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BIRDSMITH IS PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF ROBERT BLOCH. EDITOR, VERNON L. MCCAIN, 908 WALKER, WENATCHEE, WASHINGTON. DUPLICATED BY THE QWERTYUIOPRESS (I ALWAYS HAVE TROUBLE SPELLING THAT) WHICH IS ACTUALLY TED WHITE WEARING A FALSE MOUSTACHE. \*

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PYROMANIACS OF THE WORLD - IGNITE!

BLOCH

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1929 WAS A LONG TIME AGO

BLOK--LOVED THE INTERLINEATIONS IN THIS.

CONTOUR--I MERELY STATED THAT I DIDN'T READ THE LOCAL PAPER; NEVER BOTHERED MENTIONING MY REASONS WHICH HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT I WAS DISCUSSING.

DAY STAR--"DUNGAREE DOLL" IS PROBABLY THE BEST THING YOU'VE EVER CIRCULATED IN FAPA. I'M NOT SURE I TOTALLY AGREE WITH YOU, BUT I'VE FOUND MYSELF RETURNING MENTALLY TO YOUR IDEAS A NUMBER OF TIMES SINCE I FIRST READ THE ARTICLE A WEEK OR SO AGO. BUT I WOULD HATE TO SEE THE COMPLETE ELIMINATION OF GLAMOUR A LA DIETRICH. BUT MAYBE IT WOULDN'T BE. WASN'T DIETRICH THE FIRST WOMAN TO WEAR PANTS INTO THE HAUNTS OF SOCIETY IN THIS CENTURY? THERE WAS GEORGE SAND A CENTURY AGO, OF COURSE, BUT I KNOW DIETRICH GETS CREDIT FOR THE POPULARITY OF SLACKS TODAY. TOO BAD ALL WOMEN AREN'T AS WELL EQUIPPED TO WEAR THEM AS SHE.///YOUR PRIMA DONNA INTERLINEATION ISN'T NEARLY SO ESOTERIC AS YOU THINK. EVEN I UNDERSTAND IT AND, OPERATICALLY SPEAKING, I AM TOTALLY ILLITERATE.

FANTASY AMATEUR--IT SEEMS TO ME THE FAPA OFFICERS ARE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THEY ARE ADMINISTERING SAPS. PRECISELY WHERE DO THE SEC-TREAS AND VICE PRESIDENT GET THE AUTHORITY TO ADD QUALIFICATIONS FOR WAITING LISTS OTHER THAN THOSE SPECIFIED BY THE CONSTITUTION.

(\* Waddya mean, "false"? I grew that moustache with my own little upper lip! -tew)



THIS IS PAGE TWO

THE SAPS DICTATOR HAS AUTHORITY TO JUGGLE RULES AROUND ANYWAY HE PLEASES AND, EVEN IN FAPA, THE PRESIDENT HAS AUTHORITY TO MAKE DECISIONS IN MATTERS NOT COVERED BY THE CONSTITUTION. SO FAR AS I KNOW NEITHER THE V.P. NOR THE SEC-TREAS HAVE AUTHORITY TO MAKE ANY RULINGS OF ANY SORT, THOUGH THE V.P. IS LODGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTERPRETING RULES ALREADY MADE. BUT THERE WAS NO RULE IN THIS CASE, JUST A WHIM OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURERS. AND IT CAN HARDLY QUALIFY AS A SITUATION NOT COVERED BY THE CONSTITUTION. THE CONSTITUTION LAYS DOWN SPECIFIC QUALIFICATIONS FOR WAITING LISTERS AND ALSO SPECIFYS HOW THE CONSTITUTION CAN BE AMENDED. ANYONE WISHING TO CHANGE THESE QUALIFICATIONS IS FREE TO FOLLOW THE LEGAL AMENDING METHOD. THE RATHER SMUG SUMMING-UP THAT NO OBJECTIONS ~~XXXXXXX~~ HAD BEEN HEARD IS FRIVOLOUS SINCE NO MAILING HAD APPEARED IN THE MEANTIME AND IT IS IN THE MAILINGS THAT THESE MATTERS ARE TRADITIONALLY THRASHED OUT. AND, AS COULD BE SEEN, THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL ADVERSE OPINION EXPRESSED IN THE NEXT MAILING. PERSONALLY, I HOPE THAT SOME WAITING-LISTER WHOSE NAME IS REMOVED CHALLENGES THE REMOVAL AND DEMANDS REINSTATEMENT. THAT WILL THROW THE MATTER INTO THE LAP OF THE NEW VICE-PRESIDENT FOR INTERPRETATION AND SINCE IT HASN'T THE FLIMSIEST PRETEXTS OF LEGALITY, I ASSUME WE WILL REVERT TO THE METHOD PRESCRIBED BY THE CONSTITUTION. AS IT HAPPENS I THINK THE IDEA HAS SERIOUS FAULTS. A GOOD DEAL HAS BEEN SAID CONDEMNING THE PRACTICE OF MEMBERS SENDING IN NAMES FOR THE WAITING LIST. HOWEVER, ON ONE OCCASION I ADDED A NAME (ONE STILL ON IT) AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES DIDN'T AT ALL RESEMBLE THE IDEA CURRENTLY BEING BRUITED ABOUT, OF SENDING IN THE NAMES OF ALL YOUR ACQUAINTANCES JUST IN CASE THEY MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN FAPA BY THE TIME THEY WORK THEIR WAY TO THE TOP. BILL MORSE MIGHT BE REGARDED AS A FRINGE-FAN. HE'S NEVER BEEN HYPER-ACTIVE, ANYWAY. BUT I DON'T THINK ANY WILL DISPUTE THAT HE IS EXCELLENT FAPA MATERIAL. NONE HAVE SO FAR. I STARTED WORKING ON BILL AS LONG AGO AS 1953, TRYING TO GET HIM TO ENTER FAPA. I FAILED AT FIRST, I LATER LEARNED BECAUSE HE DIDN'T SEE HOW HE WOULD MANAGE TO PUBLISH. IT WAS ONLY IN 1955, AFTER I PRESENTED HIM A PLAN WHEREBY I WOULD SHOULDER THE JOB OF PUTTING HIS MATERIAL INTO PRINT THAT HE CONSENTED TO HAVE HIS NAME ADDED TO THE WAITING LIST AND IT WAS NOT UNTIL AFTER OBTAINING HIS CONSENT THAT I SENT IT IN! HE COULD HAVE DONE IT HIMSELF, OF COURSE, BUT HE IS A LOT FARTHER AWAY, LESS FAMILIAR WITH FAPA, AND A LITTLE INCLINED TO THINKING THINGS OVER AND LETTING THEM SLIDE. IT MADE MUCH BETTER SENSE FOR ME TO SUBMIT HIS NAME. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I'M COMMITTED TO HANDLE ALL BILL'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAPA. NOT ONLY WILL HIS MATERIAL BE PUBLISHED IN MY MAGAZINE; WHEN HE BECOMES ELIGIBLE FOR MEMBERSHIP I WILL PAY HIS DUES, RELIEVING HIM OF THE CURRENCY COMPLICATION; AND UNTIL HE DOES BECOME A MEMBER I'VE BEEN SENDING HIM MY OWN MAILINGS SO HE WILL BE THOROUGHLY FAMILIAR WITH THE GROUP. IN THE MEANTIME, THOUGH NOT A MEMBER, HE IS CONTRIBUTING WELL OVER THE MINIMUM MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS. IN FACT TWO OR THREE REVIEWS OF BIRDSMITH HAVE INDICATED THAT, FROM A QUALITY STANDPOINT "LETTER FROM LONDON" IS BY FAR THE BEST THING IN THE MAGAZINE. NOW WHY, UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, SHOULD MORSE SUDDENLY BE FORCED TO HAVE TO DROP THE SECRETARY-TREASURER A LITTLE LOVE NOTE EVERY THREE MONTHS TO ASSURE HIM OF HIS CONTINUING INTEREST? I'VE USED MORSE AS AN EXAMPLE BECAUSE HIS IS THE CASE I KNOW BUT I HAVE NO DOUBT MANY OF THE OTHER WAITING-LISTERS COULD PRODUCE AN EQUALLY GOOD CASE, AND FIND IT JUST AS ANNOYING AND INCONVENIENT TO SEND IN THAT POSTCARD EVERY THREE MONTHS AS MORSE DOES.///IF THERE STILL IS SOLID SUPPORT FOR THE WRITING-IN PROPOSAL MAY I SUGGEST SOMEONE SUBMIT IT AS A LEGAL AMENDMENT AND GIVE THE MEMBERSHIP A CHANCE TO VOTE ON IT?///IT NOW APPEARS MAR-



THIS IS PAGE THREE

TINEZ HIMSELF DID NOT SUPPORT THE SENTIMENTS HE IMPLIED ON THIS NEGRO QUESTION, BUT THE LETTER FROM BRANDON MORE THAN CONFIRMS MY FEELING, AT THE TIME THAT THIS WAS A HIGHLY INJUDICIOUS QUESTION TO RAISE IN FAPA, AT LEAST IN THAT MANNER. I THINK THE BEST WAY TO HANDLE ANYTHING OF THE SORT IS JUST TO ASSUME THAT FAPA IS MADE UP OF DECENT, FAIR HUMAN BEINGS AND THAT SUCH QUESTIONS WILL NEVER ARISE, UNTIL SOME INDIVIDUAL GIVES EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY RAISES THEM. THEN IS THE TIME FOR THE REST OF US TO RAISE OUR VOICES AND INDICATE WHERE WE STAND. MEANWHILE, A QUESTION FRAMED THIS WAY COULD VERY WELL (IN FACT, MAY HAVE....WHO KNOWS ABOUT ALL THE WAITING LISTERS?) HAVE COST FAPA THE PRESENCE OF AN OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTOR, IF THE PERSON WERE ONLY A TRIFLE MORE SENSITIVE THAN BRANDON GIVES EVIDENCE OF BEING. ///AT THE NORWESCON IN PORTLAND IN 1950 ONE FAIRLY ACTIVE PORTLAND FAN STAYED AWAY FROM THE CONVENTION. THERE WERE RUMORS THAT IT WAS BECAUSE (A) SHE WAS A NEGRO, OR (B) VERY BADLY CRIPPLED BY CEREBRAL PALSY. AS FAR AS I KNOW IT WAS NEVER DETERMINED WHICH OF THESE WERE TRUE, IF EITHER. OR MAYBE SHE MAY HAVE JUST NOT CARED FOR CONVENTIONS. BUT WHERE DISCRIMINATION IS PRACTICED IT IS NECESSARY FOR THOSE OF US WHO DISAPPROVE OF IT NOT ONLY TO REFRAIN FROM IT BUT TO BEND OVER BACKWARD TO PREVENT ANY ACTION WHICH COULD BE MISINTERPRETED AS MEANING WE INDULGED IN SUCH THINGS. I THINK FAPA IS ESSENTIALLY MADE UP OF QUITE DECENT TYPES AND RATHER DOUBT IF THERE IS A SINGLE MEMBER, AT PRESENT (DESPITE THE PRESENCE OF WETZEL ON THE WAITING LIST) WHO IS SERIOUSLY PREJUDICED AGAINST NEGROES, MUCH LESS ACTIVELY DISCRIMINATING AGAINST THEM. I HOPE BRANDON RECEIVED AN ISSUE OF THIS SAMBO.

