the worst events I've ever witnessed and I certainly wouldn't recommend it." Near as I could figure out from contemporary reports, the regard between American fandom and Pickersgill was mutual. It would take a very close reading of the texts to determine if Pickersgill's hotel room at Noreascon was locked from the inside or the outside.

Avedon Carol, in her Taff Official, argued that "Taff is awarded for work within its own fandom -- transAtlantic fandom." Pickersgill has been conspicuous for his dis-interest in transAtlantic fanac having been notorious during his period of greatest activity for reluctance to send his fanzines to North America, he described Taff (in SBD) as "a farce ... a seedy competition between at least partially self-seeking opportunists with a handful of money and futile and spurious prestige at the end of it," and thought, "rather than let Taff degenerate into a shabby contest between pressed men, none of whom could be honorable winners" that the administrator should "lay the whole thing decently to rest." Regarding his own qualifications as a prospective administrator he declared, "I certainly don't see myself as representative of British fandom, the idea of having to write about it afterwards fills me with an inert cold dread, and the thought of all that organisation and fundraising makes me wanna lie down."

As recently as 19 September 1984, Rob Hansen (British Taff administrator during the Pickersgill candidacy and one of Pickersgill's best friends) wrote, "Taff is about friendship and enabling those on one side of the Atlantic to meet those they've communicated with so long on the other." Hansen was the first to suggest Pickersgill stand for Taff back in 1981 and was prepared to nominate him; though, as Pickersgill pointed out at the time, he was "fully aware of my attitude" and lack of interest in transAtlantic fanac. Clearly when Hansen says, "Taff is about friendship," he is referring to a narrowly circumscribed area of friendship, ie, the administrator's friendship for his or her friends: in 1981 Pickersgill had zero standing in North American fandom. But Hansen was eager to nominate him. And Langford to see him nominated. In December 1984, Greg and Linda Pickersgill protested using British Taff funds to entertain a potential US winner on the grounds that, "It has always been assumed fundamental that persons standing for Taff have taken an active interest in the fandom of the proposed host country, and are well-known there." Since Pickersgill himself has no fundamental interest in North American fandom, his own Taff candidacy was an act which appears to reveal him as a man who puts principle at the service of expediency. In his August 1981 remarks on Taff, Pickersgill stated, "Sure enough, on examination Taff proves to be like so many other worthy causes that persist on the goodwill of the masses; there's something at least decayed at the heart of it, if not yet completely rotten."

Avedon Carol lectured Marty Cantor to the effect that "Taff has always been meant to encourage and reward work toward that transAtlantic connection some of us place a rather high value on." During the West/Hansen race in the course of the voting, while she was the administrator, she argued against the candidacy of D. West on the grounds that West was not interested in US fandom. Ms. Carol (the present Mrs. Hansen) was one of Pickersgill's Taff nominators.

Greg Pickersgill is the most recent winner of Taff and the current British administrator.

Patrick and Teresa Hayden (the current US Taff administrators), in Taffluvia #3, November 1985, greeting the news that Pickersgill was entering the 1986 race, said he "conformed in every respect to the highest Standards of this august institution" and that he was an "enthusiastic Taff-supporter."

When you return from the vomitorium, I hope to be able to show you the Hayden/Carol/Hansen reply to my question, "Why, since Greg Pickersgill has shown no fundamental "interest in the fandom of the proposed host country" or had no history of involvement with North American fandom which might have aroused a desire to want to meet "those he had communicated with for so long on the other side," is he so interested in spending North American Taff funds contributed by the very voters who wanted to send to British fandom a candidate on whose behalf he protested spending one single farthing?"

.....
"Trust us."
.....

TO:
.....

WIZ

RICHARD BERGERON: BOX 5989
SAN JUAN PUERTO RICO 00905
.....