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DYNATRON

The artless fanzine hastily uncovered in hopes of getting the FAPA copies to Pavlat before the deadline.

Otherwise this is Dynatron Number 37 (Volume 32, Number 61), a fanzine of sorts, produced by Roy Tackett at Tack's Seitch, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87107, USA, etc. Dynatron is published quarterly. Copies are available in trade for similar publications, for letters of comment, through FAPA, CAPA and N'APA and if all else fails, for 25¢.

A Marinated Publication

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Hmmm. This is the 8th annish if you keep track of that sort of thing. You were expecting maybe a big production? I went to 22 pages. That's a big production...normally Dynatron runs only 20 pages, you know.

Tsk, I'm getting worse and worse. There is plenty of artwork on hand and several good covers but I am too lazy to put them on stencil. Tell you what, though. Next issue I will try to include a few pictures. And have a cover.

Maybe.

You have to admit that's a shrewd bunch in the federal administration. In order to get the income tax increase approved (a major job in an election year--you don't think I'm going to vote for the incumbent congressman, do you?) the administration found it necessary to accept a cut in spending. So where do they say they will make the cut? In the Post Office Department, of course. The Post Master General says that in view of forced economy measures it will be necessary to curtail service, close post offices, discharge personnel, et cetera. (And it was just last January that Congress approved a big raise in postal rates.) I half expected the PMG to announce that, in the interests of efficiency and economy, the Post Office Department was being abolished. Zip codes would remain in effect, however.

Gordie Benson

brought the list of Hugo nominees to a recent meeting of the ASFG. We just sat there and vomited.

You can take Salem out of the country but...Fuzzy Pink will find a way to get it back.

I walked into Beejay's, nodded to the bartender and let myself in to the backroom. As expected, Vardeman and Mike Montgomery were both present. Bob was on the phone and I gathered from the conversation that he was talking to Lesleigh and Chris.

I flopped in a chair and dug a Pall Mall out of my pocket. "How's it going, Mike?" Mike nodded. "I think we've about got it wrapped up," he said.

Bob hung up the phone and swiveled around. "Hi, Roy. I think we're in, man. Lesleigh says the situation looks good in the midwest. Don Blyly will deliver the entire Peoria vote."

"Excellent," I said. "That should wrap it up then. The N3F will have a whole new administration come January."



Yes, with Blyly and the Peoria vote safely in hand the victory of the Young Turks was assured. The conservative element of the National Fantasy Fan Federation was due for a shock when the election votes were tallied.

It had all started a couple of years back. Vardeman and other members of Apa 45 who were also members of the N3F had done some grumbling about the way the old Neff was bogged down. "Let's face it," Gene Klein had written, "the 103% Neffers are firmly in control and the club is nothing but an old ladies knitting circle. The N3F has plenty of potential but that is all. It is potential. So long as the current club administration is in control that's all it will be. Look at the roster of officers. A bunch of ancients. No wonder the club can't get anything done."

Much discussion followed in Apa 45 and a concerted campaign was mapped out.

(To be continued (probably in Aug78))

The following letter from Christopher Walker, 5311 Old Mill Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46807, arrived too late for inclusion in the letter col but I think it is pertinent so will include it here.

Dear Roy,

There's really not so much to comment on in DYN #36. Most of the material is pretty self-sufficient, but I would like to chime in with Mike Horvat. I don't think sf (whatever you want the initials to stand for) belongs in a divorced, walled-in category, cut off from modern literature as a whole. And one of the best proofs of that is the controversy over exactly where the limits are. Is Vidal's Messiah sf? Is Barth's Giles Goat Boy? Bulgakov's The Master and Margarita is clearly fantasy - isn't it? And 1984 and Brave New World (you've heard this before) are time-honored mainstream classics. So don't wall us in. We have enough troubles without cliquism.

I'd try a hand at the essay on "why Analog stories don't appeal to me" but I'm sure someone more competent than I will manage to make it clear to you. The same piece will doubtless deal with Takumi Shibano's fifth "law of science fiction", "Do not try any literary experiment that has no connection to the situation." This is an attitude which seems to go hand-in-hand with Separatism and Space Opera (Say, there's the title of that essay for you! Separatism and Space Opera!), along with a disinclination to discuss The New Thing (whatever that means rationally).

Sincerely

Christopher Walker

I don't know, Christopher, how much of that is general comment and how much is personal comment to me however I won't argue that there wasn't much to comment on in Dynatron 36. A bland issue, as is this. On the other hand....

I want sf to stand for what it has stood for for 10, these many years: SCIENCE fiction. I am, after all, if not a scientist, at least a member of the scientific community. I work in electronics, my other interests include astronomy, archaeology and anthropology. I am interested in new developments in physics and chemistry and biology and the other fields that go to make up the body of scientific knowledge. So just to get the terminology clear, when I say SF I mean science stories. I do not consider sociology (as the term is used today) to be a science. Medicine is a science, psychiatry is not. OK?