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POSSIBLY YUGGOTH SAVES MORE, BUT BLOCH IS A MISER!  
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-----NO OTHER HIGH PRIEST CAN MAKE THAT STATE-  
MCCAINTERLINEATION: -----MENT.  
NEWSTYLE -----

FAPA BOOZE--SURE, I READ MYSTERY NOVELS. IN FACT, IN RECENT MONTHS I'VE BEEN (SHHH) READING A LOT MORE IN THE WAY OF MYSTERIES, THAN SCIENCE-FICTION. BUT IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE I'VE READ A WILSON TUCKER MYSTERY WHYNT'CHOU APPEAR IN PAPER BACKS ANY MORE, BOB? SINCE I SQUANDER ALL MY MONEY ON OLD SCRATCHY DUKE ELLINGTON RECORDS I DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY (OR SPACE) LEFT OVER FOR LUXURIES LIKE HARD-COVER BOOKS SO THE ONLY WAY TO CAPTURE THIS READER, IS VIA NEWSSTANDS. IF YOU'RE NOT IN PAPER BACKS YOU'RE NOWHERE, DAD.///INCIDENTALLY, WHY DIDN'T "RED HERRING" EVER GET A PB REPRINT. AFTER THAT BUILDUP YOU GAVE IT AT THE NORWESCON I WAITED AND WAITED AND WAITED, TO NO AVAIL. DID IT SELL LESS WELL THAN ITS PREDECESSORS OR DID THE PB EDITORS GET MAD AT YOU, OR WHAT?

FAPA FACTS-- I WAS A BIT SURPRISED TO FIND I WAS THE TENTH MOST ACTIVE FAPA-PUBLISHER IN A YEAR IN WHICH I DIDN'T CIRCULATE A SINGLE LARGE-SIZE ISSUE. WHICH I GUESS ILLUSTRATES A MORAL OR SOMETHING, BUT I THINK AESOP BEAT ME TO IT. AT LEAST I THINK THAT TORTOISE WAS NAMED AESOP.

FAPA SNOOZE--I FIND IT EASIER ON THE EYES TO READ THESE ARTICLES WHEN THEY FIRST APPEAR IN TIME. THEY USE A SLIGHTLY MORE LEGIBLE FORM OF REPRODUCTION. (FOR THIS, WE ALLOW ACTIVITY CREDIT? MAYBE SAPS HAS SOMETHING AFTER ALL.)



FAPANACEA--I'M SORRY I MAILED OFF MY ELECTION BALLOT BEFORE READING THE MAILING. YOU'D HAVE GOTTEN MY VOTE FOR SEC-TREASURER OTHERWISE. "SLAVES OF SLEEP" ACTUALLY APPEARED A DECADE BEFORE DIANETICS. IT WASN'T VERY GOOD, EITHER, BUT I'LL HAVE TO AGREE IT WAS ABOUT TEN TIMES BETTER THAN ITS SEQUEL.///ACTUALLY, WHEN THE EUGENE FANS WERE EXPERIMENTING WITH DIANETICS WE RECEIVED SOME HIGHLY UNCONFIRMED DATA ASSERTING THE TURTH OF REINCARNATION. I SHAN'T GO INTO DETAILS AS IT WOULD BE VERY BORING AND DOUBTLESS PLUNGE ME BACK INTO ARGUMENTS (BOTH PRO AND CON) ON THE SUBJECT OF DIANETICS ABOUT WHICH I LONG SINCE ARGUED MYSELF OUT. HOWEVER, WHAT I FOUND MOST INTERESTING WAS THAT THE DATA PROVIDED BY TWO DIFFERENT FILE CLERKS AGREED 100%, ON THIS SUBJECT OF REINCARNATION BUT THAT NEITHER OF THE TWO POSSESSORS OF THESE FILE CLERKS (MYSELF AND ANOTHER FAN I WAS AUDITING) BELIEVED IN REINCARNATION AND WE STILL DON'T (OR AT LEAST I DON'T). THIS BRAND OF REINCARNATION DIFFERED SLIGHTLY FROM THE CONVENTIONAL IN THAT THE FILE CLERK INSISTED THAT YOU DIDN'T HOP DIRECTLY FROM ONE LIFE TO ANOTHER, BUT FIRST WENT ELSEWHERE FOR AN INTERIM PERIOD. THIS IS NOT UNHEARD OF BUT WHEN I TRIED TO TIE IT DOWN AS TO HOW LONG I FAILED TO GET EXACT DATA BUT WAS GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND THAT MANY THOUSANDS OF YEARS SEPARATED INCARNATIONS. DURING THIS PERIOD THE PERSONALITY WENT 'SOMEWHERE ELSE'. I TRIED TO PIN THIS DOWN AS JUST WHERE ELSE, AND ASKED IF THE FILE CLERK MEANT ANOTHER DIMENSION. HE INSISTED HE MEANT NO SUCH A THING, IT WAS 'SOMEWHERE ELSE', AND THAT WAS AS CLOSE AS I COULD TIE IT DOWN.///ANY VIEWS OR OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY THE FILE CLERK ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF EITHER THE PRE-CLEAR OR THE AUDITOR.///MY PERSONAL REACTION TO REINCARNATION, IS A SHRUG OF THE SHOULDERS....IN FACT I REACT TO IT RATHER LIKE I DO TO ALL FORMS OF RELIGION. I DON'T PERSONALLY BELIEVE IN IT BUT I DON'T RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A KERNEL OF TRUTH. BUT WHETHER THAT KERNEL EXISTS OR NOT, SO WHAT? IT IS PRETTY OBVIOUS THAT IT HAS NO EFFECT WHATSOEVER ON OUR LIVES, SO WHY WORRY ABOUT IT? IT'S A WASTE OF TIME.

GEMZINE--This is a switch. Probably the first Carr fanzine in history which has failed to inspire the slightest comment from me. But one of the better issues, all the same.

HORIZONS--It seems to be generally agreed that there are a number of exceptions to that rule that you can't hypnotise a person against his will, although professional hypnotists prefer not to admit it publicly. I have read of several exceptions and, in hypnotic experiments, turned up several other likely methods, though I never tried any of them for what I hope are obvious reasons. It is supposed to be possible to hypnotize an ignorant or superstitious person who over-rates the power of hypnosis. If he believes you can hypnotize him against his will, then you can, no matter how hard he resists. And I think it highly probable that a person who had once allowed himself to be hypnotized would be able to resist hypnosis from the same individual in the future, if he changed his mind, providing in the first session suggestions had been implanted to make him cooperate in the future. Of course, this is a little like counting angels on the head of a pin. The human mind tends to find good reasons for 'desiring' anything for which they've had hypnotic commands, so in such a case it is highly unlikely that the hypnotic subject would suddenly develop a desire not to be re-hypnotised. And I found rather strong evidence to indicate a very close linkage between the hypnotic trance and normal sleep. I think it highly likely that suggestions made to a person while asleep would have some hypnotic affect, though



I imagine it would be less potent than commands given in a regular hypnotic session. At one time we were trying to break down and eradicate some harmful commands which had previously been inserted in the subject's mind. This was made difficult by the fact that the previous hypnotist had also inserted a command that no one else could hypnotise the subject. We made spasmodic progress since he would accidentally slip into hypnotic trances fairly frequently and could be handled normally, at those times, but the situation could not be reproduced at will (in fact most of what I know about hypnotism.....augmented somewhat by what I've read.....I picked up in strictly pragmatic fashion through finding myself, involuntarily, with a person in a hypnotic trance on my hands). It proved somewhat easier to break down these barriers and dig out the old negative commands by working the subject at night, just before he dropped off to sleep. The resistance seemed less, then. I never tried any hypnosis while he was actually asleep, since there could have been severe psychic shock had he awakened before the process was completed. I believe it is also possible to use hypnotic drugs which aid the process much the same way that truth serums break down resistance to revealing the truth. I would say there are other methods of hypnotising an unwilling subject, also, but these fall more into the category of ordinary psychology. And it's generally agreed that we all go around in a perpetual state of very light hypnosis. Advertising is based on this assumption. Hence the effectiveness of the repetitive techniques which are basic to all hypnosis. Personally, I would like to encounter someone adept at hypnotising people against their will. Attempts to hypnotise me have always failed and I suspect this is due to a basic character trait. Though I was consciously cooperating, I suspect my subconscious was militantly resistant. But I can think of a number of things hypnosis could help me with if I could find an efficient individual to work with. The period in which we actively experimented with hypnosis was limited to about nine months. It convinced me of its efficacy as a tool, but like most tools it can be misused. I'd urge anyone who is thinking of letting themselves be hypnotised to satisfy themselves as to the ethical standards and intelligence of the hypnotist in advance. Someone who uses it as a parlor trick, or even for more serious reasons, can do all sorts of damages if they don't use safeguards to prevent their commands from being too widely interpreted. For instance, the individual I was trying to help had a habit of falling into a reverie, staring off into space oblivious of his surroundings. You could speak to him loudly from two feet away and it sometimes was necessary to do so four or five times before he would even notice he was being addressed. Seemingly he wasn't in particularly deep thought about anything in particular.....if queried, he'd respond he was just 'thinking'. We found out the cause of this, eventually, when we dug up previous hypnotic sessions and started cancelling them all out. The previous hypnotist had had a habit of attempting to make the hypnotic trance deeper by saying, over and over "You will hear only my voice." But.. he didn't bother specifying that this applied only to the hypnotic sessions. The result was that any little thing which bore sufficient resemblance to the hypnotic sessions would trigger a reverie in which the individual tended to hear only one voice. If any one else spoke to him, he just didn't 'hear' them. After I inserted counter-suggestion so that he no longer was under compulsion to obey this careless command, the absent-minded reveries vanished completely.



Human beings being fallible I would be very hesitant to every hypnotise anyone again unless, as in this instance, there was a very obvious need which couldn't be met otherwise. I disapprove of using hypnosis as a parlor trick. But I wouldn't hesitate for a second to allow myself to be hypnotised by someone I trusted. The catch is that I'm a very suspicious character and there are very few people I trust that far.///"All Quiet Along the Potomac Tonight" was magnificent. I can't figure whether Warner is incident prone, whether fantastic things tend to happen in Hagerstown, or whether it's just that Warner's job as a newspaperman allows him to get the behind the scene's stories which exist everywhere, but which remain hidden to most of us. I'd like to see a book someday, in which were collected all these various FAPA pieces Harry has done about Hagerstown and its environs. Not that you'd dare print such a book until he was dead and beyond retaliation.///I am particularly fascinated by the brief glimpse you give us of Clarence Baker. The techniques he uses for his own private reform school are something I would like to hear about in great detail.///"Nor Any Drop of Drink" was spoiled for me by being obvious from the moment you had the screen set up. In fact my unfamiliarity with Catholicism is so great that it never occurred to me he was administering last rites till one of the characters mentioned it. I just assumed from the start he was changed the wine to blood. But what would have happened if Christ had been the wrong blood type?///Yes, there are apparently simple problems which people are baffled about but ashamed to admit their ignorance of. I went on in ignorance for two years before I worked up the courage to ask, in an interlineation, just what critical fan activity is, and since nobody every bothered answering (that was two years ago) I still don't know. The way it is customarily used it obviously is applied to just about all types of fan activity. But in that case, why isn't it just called fanac? Where does the word critical come from, and why? If it was reserved to refer to movie, book, magazine, and fanzine reviews in other fanzines and to analyses of fandom such as Boggs and myself and some others occasionally try I could understand, but these constitute a very small portion of what is usually referred to as 'crifanac'.///I believe it was HARPERS which had an article last winter extolling the virtues of the person whose conscience leads him to stay at home on election day and debunking get out the vote campaigns.

LA VIAND ROSE--Odd coincidence that two zines in the same mailing would happen to reproduce that "Plan Ahead" sign. I assume it was a co-incidence.

LARK--I suspect the phrase "top of the news" comes from the fact that the headline appears at the top of the item, plus which it is standard newspaper practice to put a statement of exactly what happened in the first sentence and thereafter to enlarge on this repeating it in greater and greater detail, the further you get down in the story so that the newspapers who take the service can clip it off. . . any place space requirements make it desirable. So the 'top of the news' would be the first paragraph or so which give all the essential facts.



THIS IS PAGE SEVEN

LE MOINDRE--I DUG "HOLLYWOOD LIFE #2"

PAENDEMONIUM--THIS BUSINESS OF VOICING YOUR OPINIONS TO OTHERS WHO WOULD CONSIDER THEM RADICAL IS A THORNY PROBLEM. TO AN EXTENT, MINE IS SIMILAR TO YOURS.....I USUALLY LET PEOPLE TALK AND MAKE NO COMMENT NO MATTER HOW OUTRAGEOUS THEIR VIEWS, BECAUSE I'VE LEARNED THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF PEOPLE LIVE A VERY SHALLOW INTELLECTUAL LIFE, HAVE NO CONCEPTION OF GREATER DEPTHS, NOR THE ELASTICITY TO ENCOMPASS THEM IF THEY ARE SUDDENLY PRESENTED TO THEM. HOWEVER, MANY PEOPLE (PROBABLY AS A BOOST TO THEIR OWN EGOS) HAVE A CONVERSATIONAL HABIT OF INCLUDING QUESTIONS IN THEIR ARGUMENTS. "DON'T YOU THINK SO?" "DON'T YOU AGREE?" "WHAT DO YOU THINK?" "+SN'T THAT RIGHT?" AND SO ON. IF I CONSIDER THE QUESTIONER TO BE HOPELESSLY STUPID I MAY BYPASS THE QUESTION AND REFUSE TO ANSWER IT. BUT, USUALLY, I FEEL AN APPARENTLY HONEST QUESTION CANNOT BE BYPASSED AND THERE IS ALWAYS THE POSSIBILITY THE QUESTIONER HAS A MIND WAITING TO BE OPENED UP, AND YOUR ANSWER MIGHT PROVE A VITAL GERMINATING FACTOR. THEREFORE I TRY TO ANSWER SUCH QUESTIONS HONESTLY. REALIZING THAT MOST PEOPLE ARE ANYTHING BUT FERTILE MATERIAL, AND THAT NASTY QUARRELS CAN ENSUE I USUALLY TRY TO USE MY ANSWER AS A METHOD OF ENDING THE DISCUSSION RIGHT THEN. IF THE INDIVIDUAL APPEARS HIGHLY NARROW-MINDED. BY THAT I MEAN THAT I TRY TO MAKE MY ANSWER NOT ONLY BRIEF AND CLEAR-CUT BUT MAKE IT OBVIOUS THAT I AM UNFRIENDLY TO HIS VIEWS AND SOMEWHAT CONTEMPTUOUS OF THEM. THIS HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF JARRING THE QUESTIONER FROM HIS FORMER COMPLACENCY AND MOST ARE WILLING TO DROP MATTERS RIGHT THERE, WHILE VIEWING ME SLIGHTLY ASKANCE. SOME ARE MORE PERSISTENT, AND DEMAND TO KNOW WHY I FEEL AS \* I DO, MY TRAIN OF LOGIC, THE JUSTIFICATIONS I CAN PROVIDE, AND SO ON. I SELDOM CHANGE ANYONE'S MIND, BUT IT HAS HAPPENED, AND THOSE FEW MAKE THE REST WORTHWHILE. EVEN IF IT NEVER HAD ANY CONSTRUCTIVE RESULTS I'D STILL FEEL OBLIGATED TO REACT IN THIS FASHION. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THIS IS A SORT OF ROCK-BOTTOM MINIMUM OBLIGATION ONE OWES TO ONE'S OWN INDIVIDUALITY AND DIGNITY, NEVER TO DENY YOUR OWN HONESTLY FELT VIEWS. I SHAN'T CLAIM TO BE THE MOST POPULAR PERSON IN THE STATE, AS A RESULT OF IT. THE TECHNIQUE IS DESIGNED TO DELIBERATELY SCARE OFF THE MORE TIMID SOULS, AND IT ANTAGONIZES MANY OTHERS. SOME OF THE MORE MENTALLY POVERTY-STRICKEN (USUALLY WOMEN, FOR SOME ODD REASON) DESCEND TO PERSONAL VILIFICATION WHEN THEY FIND I CAN'T BE WON OVER TO THEIR VIEWS BY A FEW SUGAR-COATED BROMIDES. THE RESULTS ARE THAT MANY REGARD ME AS A RATHER ODD-DUCK, AND DEFINITELY A NON-CONFORMIST. BUT I SEEM TO BE SUFFICIENTLY ~~xxx~~ FIERCE, WHEN AROUSED, THAT MOST OF THEM EVENTUALLY GIVE IT UP AS A BAD JOB AND ARE CONTENT TO ALLOW ME TO LEAD MY OWN LIFE, IN MY OWN WAY, WHICH IS ALL I ASK. I FREELY GRANT THEM THE SAME RIGHT AND MAKE NO EFFORTS TO HAVE THEM CONFORM TO MY IDEAL, THOUGH I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO HAVE AND EXPRESS AS MANY ADVERSE VIEWS REGARDING IT, AS I WISH. BUT USUALLY I'M WILLING TO KEEP SILENT. I AM A PERSON WITH A RATHER POWERFUL URGE TO BE LET ALONE AND I CAN BE EXCEEDINGLY NASTY TO THOSE UNWILLING TO ALLOW ME THE PRIVILEGE. OF COURSE, ~~bx~~ SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION, I AM SACRIFICING LESS THAN A SPEER WOULD BE. IT IS EXCEEDINGLY UNLIKELY THAT I WOULD EVER STAND FOR EVEN THE MOST TRIVIAL PUBLIC OFFICE. NEITHER MY OCCUPATION NOR MY PRESENT AVOCATIONS LEAD IN THAT DIRECTION. AS A LAWYER AND AN ALREADY ADTIVE POLITICAL AMATEUR, THE ODDS ARE PROBABLY BETTER THAN EVEN THAT SPEER WOULD SOMEDAY BE URGED TO RUN FOR SOME POSITION OR OTHER. SO MY ICONOCLASTICISM IS PURCHASED MUCH MORE CHEAPLY THAN WOULD BE POSSIBLE



THIS IS PAGE EIGHT

FOR SOME ONE WITH BONA FIDE POLITICAL EXPECTATIONS.

PHANTASY PRESS--I CANNOT TAKE CREDIT FOR THE HARNESS BACK COVER YOU PRAISE. I ACCIDENTALLY SKIPPED ONE PAGE IN THE NUMBERING OF BIRDSMITH, THAT ISSUE, SO WHITE, WHEN I MAILED IT TO HIM WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO JUST LEAVE THE PAGE BLANK, RENUMBERED THE REMAINING ONES INSTEAD AND USED A HARNESS ILLO HE ALREADY HAD ON HAND FOR THE BACK COVER. ODD THAT AFTER TEN COMPLETELY ILLUSTRATIONEES ISSUES OF BIRDSMITH IN A ROW THERE SHOULD SUDDENLY BE TWO ISSUES CONTAINING FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS. AND WITH NO EDITORIAL CHANGE IN POLICY, EITHER.

PHLOTSAM--JEAN SHEPARD MAY BE SENSATIONAL ON THE RADIO.....CERTAINLY HE'S BEEN GETTING FANTASTIC PUBLICITY RECENTLY, AND EVERYTHING ABOUT HIM SOUNDS INTRIGUING.....BUT THE MAN WRITES THE MOST NAUSEOUSLY STUPID JAZZ RECORD REVIEW COLUMN (IN AUDIO ENGINEERING) I'VE EVER ENCOUNTERED. IF I WERE FORCED TO LIST JAZZ RECORD REVIEWERS QUALITATIVELY, INCLUDING WRITING STYLE, PERCEPTION, MUSICAL AWARENESS, DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF HISTORY OF THE FIELD, AND TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS, AT THE VERY TOP WOULD BE MIKE LEVIN, ALMOST TOPS IN EVERY CATEGORY, AND AT THE OPPOSITE END OF THE CURVE WOULD BE SHEPARD. HE MANAGES TO FLUNK EVERY CATEGORY EXCEPT WRITING STYLE, AND AS FOR IT I THINK IT WORTHWHILE TO NOTE THEY HAD TO CALL IT STURGEON TO GHOST-WRITE HIS NOVEL FOR HIM. SHEPARD WRITES WELL ENOUGH TO HAVE PROBABLY GOTTEN A B PLUS IN HIS HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR ENGLISH CLASS. ///SO A MAGAZINE WITH A HEAVY THIRD-PLACE VOTE AND NO FIRSTS OR SECONDS, MIGHT WIN A POLL FOR MOST POPULAR MAGAZINE? SO WHAT? IT WOULD SEEM TO ME OBVIOUS THAT A MAGAZINE THAT EVERYONE OR ALMOST EVERYONE LIKED WELL ENOUGH TO VOTE INTO THIRD PLACE WOULD BE MORE LIKED THAN ANY ONE OF FIVE OR SIX MAGAZINES LIKED WELL ENOUGH BY A SMALL MINORITY TO BE VOTED FIRST OR SECOND, BUT RELEGATED TO MEDIOCRITY OR WORSE BY THE MAJORITY OF THE VOTERS. JUST BECAUSE IT WAS NOT THE FAVORITE MAGAZINE OF ANY GIVEN FAPAN DOES NOT MEAN THAT IT WASN'T THE BEST LIKED MAGAZINE OF FAPA AS A WHOLE, AND THAT IS WHAT WE ARE POLLING. I'M REMINDED OF THE FIRST STORY CONTEST RUN BY ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE SOME TEN OR ELEVEN YEARS AGO. FIRST PRIZE DRAWS, I BELIEVE, FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS, AS A PRIZE, OR SOME SIMILARLY ATTRACTIVE FIGURE. THE FIRST YEAR IT WAS WON BY MANLEY WADE WELLMAN. IT WAS A GOOD OFFBEAT STORY BUT MOST READERS, LIKE MYSELF, FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE JUDGES HAD CONSIDERED IT WORTH ADVANCING SO FAR ABOVE ITS COMPETITION. MANY OF THE OTHER STORIES WERE BRILLIANT, IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. THE NEXT YEAR THE EDITORS TOLD THE WHOLE STORY. THE WELLMAN STORY HAD NOT BEEN THE FIRST PLACE CHOICE OF ANY ONE OF THE JUDGES (I BELIEVE THERE WERE SEVEN). EACH HAD CHOSEN A DIFFERENT FIRST PLACE FAVORITE. NOT A SINGLE JUDGE WAS WILLING TO SWITCH TO THE FAVORITE OF ANY OTHER. THEY TRIED COMPROMISING ON THEIR SECOND PLACE VOTES, I BELIEVE AND EVEN HERE WERE UNABLE TO ACQUIRE A MAJORITY FOR ANY ONE STORY. AS I RECALL, THE STRUGGLE CONTINUED FOR SOMETHING LIKE A WEEK. THEN IT WAS NOTICED THAT ONE STORY, AND ONLY ONE, APPEARED IN EVERY JUDGES TOP FIVE LIST. THIS WAS THE WELLMAN STORY, SO A COMPROMISE WAS REACHED AND IT WAS GIVEN THE PRIZE. PERHAPS IT WAS NOT THE BEST STORY SUBMITTED, BUT IN SUCH A CIRCUMSTANCE I FEEL IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY WHICH, IF ANY, STORY WAS BETTER AND I CONTENTEND IT WAS THE MOST POPULAR STORY....AT LEAST WITH THOSE JUDGES.///THE



STORY OF YOUR YOUTHFUL DEVELOPEMENT IS FASCINATING (READS LIKE A STF PLOT AS A MATTER OF FACT) AND I'M DYING TO ASK HALF A DOZEN QUESTIONS (SUCH AS HOW RARE SUCH A CONDITION IS AND WHAT THE DOCTORS HAD TO SAY, AND WELL.....) BUT SINCE YOU'VE EXPRESSED A RELUCTANCE TO DISCUSS YOURSELF GUESS I'D BETTER KEEP MY MOUTH SHUT. BUT IT IS VERY INTRIGUING. DON'T RECALL MY EXACT STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT BUT IF I SAID UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD CHILDREN BE ALLOWED TO SKIP GRADES I MUST AGREE THAT I OVERSTATED MY VIEWS. WHAT I USUALLY SAY IS THAT I WOULD NOT ALLOW IT WITH ANY CHILDREN OF MY OWN. THE QUESTION IS ACADEMIC SINCE I HAVE NO CHILDREN, BUT I MUST ADMIT THAT IF I HAD A CHILD WHO APPEARED SIMILARLY ACCELERATED IN GROWTH, INTELLIGENCE, AND SOCIAL DEVELOPEMENT....ALL THREE....I UNDOUBTEDLY WOULD CONSENT TO GRADE-SKIPPING. IN SUCH A CASE IT WOULD APPEAR THAT CHRONOLOGICAL AGE IS ACTUALLY NOT A RELIABLE INDICATOR AND THE CHILD IS OLDER AND SHOULD ASSOCIATE WITH OLDER CHILDREN. BUT THE CASES DEAN AND I MENTIONED ARE MUCH MORE COMMON AND WHILE MOST MENTALLY ADVANCED CHILDREN TEND TO BE SOMEWHAT ADVANCED PHYSICALLY, ALSO, AND PERHAPS SOCIALLY SOMETIMES, TOO, THE ADVANCEMENT IS FAR FROM SUFFICIENT TO ALLOW FOR A REALLY COMFORTABLE ADJUSTMENT WITH CHILDREN EVEN ONE YEAR OLDER (ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU ALLOW FOR THE INEVITABLE LEAVENING OF THOSE FLUNKED AND HELD BACK A YEAR OR SO), MUCH LESS THOSE TWO GRADES AHEAD. FOR BRIGHT CHILDREN, A STRONGLY FAVOR SPECIAL CLASSES MADE UP WHOLLY OF CHILDREN OF A SIMILAR MENTAL LEVEL (YES, I KNOW ALL THE USUAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THIS AND DON'T FEEL A SINGLE ONE OF THEM WITHSTANDS CLOSE SCRUTINY IN WHICH THE CHILDREN MOVE SOMEWHAT MORE RAPIDLY THAN THEIR CONTEMPORARIES BUT, IN GENERAL, STAY AT THE SAME EDUCATIONAL LEVEL, WHILE USING THEIR GREATER LEARNING-POWER FOR A GREATER PENETRATION IN BREADTH AND DEPTH OF LEARNING THAN MERELY TO USE IT TO QUICKLY SCALE HEIGHTS AS IS NOW THE CASE. FOR INSTANCE, IN ONE SUCH EXPERIMENT I RECENTLY READ OF, SIXTH GRADE CHILDREN OF I.Q. 130 AND ABOVE, ARE STUDYING THREE DIFFERENT FOREIGN LANGUAGES. FOREIGN LANGUAGES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN KNOWN TO BE A GOOD SUBJECT FOR GRADE-SCHOOL CHILDREN (THEY PICK THEM UP MORE QUICKLY THAN THOSE OF HIGH SCHOOL AGE) BUT THEIR IMPORTANCE IS LESS AND YOUR AVERAGE CHILD SIMPLY DOESN'T HAVE TIME TO SQUEEZE THEM IN ALONG WITH EVERYTHING ELSE HE MUST LEARN. THE BRIGHT CHILD CAN, AND IT IS AN EXCELLENT WAY TO OCCUPY THE SPARE TIME HE HAS ON HIS HANDS, USEFULLY. AND YET HE ISN'T REALLY MOVING AHEAD OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES. WHEN HE GETS TO HIGH SCHOOL THERE ARE STILL OTHER FOREIGN LANGUAGES HE CAN TAKE, AS REQUIRED. AND HE HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF STAYING IN TOUCH WITH HIS CONTEMPORARIES.//BUT DOES AN INTELLIGENT WOMAN ACTUALLY WANT TO SPEND HER TIME AROUND THE TYPE OF MAN WHO MUST HAVE THE ILLUSION THAT ALL WOMEN ARE FRILLY EMPTY-HEADED THINGS? I'VE ALWAYS HAD MY DOUBTS ABOUT THIS STEREOTYPE OF THE REAL BRAINY WOMAN WHO DELIBERATELY APES HER LESS INTELLIGENT SISTERS. SEEMS TO ME THE MEN GOTTEN BY SUCH TACTICS WOULD PROVE PRETTY DULL TO AN INTELLIGENT WOMEN, ONCE HIS PROFILE STARTED TO BORE.//ACTUALLY, THE REASONS FOR THE AMERICAN FOLDING ARE RATHER WEIRD. CROWELL-COLLIER PUBLISHES THREE MAGAZINES. THEY'VE BEEN TAKING LOSSES ON THE OPERATION FOR YEARS. COLLIERS HAS BEEN DRIBBLING AWAY MILLIONS, AND THE WOMEN'S HOME COMPANION HAS ALSO BEEN SHOWING A MUCH SMALLER LOSS. THEY'VE TRIED ALL SORTS OF SHAKE-UPS AND FINALLY DECIDED SOMETHING DRASTIC WAS NEEDED. THEIR SOLUTION? KILL THE AMERICAN, THE ONLY ONE OF THE THREE SHOWING A PROFIT. THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE GOOD BUSINESS SENSE, THOUGH I MUST CONFESS I'M SKEPTICAL. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE IDEA IS THAT THEY TAKE THE LIST



THIS IS PAGE TEN

OF AMERICAN SUBSCRIBERS (THE LARGEST THEY HAVE) AND ARBITRARILY ASSIGN FIFTY PERCENT OF THEM TO COLLIERS, TO FINISH OUT THEIR SUBSCRIPTIONS, AND THE OTHER HALF TO THE COMPANION. THEY FIGURE THAT VERY FEW WILL GO TO THE TROUBLE OF DEMANDING THEIR MONEY BACK. THIS MEANS THAT THEY WILL VASTLY SWELL THE CIRCULATION OF EACH OF THE REMAINING TWO (THEY HOPE PUTTING THEM IN THE BLACK), WHILE THEY WILL HAVE, IN THE FUTURE, THE EXPENSE OF PUTTING OUT ONLY TWO MAGAZINES INSTEAD OF THREE (PRESUMABLY THE LOSS OF NEWSSTAND SALES OF THE AMERICAN WON'T HIT THEM TOO BADLY). MORE IMPORTANT, WITH THIS GREATER ASSURED READERSHIP, THEY CAN UP THEIR GUARANTEES (THEY'VE HAD TROUBLE MEETING THE OLD ONES).....THAT IS GUARANTEED NUMBER OF READERS.....AND ATTRACT BACK SOME OF THE ADVERTISERS WHO'VE BEEN LEAVING THEM IN DROVES AND WHO MUST SUPPORT CROWELL-COLLIER IF THE FIRM'S PUBLISHING SECTION IS TO BE PROFITABLE. I STILL SUSPECT THE SAME SCHEME WOULD HAVE WORKED BETTER IF THEY'D KILLED COLLIERS, BUT THEN I'M NOT A BIG SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN WHO CAN DEMONSTRATE MY GENIUS BY LOSING TEN MILLION DOLLARS A YEAR.///WELL, THIS IS ONE ISSUE YOU SURELY CAN'T COMPLAIN ABOUT MY PHLOTSAM REVIEW BEING TOO BRIEF.

POO--CAMPBELL EXPERIMENTED WITH THE VARIABLE 1 TO 10 RATING SYSTEM ON ASF STORIES A FEW YEARS BACK, AND EVIDENTLY FOUND IT IMPRACTICAL OR THAT THE READERS WOULDN'T SUPPORT IT. I AMAGINE MOST WOULD BE TOO LAZY. EVEN IF YOU COULD GET ALL VOTERS TO GO TO THE TROUBLE OF ASSESSING THEIR VIEWS, IT SEEMS TO ME THE FATAL FLAW IN ANY SUCH APPORTIONMENT IS THAT PEOPLE ARE DIFFERENT AND WHILE TWO PEOPLE MIGHT ENJOY A MAGAZINE EXACTLY THE SAME AMOUNT ONE MIGHT BE A CHRONIC LOOK-ON-THE-BRIGHT-SIDER WHO WOULD ALLOT IT A 9 OR 10 WHILE THE OTHER MIGHT BE AN EXTREME PERFECTIONIST WHO'S CAREFULLY WEIGH OUT A MISERLY 1.5. AND PEOPLE VARY FROM TIME TO TIME. A MAGAZINE WHICH RINGS UP UP A CHEEREUL 8 ON MY PERSONAL APPLAUSE METER AT A TIME WHEN I HAVE IMMENSE AMOUNTS OF SPARE TIME, TEMPORARILY INTENSE INTEREST IN FANDOM, AND A GENERALLY HAPPY OUTLOOK ON LIFE MIGHT GET NO BETTER THAN A 2 OR 3 IF IT APPEARED SIX MONTHS LATER WHEN I AM TOO RUSHED TO DO ANY MORE THAN SKIM THE MAGAZINES RAPIDLY, AM WORRIED OVER PRESSING FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS, AM FEELING SUB-PAR PHYSICALLY, AND CONSIDERING DROPPING FROM FANDOM.///THE SEEMINGLY CONTRADICTIONARY STATEMENTS REGARDING FAPA'S CONSTITUTION RESULT FROM THE FACT THAT FAPA HAS HAD TWO, AND IT IS THE SECOND ONE UNDER WHICH WE NOW OPERATE WHICH IS SPEER'S BRAINCHILD....OF COURSE I'M ONLY TAKING WARNER'S WORD FOR IT. HE HAD A WHOLE ARTICLE ON THE SUBJECT SEVERAL YEARS AGO.///I FELT THAT SIGNERS OF THE GRAHAM-PETITION SHOULD BE CENSURED SINCE IT SEEMED TO ME HIS MEMBERSHIP WAS PATENTLY ILLEGAL AND THE EXCUSES PUT FORTH BY THE GRAHAM SUPPORTERS EXTREMELY WEAK. THE LEGALISTIC VIEW THAT HIS OUSTING WAS UNCONSTITUTIONAL I THOUGHT SO TRANSPARENT THAT I NEVER MENTIONED IT BEFORE BUT APPARENTLY SOME WERE CONVINCED. IT IS TRUE THAT THE CONSTITUTION ASSIGNS TO THE SECRETARY-TREASURER THE TASK OF ASSESSING MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS, BUT I FAIL TO SEE ANYTHING WHICH MAKES HIM A SORT OF DIVINE DICTATOR OF WHO MAY OR MAY NOT BE A MEMBER, FROM WHOSE JUDGMENTS THERE CAN BE NO APPEAL. WHEN A SECRETARY-TREASURER, THROUGH EITHER LAZINESS OR INDIFFERENCE (OR THROUGH DELIBERATE FLOUTING OF THE RULES, THOUGH THAT DOES NOT APPEAR TO ENTER INTO THIS CASE) REGISTERS SOMEONE AS HAVING MET ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS WHEN THAT PERSON HAS NOT DONE SO AND IT CAN BE PROVED THEN IT HARDLY SEEMS TO ME THAT ANY SELF-RIGHTEOUS WHINING ABOUT THE SECRETARY-TREASURERS PREROGATIVES AFFECT THE CASE. THESE ARE



THIS IS PAGE ELEVEN

DUTIES, NOT PRIVILEGES, AND IF AN OFFICER FAILS TO CARRY OUT HIS DUTIES AND A MEMBER COMPLAINS TO THE PRESIDENT REGARDING IT THEN IT WOULD SEEM THAT THIS IS QUITE CLEARLY ONE OF THE SITUATIONS NOT COVERED BY THE CONSTITUTION, WHICH PLACES IT SQUARELY UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE PRESIDENT. I SUPPOSE THAT AN OFFICER WHO CAN'T EVEN KEEP TRACK OF THE FUNDS CAN BE EXPECTED TO GET SIMILARLY CONFUSED IN ALLOTING ACTIVITY CREDIT BUT IT HADN'T OCCURRED TO ME THAT HE'D CONVINCED ANYONE BUT HIMSELF REGARDING HIS PECULIAR INTERPRETATION OF THE CONSTITUTION (A FUNCTION RESERVED TO THE VICE PRESIDENT, BY THE WAY, AND THE PROPER PLACE TO TAKE ANY COMPLAINTS HAD HE HAD ANY GENUINE OBJECTIONS ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S ACTIONS). SO I ASSUMED THAT THOSE SIGNING THE PETITION WERE MOTIVATED BY THE BE-A-GOOD-FELLOW AND HELP GRAHAM KEEP HIS MEMBERSHIP PHILOSOPHY, WHICH I FELT TENDED TO WEAKEN FAPA AT THE PRESENT TIME, HENCE MY STATEMENT REGARDING CENSURESHIP OF THE SIGNERS. INCIDENTALLY, I DID NOT KNOW WHO HAD SIGNED THE PETITION AT THE TIME, SO THE CONDEMNATION WAS NOT A PERSONAL ONE, ADDRESSED AT ANY INDIVIDUAL, BUT A BLANKET CONDEMNATION OF A CERTAIN TYPE ACTION.///DANNER ALSO REVIEWS FAPAZINES IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER.

ROCK AROUND THE CONUS--I PRESUME YOUR ACCOUNT OF YOUR SAN FRANCISCO VISIT IS AT LEAST PARTIALLY, IF NOT WHOLLY, A HOAX, LEADING ME TO WONDER HOW MUCH THE REST OF THE MAGAZINE IS, ALSO. I KNOW AT LEAST PART OF THE THINGS YOU RELATE ACTUALLY OCCURRED. BUT I BECAME SUSPICIOUS WHEN YOU STARTED DESCRIBING WRAIBALLARD'S ACTIONS, AND WHEN YOU THREW IN CASUAL MENTIONS OF GEIS BEING PRESENT THAT WAS JUST TOO MUCH. I COULD POSSIBLY SWALLOW THE IDEA THAT EITHER ONE OF THESE TWO STAY-AT-HOMES MIGHT HAVE KICKED TRADITION IN THE EYEBALL AND JAUNTED OFF TO FRISCO FOR A WEEKEND OR LONGER BUT THAT BOTH OF THEM DID IT, AND ON THE SAME WEEKEND....WELL, THERE ARE SOME THINGS EVEN RAY PALMER WOULDN'T BELIEVE. AT LEAST YOU OFFERED A HINT IN ADVANCE....WHEN YOU MENTION THE ETHICS OF HOAXING IN ADVANCE AND DECLARE YOURSELF ON THE SIDE OF IT. OF COURSE, THERE IS THE BARE POSSIBILITY THAT YOU WERE HOAXED INTO THINKING RIKE AND GRAHAM OR SOME OTHER LOCAL FANS WERE BALLARD AND GEIS, BUT THIS I DON'T REALLY BELIEVE.

TARGET: FAPA--YOUR DEFINITIONS OF MY TERMS 'ACTIVE' AND 'PASSIVE' SUPPORT (OF GOVERNMENTS) ARE CLOSE ENOUGH THAT I SHAN'T QUIBBLE. HOWEVER, AS YOU'LL NOTE, I DID NOT SPECIFY HOW THIS SUPPORT WAS GAINED. PASSIVE SUPPORT CAN VERY WELL BE OBTAINED THROUGH THE TYPE OF TERRORISTIC TECHNIQUES YOU DESCRIBE; AFTER ALL, TO A PEASANT WHO HAS ALWAYS BEEN HUNGRY AND HAD LITTLE FREEDOM (OR POSSIBLY EVEN LITTLE USE FOR IT) A GOVERNMENT WHICH USURPS A FORMER ONE AND DEMANDS THAT HE SUPPORT IT, OFFERING DIRE CONSEQUENCES IF HE FAILS WILL PROBABLY HAVE HIS PASSIVE SUPPORT EVEN THOUGH HE MIGHT HAVE A MILD PREFERENCE FOR THE LAXER FORMER GOVERNMENT. BUT HIS ACTUAL SITUATION IS LITTLE CHANGED. WHERE THIS PASSIVE SUPPORT EVAPORATES IS IN SITUATIONS WHERE ITEMS ABOUT WHICH THE CITIZEN HAS STRONG EMOTIONAL FEELINGS ARE TAMPERED WITH. IN THIS COUNTRY PERHAPS A SIZEABLE MINORITY MIGHT BE WILLING TO ACTIVELY SUBVERT ANY GOVERNMENT FORCIBLY REMOVING THEIR FREEDOMS. THIS IS PROBABLY EVEN MORE LIKELY IN ENGLAND. BUT FOR MOST OF THE WORLD THIS IS AN EMPTY ISSUE. THEY'VE SELDOM ENJOYED REAL FREEDOM, EITHER BECAUSE OF LEGAL OR ECONOMIC SANCTIONS, AND THEY HAVE LITTLE EMOTIONAL ATTACH-



MENT TO IT. BUT WHEN A GOVERNMENT PLACES ITSELF IN DANGER IS WHEN IT ATTACKS THE THINGS SO CLOSE TO PEOPLE THAT THEY REGARD THEM AS INDISPENSABLE TO THEIR WELL-BEING. RELIGION HAS FREQUENTLY BEEN SUCH A SUBJECT. ONE THAT HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY TRYING TO THE COMMUNISTS IS THAT OF LAND. THEIR POLITICAL THEORY CALLS FOR REMOVING THE PEASANTS FROM THE LAND, AND THIS THE PEASANTS FIGHT WITH EVERY WEAPON AT THEIR DISPOSAL. THE ONLY WAY IT IS BEING ENFORCED IN THE SATELLITE NATIONS IS THROUGH PRESSURE FROM WITHOUT AND HERE IT IS PROVING A DEBILITATING FACTOR WHICH SEEMS TO CARRY THE SEEDS OF DESTRUCTION FOR THE GOVERNMENTS. IN RUSSIA ITSELF THE CHANGE WAS MADE, BUT PLEASE NOTE THAT THE GOVERNMENT FOUND IT NECESSARY TO APPEASE THE BOURGEOIS CLASS AND ALLOW THEM TO CONTINUE THEIR CAPITALISTIC ACTIVITIES IN DIRECT DEFIANCE OF COMMUNISTIC DOCTRINE WHILE THE FARMERS WERE BEING FORCED INTO COLLECTIVES. IT WAS NOT UNTIL THE FARMERS HAD BEEN CONQUERED AND FORCED INTO Sullen ACQUIESCENCE THAT THE GOVERNMENT FOUND IT SAFE TO PROCEED AGAINST THE LESS POWERFUL SHOPKEEPING CLASS.

TYKE--BUT GRANT WAS NOT EJECTED FROM POWER BY HIS SUBORDINATES. ON THE CONTRARY, THEY USED HIM AS A TOOL, A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT UNDERTAKING. JUST HOW AWARE GRANT WAS OF HOW HE WAS BEING USED IS, OF COURSE, A QUESTION.

FANALYSIS--I'M AMUSED TO THINK OF MORSE'S REACTIONS TO YOUR SUGGESTION THAT HE IS POSSIBLY AN AMERICAN. CAN YOU ACTUALLY PICTURE ANY AMERICAN WRITING IN THAT CLIPPED, UNDERSTATE, SO TYPICALLY BRITISH METHOD THAT MORSE USES? IT'S TRUE THAT DUE TO SOME YEARS IN THAT COUNTRY MORSE OCCASIONALLY PASSES FOR A CANADIAN IN ENGLAND BUT HE IS VERY MUCH A NATIVE PRODUCT.///SOMETIME I'D LIKE SOMEONE TO DEFINE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ROCK-AND-ROLL AND RHYTHM-AND-BLUES FOR ME. I KEEP RUNNING INTO CHARACTERS WHO INSIST THEIR DIFFERENCE BUT THE SIMPLE FACT IS THAT ROCK-AND-ROLL IS MERELY A TERM INVENTED BY THE LEADING DISC JOCKEY WHO PLAYS THE STUFF AS A CATCH PHRASE TO DESCRIBE THE MUSIC THAT WAS THEN JUST GAINING POPULARITY. AURALLY THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE WHATSOEVER. RHYTHM AND BLUES MERELY GAINED WIDESPREAD POPULARITY AND SOMEONE HUNG A NEW NAME ON A CURRENT FAD. BUT I DEFY YOU TO POINT OUT EITHER MUSICAL ~~OR~~ DIFFERENCES OR DIFFERENCES IN LYRICS. OH SURE, IF YOU WISH TO ARBITRARILY ASSIGN THE TERM ROCK-AND-ROLL TO EVERY PIECE THAT BECOMES A HIT OR WHICH HAS VULGAR LYRICS, THAT IS YOUR PRIVILEGE PROVIDING YOU CAN PERSUADE THE BULK OF THE POPULACE TO GO ALONG WITH YOUR TERMINOLOGY. IT'S BEEN DONE BEFORE. RECENTLY, TWO IDENTICAL TERMS, 'BINAURAL' AND 'STEREOPHONIC' WERE TAKEN AND DELIBERATE DISIDENTIFIED. ALL WRITERS ON THE SUBJECT STARTED USING BINAURAL TO DESCRIBE TWO-TRACK SOUND MEANT TO BE LISTENED TO THROUGH EARPHONES WHILE STEREOPHONIC WAS USED TO DESCRIBE ANY MULTI-TRACK SOUND HEARD THROUGH LOUDSPEAKERS. THE TERMS ARE NOW UNIVERSALLY ACKNOWLEDGED TO MEAN THAT AND SINCE MEANING FOLLOWS USAGE THEY DO MEAN THAT. THAT IS THE WAY LANGUAGE CHANGES AND GROWS. BUT I DON'T THINK YOU'LL PERSUADE THE TEENAGERS TO RESTRICT ROCK-AND-ROLL TO USAGE ONLY TO DESCRIBE WHAT YOU DISLIKE.///YOU STATE THAT LIBERACE'S RECORDS WERE BEST SELLERS LONG BEFORE HIS SMILE BECAME KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC. NAME ONE. HE DID MAKE A FEW RECORDS FOR THE SIGNATURE LABEL IN 1947. THE LABEL SHOWED THEM AS BY THE 'PRICELESS PIANO OF LIBERACE'. ONE REVIEWER COMMENTED THAT NEVERTHELESS YOU COULD BUY THEM FOR 79 CENTS. THESE WERE DEFINITELY NOT BEST-SELLERS. SIGNATURE ONLY HAD ONE BEST-SELLER IN ITS ENTIRE HISTORY AND THAT WAS AN ALBUM, ONE OF MANY VERSIONS OF "RHAPSODY IN



THIS IS PAGE THIRTEEN

BLUE" WHICH PAUL WHITEMAN RECORDED DURING HIS CAREER, AND THE ONLY THING HE EVER DID FOR SIGNATURE. THEY ALSO HAD TWO OR THREE MILDLY SUCCESSFUL RECORDS BY JOHNNY LONG AND CONNIE HAINES WHICH RESTED BRIEFLY AT THE BOTTOMS OF THE CHARTS AND SHOWED SIGNS OF BECOMING BEST-SELLERS BUT WHICH FAILED TO. NOTHING WHATSOEVER HAPPENED TO LIBERACE'S RECORDS. I'VE KEPT PRETTY CLOSE TRACK OF THE RECORD INDUSTRY FOR QUITE A FEW YEARS AND, WHILE IT IS UNLIKELY, IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT LIBERACE MIGHT HAVE RECORDED FOR SOME OTHER COMPANY AND BROUGHT OUT SOME RECORDS ABOUT WHICH I NEVER HEARD, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN QUITE IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO HAVE PRODUCED ANY BEST-SELLERS OF WHICH I REMAINED UNAWARE. HIS FORTUNES DURING THE NEXT FEW YEARS WEREN'T EXACTLY BRIGHT. HE HAD A PART IN A SHELLEY WINTERS MOVIE AROUND 1950. IT WAS A FAIRLY SMALL PART AND HE WAS ASSIGNED TO PORTRAY GREATNESS DEGRADED. IN ONE SCENE SHELLEY WINTERS REVERENTLY MURMURED "HE WAS A VERY GREAT PIANIST ONCE, BEFORE HE STARTED DRINKING" I THINK HE HAD TWO SCENES AND MANAGED TO BE FAIRLY LUDICROUS EVEN SO. HE LOOKED THE PART SINCE HE WEIGHED ABOUT FORTY POUNDS LESS THEN THAN HE NOW DOES AND HAD INSTRUCTIONS TO ALWAYS LOOK VERY SAD BUT THAT "GEE, MOMMY, I DIRTIED MY PINAFORE" VOICE OF HIS MANAGED TO MAKE THE PART PRETTY FUNNY. FOR A WHILE HE WAS REDUCED TO ACCOMPANYING A BALLROOM DANCE ACT....VELOZ AND YOLANDA, I BELIEVE. DURING ALL THIS TIME HE MADE NO RECORDS OF ANY IMPORTANCE. IT WAS NOT UNTIL LATE 1953 OR EARLY 1954 THAT HIS COLUMBIA ALBUMS EXCITED TALK AND HE BECAME KNOWN AS ONE OF THE SUREST SELLERS IN THE INDUSTRY AND BY THAT TIME HE WAS VERY SECURELY ESCORGED AS THE BIGGEST TELEVISION PHENOMENON SINCE DAGMAR.///I THOUGHT YOU MADE ANOTHER COMMENT I REALLY INTENDED TO BLAST AS A FIRST-CLASS EXAMPLE OF IGNORANCE (NO, I DIDN'T DELIBERATELY LEAVE YOU TILL LAST; YOUR MAG JUST ACCIDENTALLY FELL OUT) BUT I'VE SEARCHED THROUGH YOUR MAGAZINE AND CAN FIND NO REFERENCE TO IT...ACTUALLY FIND THINGS WHICH TEND TO SAY YOU HAVE OPPOSITE VIEWS, SO I APOLOGIZE FOR EVEN TEMPORARILY HAVING SUCH LOW VIEWS OF YOU. BUT I DO KNOW THAT SOMEONE IN THE LAST FAPA MAILING PASSED OFF SOME COMMENT ABOUT JAZZ BEING INFERIOR MUSIC SINCE ANY CLASSICALLY TRAINED MUSICIAN COULD PLAY IT IF HE CHOSE. I SHAN'T ARGUE ABOUT THE QUALITY OF JAZZ (THAT'S A SUBJECTIVE THING, AND THEREFORE NOT A FIT TOPIC FOR ARBITRARY STATEMENTS, AND ANYWAY I ALSO LIKE CLASSICAL MUSIC). BUT THAT BUSINESS ABOUT CLASSICAL MUSICIANS BEING ABLE TO PLAY JAZZ INDICATES A COMPLETE LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ON THE SUBJECT AND PURE ASININITY IN AIRING SUCH VIEWS, THEREFORE. VARIOUS CLASSICAL MUSICIANS HAVE TRIED THEIR HANDS AT JAZZ, EVER SINCE IT WAS BORN. MOST DIDN&T ACTUALLY UNDERSTAND IT IN THE EARLY DAYS AND SOME STILL DON'T. THEY DIDN&T EVEN REALIZE WHAT THEY WERE TRYING TO PLAY. JOSE ITURBE PLAYING A SIMPLE (AND MECHANICAL) BOOGIE RHYTHM FOR A MOVIE CAMERA IS NO MORE AN EXAMPLE OF A CLASSICAL MUSICIAN PLAYING REAL JAZZ THAN A FIRST YEAR PIANO STUDENT HALTINGLY FEELING HER WAY THROUGH "CLAIRE DE LUNE" CAN BE SAID TO BE 'PLAYING' THE CLASSICS. EVEN MUSICIANS WHO UNDERSTAND AND LOVE JAZZ, SUCH AS LEONARD BERNSTEIN, HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO PLAY IT, WHEN THEIR BASIC ORIENTATION WAS CLASSICAL. OF ALL THOSE WHO'VE MADE THE ATTEMPT ONLY ONE HAS DONE SO SUCCESSFULLY (IN PUBLIC, ANYWAY) AND THAT IS FREIDRICH GULDA. IF JAZZ IS SO SIMPLE AND EASY TO PLAY WHY DO THE WORLD'S BEST-TRAINED MUSICIANS FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE? MIND YOU, I'M NOT SAYING THAT JAZZ IS 'BETTER' THAN CLASSICAL MUSIC OR THAT JAZZ MUSICIANS ARE BETTER MUSICIANS.



## THIS IS PAGE FOURTEEN

ON THE CONTRARY, IT IS JUST AS DIFFICULT TO TRANSFER FROM JAZZ TO CLASSICAL MUSIC AS THE OTHER WAY. JUST AS STRAVINSKY, RAVEL, AND OTHERS TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO WRITE JAZZ (THEY JUST WROTE CLASSICAL MUSIC THAT WAS INFERIOR TO THEIR USUAL PRODUCT) SO HAVE A MAJORITY OF JAZZ COMPOSERS TRIED AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER TO WRITE SUCCESSFUL CLASSICAL MUSIC, AND FAILED. A LESSER NUMBER OF JAZZ MUSICIANS, LIKE THEIR OPPOSITE NUMBERS IN THE CLASSICAL WORLD, HAVE ATTEMPTED TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR VERSATILITY BY PLAYING CLASSICAL MUSIC ON THE SAME LEVEL WITH THEIR JAZZ. THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS DONE SO AND DEMONSTRATED HE COULD HOLD HIS OWN WITH SKILLED MUSICIANS IN THIS FIELD IS THE FIRST ONE TO MAKE THE JUMP, BENNY GOODMAN. EVEN THE JAZZMEN WHOSE TRAINING WAS ALMOST ENTIRELY CLASSICAL (AND THERE ARE SEVERAL WELL-KNOWN JAZZ NAMES WHO HAVE SUCH A HISTORY) HAVE NEVER GIVEN ANY INDICATION THAT THEY WOULD HAVE ACQUIRED ANY FAME, OR EVEN BEEN GOOD ENOUGH TO EARN A LIVING HAD THEY STUCK WITH THEIR FIRST LOVE. I BELIEVE IT WAS JOHNNY SMITH (THOUGH I THINK HE USED SOME OTHER INSTRUMENT THAN GUITAR) WHO WAS REPORTED TO HAVE TAKEN TIME OUT FROM JAZZ LONG ENOUGH TO HAVE BEEN PRESENT AS ONE OF TOSCANINI'S MUSICIANS AT A RECORDING OR PERFORMANCE. BUT I HAVEN'T HEARD OF OTHER CONDUCTOR'S FALLING OVER THEMSELVES TO ASK HIM TO REPEAT THE PERFORMANCE. JAZZ AND CLASSICAL MUSIC ARE TWO ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FIELDS. IT TAKES DIFFERENT SKILLS AND (PROBABLY) DIFFERENT BASIC TALENTS TO SUCCEED IN EACH. THE INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS BOTH THE NECESSARY SKILLS AND TALENTS TO BE AN OUTSTANDING ARTIST IN BOTH IS VERY VERY RARE. TRUE, A GOOD CLASSICAL MUSICIAN CAN PLAY ADEQUATELY ANYTHING WRITTEN DOWN FOR HIM. THE CATCH IS THAT JAZZ CANNOT REALLY BE WRITTEN DOWN. ACTUALLY, NO MUSICAL WORK IS EVER COMPLETELY WRITTEN DOWN. NOTES ARE MERELY A TYPE OF SHORTHAND, WITH THE RESULT THAT WE HAVE SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT HOW MUCH BAROQUE MUSIC WAS ACTUALLY MEANT TO BE PLAYED. BUT JAZZ IS FAR LESS SUSCEPTIBLE TO CAPTURE ON PAPER THAN IS MORE CONVENTIONAL MUSIC. THE TRICKY RHYTHMS WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL TO IT ARE TOO SUBTLE TO RESOLVE COMPLETELY WITH FIGURES ON PAPER, AT LEAST THOSE NOW IN USE. AND HOW DO YOU INDICATE THE TONE WITH WHICH SOMETHING IS TO BE PLAYED? CLASSICALLY TRAINED MUSICIANS HAVE ONLY ONE TONE, THE CLASSICAL TONE. ALL THEIR PRACTICE AND TRAINING COMBINES TO TRY AND MAKE THIS TONE AS CLEAR AND BEAUTIFUL AS POSSIBLE. THIS IS ONLY ONE OF MANY TONES IN USE IN JAZZ (AND ONE OF THE LEAST USED). ONE OF THE SIGNS OF THE GREAT JAZZMAN IS THAT HE HAS HIS OWN UNIQUE INDIVIDUAL TONE WHICH HE HIMSELF INVENTED AND WHICH OTHERS MAY IMITATE AND SELDOM CAPTURE. MUCH OF JAZZ'S RICHNESS COMES FROM THE VARIOUS TONAL COMBINATIONS AND QUALITIES FOUND IN JAZZ AND NOWHERE ELSE. FOR A CLASSICAL MUSICIAN TO PLAY IN THAT WAY IS A SIGN OF SLOPPINESS. FOR A JAZZ MUSICIAN TO PLAY WITH A CLASSICAL TONE, SOLELY, WOULD BE A SIGN OF WOEFUL LACK OF IMAGINATION.. NO WONDER THE TWO DO NOT READILY MIX.

### "The Beastly TV"

The above title was one I concocted several years ago as a title for a fantasy story....one that I thought intriguing. I never found a really satisfactory plot for it so it remained unused. However, it was really a very accurate summation of my feelings toward the electronic medium.



When I first viewed television I was amazed at the crudeness and generally unsatisfactory quality of the picture produced; I found it difficult to credit that such lovers of sleekness as the American public had accepted it, especially considering the technological marvels come to be accepted as everyday commonplace in other fields, most noticeably movies. The program content was, if anything, on even a lower level than the technical quality. I found television a dull, costly bore. While this was disappointing, what aroused my active animus toward the medium was the trend of events started in the late 40's and accelerated in the early 50's whereby every single thing for which I had any fondness (with the sole exception of phonograph records) proceeded to suffer badly as television lured more and more viewers, monopolizing their time and cutting down on the money they had formerly had to spend on other diversions. As motion picture theatres closed, pulp magazines vanished, slick magazines went to a non-fiction diet, and dancing became a lost art, with consequent unemployment and economic and intellectual depression in the fields of theatre, music, and literature I found it more and more difficult to find the things I appreciated, with tv usually the chief culprit. With something so completely unappealing sopping up all the opportunities formerly available to more stimulating things I conceived a violent antipathy for television as a whole.

The television freeze kept much of the U.S. videoleless and happily the section of the country I live in was among them. We felt the nationwide repercussions, but not the local ones. But, with the thaw, I began to grow uneasy and well remember my annoyance and frustration, upon moving to Kellogg, Idaho in late 1953 to learn that they were receiving tv by cable, and the town showing all the usual effects. By the time I left Kellogg it was practically impossible to find any area without facilities for the legion of would-be viewers.

But I held out and continued to growl at the medium on every occasion. I hadn't seen much in the way of tv (I'd deliberately avoided it) and every once in a while I might soften and think there might be advantages to having a set. But then somewhere I would be in the presence of a set and sit and watch one or two shows. That would be sufficient to bring back all my irritation at its technical inadequacy and disgust for its programming content at their full virulence.

But, unintentionally, the networks began battering at my defenses two years ago when they inaugurated their new long occasional special high-cost shows. The motivations for this were several....they wished to cut the ground from under the adherents of pay-tv; by putting on a special color shows it was hoped to encourage the sale of color sets; and with revolutionary programming each hoped to win a bigger portion of the audience for himself. I doubt if they ever actually intended to offer a better grade of television. But if you are going to be revolutionary and different you quickly find that banality and bad taste (hitherto the common denominator of all tv fare) run out and you have to invade the provinces of quality, originality, and possibly even good taste.

The first few shows struck new lows. Seldom has any national entertainment been so roundly criticized as the first couple of spectacles which featured people like Betty Hutton, Betty Grable, and Mario Lanza mouthing the words to his own records.

But as time passed on the shows began to sound more and more interesting and some provoked raves from tv critics. It hurt to have to pass up such well-advertised and attractive sounding shows



as "Peter Pan", "Richard III", ~~and~~ "Twentieth Century", and "The Caine Mutiny Court Martial".

My resistance gradually lowered but the crucial factor was that 1956 is a Presidential year. One thing I've always conceded to tv and that is that nothing else can touch it when it comes to on-the-spot coverage of news events as they happen. Sports events do not interest me so that has never been a lure. But politics does so I tentatively decided about a year ago that I'd try to have one in time to watch the conventions.

I also like old movies and thought it would be nice to have a set to watch those since as theatres become rarer it is harder and harder to find ones rerunning old films....the much more satisfactory method of viewing them. Thirdly this would give me a method of watching the occasional spectacular that sounded worth a look. Otherwise I expected the set would usually be off (especially as I work most nights).

I bought the set (a second-hand one as I couldn't see putting much money into something I planned to use so little) last July in time for conventions, then unexpectedly had to be out of town while they were on so didn't get to watch them after all my plans. I understand I didn't miss much, though.

Knowing myself, I was quite aware the tv would be very much a new toy at first and would receive pretty heavy usage the first few weeks. So I wasn't too surprised when I adopted the usual behavior of a new tv owner.....watching almost constantly during the first weekend. But it didn't pall as quickly as I'd expected and much of what I saw proved a very considerable surprise.

Much of tv, as available today and viewed in your (or at least my) own home is far better than I'd ever have reason to suspect.

Let me add that I refused to withdraw a single word of criticism I've ever uttered about its technical standards, however. I think that at its present technical development television needs at least fifteen more years of laboratory development before it's ready to be offered to the public.

Programatically, nothing turned out quite like I expected. As I said, I missed the conventions; but a political campaign is under way and I'd also anticipated it. I shan't know till election day how well tv covers the election itself but political speeches are duller on tv than radio (and they don't seem to have discovered any visual gimmicks to add to the speeches). Discussion and interview programs such as "Meet the Press" are no better on tv than radio. In fact, I find it a bit easier to concentrate on what is being said on radio. I still stand by my admiration for tv for conventions however. I rented a set in 1952 to watch the Democratic convention.

My fondness for old movies evaporated very speedily with ownership of a tv. Much of this fondness was due to the timebinding quality inherent in them....the very definitely dated autos, clothes, speech habits, etc. A great deal of this was fine detail stuff which can be seen on a theater screen but which is invisible on tv. And with an average of four or five such movies available daily, if you wish, any nostalgic quality soon is saturated. In theatres they usually brought back the cream of the crop. On tv they tend to start with the worst and gradually work up.



It is far more difficult to appreciate movies on a tv set than in a theatre. They weren't designed for this type of viewing. A top grade film can overcome the handicap but anything less cannot. I've tuned out on countless movies after five, ten, fifteen, or thirty minutes. Of those I've watched through most didn't make much of an impression and those I recall mostly I'd just have soon skipped. The only ones I recall with enthusiasm are "Repeat Performance", an excellent but undervalued 1947 movie which is perhaps the finest fantasy I've ever seen....it was precisely as good on tv as I recalled from my first viewing; "The Boys from Syracuse", Rodgers and Hart's updating of "A Comedy of Errors", and "Mine Own Executioner". The last has a disturbingly familiar title but the story wasn't at all familiar. It apparently was a British picture though it starred Burgess Meredith. And I'm anticipating, next week, the showing of "The More the Merrier", the 1943 comedy which won Charles Coburn his Academy Award. It will be my first opportunity to view it. But usually movies on tv leave me indifferent, even films which would probably impress me favorable if I could see them in a theatre.

This leaves only the special events, and here I can't really judge yet. There haven't been any, so far, which I particularly cared to see though I shall probably watch the Mary Martin-Paul Douglas broadcast of "Born Yesterday" due in a few weeks. I won't be surprised if I find it compares poorly to the Judy Holliday movie, however.

So my tv set has proven pretty much a bust for what I purchased it for. This leaves the more conventional programming. Variety shows I'd seen various times before and been unimpressed by. I still am. Even the Steve Allen show, probably the best of these, is usually good only when they concentrate on the Allen personality and sags when they turn to guest artists, most of whom do numbers which look pretty sad compared to the same thing on a movie screen in full color. My views on variety shows have not changed.

The quiz programs....even the best such as Groucho Marx....I find not worth watching unless I have to kill time. Again my views Haven't changed. I've watched the most popular current tv show "The 64,000 Dollar Question" only once and considered it indifferent. But I find its younger sister "The \$64,000 Challenge" a better show with some genuine interest.

X The filmed situation comedies, which dominated the video lanes a few years ago and are still run and re-run are universally dreadful. In fact, practically all filmed shows seem to be.

One startling discovery I did make however. I'd watched some of the panel shows (all of them patterned after "What's My Line") a few time in the homes of others or hotel lobbies and considered them on a par with the fiction in slick magazines....they went down awfully easily and pleasantly but weren't worth bothering with unless you were so poverty-stricken mentally as to have nothing better to do. I find the whole atmosphere changes when you watch them on your own set in your own home. These are, each and every one, absolutely delightful! Unfortunately "What's My Line" is the only one which appears at a time when I can normally watch it.

But the real surprise was the dramatic programs. I've always been fascinated by the method of telling stories through motion pictures. I was particularly displeased with tv for the effect it had on the movie industry. I could write a complete article on just the types of movies common prior to 1948 and those that have been made since that year but perhaps I can squeeze it down a little and still



generally summarize it. Before 1948 almost the whole range of human interests was encompassed in the movies. Movies were about people. The motion picture industry likes to brag that movies are better than ever and they appear to honestly believe it. They consider that television did them a good turn by killing the B picture and taking over its function. Had the B's been confined to cheap, badly-made Westerns, cheap badly-made mysteries, and cheap badly-made comedies it would be possible to agree with them. But while these did account for a sizable percentage of B production, it actually included a much greater variety. The B's were used experimentally. Many of the low-budget films exhibited more imagination than their more expensive brethren. Many of them were quite enjoyable. Occasionally a low-budget quickie would break through to A money, making the fortunes of everyone connected with it. An example was "The Thin Man", filmed in slightly over two weeks, starring two previously unsuccessful players William Powell and Myrna Loy, which not only founded a perennial series but also whole new cinematic schools of comedy and romance. A decade and a half ago a writer commented that the best mysteries are novels and movies, though not always or even usually the same stories. Lippert has monopolized the mystery field recently....filming low budget mysteries in England with an English cast and one moderately-well-known American name. They pall quickly. Except for these I can't recall any movie mystery (not to be confused with crime stories, which still continue) in years.

Then there were the family comedies, a type of entertainment which if done with reasonable intelligence and taste cannot miss. Not only has the family comedy vanished.....comedy as an entire field is almost invisible. We still have low comedy....though only in the persons of Martin and Lewis. Musical comedy remains. It is even possible for Danny Kaye to break through with a marvelous farce like "The Court Jester". But remember the days stars like Rosalind Russell, Melvyn Douglas, and the aforementioned Loy and Powell kept a steady stream of sophisticated relatively subtle comedies coming? Many were far from unforgettable but they made for enjoyable evenings. Where is comedy today? Hollywood has just one star who still works this vein, Judy Holliday; and in seven years of stardom she has made exactly five movies.....one of them more a realistic drama than a comedy.

Musicals continue; the proportion of good to bad continues in the usual proportions....three putrid musicals for every good one. The biggest increase in Hollywood production has been in the spectacle category, the sort of picture for which de Mille is famous. This is one thing television cannot do and which the public likes. So we have an unending procession of fictionalized Biblical tales, each with a heavily larded-on quota of sex. Has anyone ever seen a good one yet? In one respect Hollywood has improved.....they are much more courageous (chiefly through desperation) in handling touchy off-trail subjects that were taboo in more prosperous years. Stories about racial difficulties, illegitimate babies used as more than just tearjerkers, witch hunting....or even a romance between two unattractive people as in "Marty". Many of these are very very good. However, Hollywood attempts to protect themselves against loss by such prodigious publicity campaigns that any reasonably well-read customer has been informed of every twist and turn of the plot before he gets his first chance to see the picture. But the bulk of Hollywood's current output is adaptations. Hollywood is jittery. They want boxoffice insurance. The best insurance they've found is to rely on pre-proved properties....



this is page nineteen.

Best-selling novels or hit plays are said to be 'pre-sold'. So the movie industry devotes its sturdiest efforts to adapting material which has succeeded in other fields. Look at the movies which won Academy Awards last year. "East of Eden" was originally a Steinbeck best-seller. "The Rose Tattoo" and "Mr Roberts" came from Broadway. "Marty" was lifted from tv. Practically every current important picture has a similar history. Even the hit parade is sometimes raided. And little thought seems to be given to how adaptable the material is to the screen. Even if it is necessary to yank out the entire guts of the story (as in "Tea and Sympathy") or create from scratch a story to go with the title purchased from a best-selling psychological treatise ("Rebel Without a Cause") Hollywood puts its most expensive talents to the job of twisting them into something worth seeing. They are afraid of original material.

Oddly enough, I can't recall ever having seen a regular dramatic tv show until just a few months ago. I had seen the half-hour detective and spy stories and been nauseated; the half-hour situation comedies were pretty limp; and the filmed cowboy shows didn't last more than a couple of minutes in my vision. Everyone of these very closely approximated the low quality level of similar shows on radio. And on radio the half-hour or hour-long dramatic show, no matter how well intentioned, has never been able to rise much above this low level. Radio has always been (with a few very rare exceptions) abominably poor as a dramatic medium. I was happy to have tv leach these away from radio. But apparently I must have jumped to the conclusion that serious dramatic tv shows were as similar to their more plebian brethren as had been the case in radio; logical, I suppose, since I had no information to the contrary.

The first time I actually sat down and watched a dramatic tv show was late this summer. It was Sunday night....an hour-long program which apparently changes its name weekly with the sponsor. I believe that week it was "The Goodyear Hour". The play was titled "Grow Up". I'd been watching Steve Allen and expected to leave in a few minutes but something made me hang around. Soon I was engrossed. The play was about real people! And the dialog did not consist of the soap opera cliches which had always passed for character development on radio and in the previous television plays I'd seen. The protagonist was a teen-aged boy in prep school. He had a problem all right, but he was not being forced to decide whether to aid integration or marry the girl he'd made pregnant; nobody murdered anybody else; the boy didn't fall in with criminals who used him as a captive shield; he didn't have to try to prevent his parents from divorcing each other. What was his problem? He was failing in school, and being a mixed-up adolescent was having trouble find the root of his difficulties; his parents had sacrificed to send him to this school so it put a greater responsibility on him than the normally weighty danger of scholastic failure. Here was a real adolescent faced with a real problem such as hundreds of adolescents face in every area every year, not some over-dramatic fictional situation by which it was hoped people would be shocked into theatres. It was years since I'd been able to relax with such a comfortable and likeable cast of characters; the cast didn't find it necessary to beat me over the head with sensations to justify my admission price. I hadn't realized how weary I was of over-dramatization.

The full hour production time allow for considerable development of subtlety in character bypassing the weakness in all radio and



shorter tv dramas. Following this show came The Loretta Young Program. So I stayed to watch it. It was only half an hour long and thus tended much more toward the weaknesses I'd expected but even so was a good deal better than I'd have thought possible for a half-hour tv drama.

At any rate I was sold on hour-lengthers....especially when I discovered "Grow Up" was no fluke. Oh, it was one of the best (maybe the best) tv drama I've yet seen but a good many others approach the same standard. Even in the highly limited time I have for viewing I've discovered several similar programs. Thursday nights there is "Climax", "Playhouse 90" and several lesser shows. Five mornings a week NBC puts on an hour-long "Matinee Theatre" which is not soap-opera, as I'd expected.

The programs seem about evenly split in their attitude toward stars. The first ones I encountered would have usually only one 'star' name, and that usually one of the more obscure movie or theatre names....sometimes quite obscure. I assumed that tv, like the legitimate theatre, simply could not afford to throw around names in the lavish way Hollywood does. Then I discovered there are other shows which regularly load down each show with a lavish display of names which would make even Hollywood blink. Oh, I doubt if tv will ever duplicate, in a dramatic program, such a high-powered combination as the recent MGM film "High Society" which relegated such well-known actors as John Lund and Louis Calhern to supporting roles, featured Louis Armstrong and Celeste Holm, and reserved star billing for Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, and Grace Kelly....complete with Cole Porter music yet. But I have seen some lineups on tv with a list of names more powerful than those used in some Hollywood 'all-star' productions. I saw one play last week in which Vincent Price had only a bit role, for instance and in the same production Victor Jory was little more than a walk-on. By contrast, the same Jory had, earlier in the week, been the sole star of one of the Matinee Theatre productions. And yet, in story quality which is the most important thing, there seems to be little difference in the two type shows. The penny-pinching when it comes to buying stars does not show up, as you might expect, on the less-expensive programs in weak scripts, also. Nor, on the other hand, do the star-laden stories come out with lots of vulgar ostentation and poor taste. One of the star-heavy shows, "Climax", also seems to be the most consistent in its script selection; while the show that squandered the talents of Price and Jory was one of the weakest scripts I've seen (it was "Forbidden Area", by the way, the Pat Frank novel about near-future atomic warfare which has been reviewed in many sf magazines, which perhaps proves that adaptation works even less well for tv than the movies, and that they are at their best with original material).

Both because of limited budgets and small screens tv must deal with the small problems...the ones Hollywood has abandoned. It just happens that a very great deal of the best and most absorbing drama has always been confined to a small focus. I think tv got the best of the deal. Tv performances seem to have more vigor, while being less perfect than the oft-repeated Hollywood ones. You get the feeling that tv actors believe more strongly in their work and feel it more deeply than is the case on the Hollywood screens. Which is only logical. After all, if you had a deep desire to act and the necessary creativity to do it well wouldn't you find a medium like tv where you



this is page twenty-one

work on a role only a week or ten days before you finish it up and tackle a new and possibly vastly different one more stimulating than the movies where you must concentrate on the same characterization for several months, doing the same scene endlessly, or than the legitimate theatre where you give a complete performance each evening but make it the same performance for months or even years?

At present I am still not familiar enough with those active in this medium to have formed strong views. However, I have no doubt that eventually I shall await with as much eagerness the next appearance of some tv performer as I now do ~~xxx~~ each new cinematic role for a Jack Lemmon or Arthur Kennedy.

One thing about tv has puzzled me. I've read several times that eye specialists recommend, for minimum eyestrain, that you watch tv in a room which is dimmed but not darkened....that you keep a dim lamp turned on someplace in the room. I cannot see why it should be injurious to your eyes to watch a black-and-white varying image of small size in the darkness of your home when it is not so when you watch a large black-and-white varying image in the darkness of a theater.

With a little experimentation I discovered that I frequently preferred to have all the lights off when watching tv. It seemed to give a heightened dramatic effect. I thought perhaps this was years of acclimatization to motion picture theaters coming out... that I wasn't comfortable unless I could reproduce the conditions I was familiar with in theaters as closely as possible. However, I notice that the programs I enjoyed doing this with were chiefly dramatic shows or news programs (interview-style that is), the two types of shows which make the greatest intellectual demand on the viewer so I've concluded that probably the reason I preferred it was that this method aided concentration. In a still-lighted room not only is the picture dimmer, with less contrast, therefore having less impact.....it also has to compete, visually, with everything else in the room. It is easy for the eye to wander away to something else in the room, and therefore it is less easy to follow the thread of the story or discussion. When the tv picture is all that can be seen it has your undivided attention and can do its job much more easily.

Unfortunately, I find that if I keep a room dark for approximately an hour or longer my eyes do, indeed, begin to pain me and that apparently the eye doctor's knew what they were talking about when they made that recommendation, even if I can't discover any logic in it. I still am puzzled as to the reason for different reactions to two things as similar as a tv and movie picture. It can't be the small size of the tv tube,...there is no strain watching 16 mm. or even 8 mm. home movies in the dark. There is a good deal more distortion in the television picture, of course, but it hardly seems that that would produce the effects I've experienced. Fatigue, perhaps, but not pain.

At any rate, I've had much too much difficulty with my eyes recently to take chances so I've rather reluctantly abandoned watching tv in the dark. I wonder if the same problem would arise with a tv set which projected the picture (there were a number of such sets on the market when tv was first introduced, but they never caught on) instead of viewed directly on the tube?



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