The term "speculative fiction" seems to me to be much too broad... all fiction is speculative. (For that matter, it has been advanced that all fiction is "fantasy" and that really broadens it out).

Separatism and being walled in--don't look at me, babe, I didn't do it. The credit/blame for ghettoizing SF rests squarely on the shoulders of the late, beloved Hugo Gernsback. Prior to his publication of AMAZING STORIES and his tagging the genre with the SF label the sort of fiction we call science fiction or fantasy was an accepted part of mainstream fiction and printed in books and the old all fiction magazines such as ARGOSY, BLUEBOOK, etc., right alongside western, detective, historical, and contemporary fiction with no distinction being made. With the coming of AMAZING and the sfzines that followed it, however, SF became a specialized field and so it remains for the most part. Unfortunately, the, ah, literary world has accepted this convention and helps to maintain the separatness of SF.

However, as you point out and certainly I won't argue that with you, SF does appear in the mainstream of literature--although it isn't called SF ("this can't be SF--this is good"). 1984 and Brave New World, certainly. And On the Beach, In the Wet, Stranger in a Strange Land, Islandia, Live With Lightning (not, by any means conventional SF, but SF nevertheless), and a host of others.

The point is that SF was once accepted mainstream literature and still is--if it is good enough (well, some of it is accepted as mainstream although it isn't good but because it is written by a mainstream author).

The same applies to any other specialized field of literature. The Ox-bow Incident is a western that you'll find on the main fiction shelves of your library and not in the western section.

The specialization of SF led to the formula story which is what we find in most of the magazines today and it is doubtful that the formula story (be it SF, western, detective or whatever) will ever be accepted as mainstream literature.

I think Shibano's 5th law (Do not try any literary experiment that has no connection to the situation) is valid particularly when applied to specialized, ghettoized, SF. The reader's won't accept it as SF. As something else, maybe, but not as SF.

Oh, I'm quite willing to discuss The New Thing rationally and coolly and all like that. First, however, define your terms. What do you mean by "New Thing"? (Jerry Lapidus, in reference to my statement that New Wave writers were intellectually bankrupt, asked if I so considered Zelazny and Delaney. No, I do not. I consider Zelazny, Delaney and Niven to be three of the finest writers to come into the field in quite some time--they have the potential to make it not just as SF authors but as authors period. Those three can write. Obviously I do not consider them as part of the New Wave or New Thing or whatever it is.)

I didn't ask for any essays on why ANALOG doesn't appeal to you but if you want to write one I'll be happy to have it. I think Phil Muldowney (in the LoCol) did a good job of analyzing why it doesn't appeal to him.

Do you get the feeling that all stories in this field, whether science fiction or fantasy or speculative fiction or whatever, should begin "Once upon a time...."?



I do not ordinarily comment on things mundane in Dynatron as I prefer to keep the focus of me that is turned towards the fannish sub-culture separate from the day to day goings on of the mainstream of society, however, the recent pronouncement of the head of the Roman Catholic Church in regards to birth control strikes me as being close to the ultimate in religious idiocy.

The greatest problem Terra faces is not clashing ideologies or rising nationalism or racial conflict. Our biggest problem is people. We are almost at the point now where there are too many of them. Population explosion is not just a catch-phrase but an actual fact. The head count in the United States will exceed 300,000,000 before the turn of the century. Asia will add another 1,000,000,000 people to its already overcrowded spaces. The population of Europe, South America and Africa is increasing at an ever-increasing rate.

The prospect of a Malthusian future is all too real and most of Terra's leaders have recognized this and are, albeit rather hesitantly, urging that the brakes be applied. Birth control and family planning are getting ever increasing attention. It begins to look as if the realization that we are running out of room and out of food and out of everything else is beginning to dawn on the powers that be and the common herd alike.

And now charging in from right field comes the Pope with the sort of Medaevil thinking that kept Europe in darkness for a thousand years. You will not, he tells 500,000,000 Roman Catholics, practice birth control. He urges the world's political leaders to take steps to ban the use of contraceptive devices. With one letter the Pope undid all the achievements of his predecessor and set his church back 500 years.

The man is a fool.

Various inquiries have been received concerning who or what the Radical Center is supporting in this election year. Hjalmar J. Wong, chairman pro-tempore of the Division of Radical Centerists has come out in favor of a write-in for Pat Paulsen. Mr. Wong said that in view of the fact that all we had actively and inactively seeking the Presidential office was a bunch of comedians we might as well vote for a professional. He further suggests that 5 November be declared a national day of mourning.

Next issue will have a review or two and maybe some poetry by Bill Wolfenbanger and I don't know what else. Maybe something by Ed Cox. Or Sam Umbrage even.

ROYTAC

ED COX, doodle in this space:



don

# FRANSON

winds up his account of the 20th Westercon

## WIND-UP AT THE SHERATON-WEST

### Part IV

Back to the art room where fans were clumping in congenial groups. Ed Cox, Rick Sneary and Len Moffatt were about to go to dinner as soon as someone got back from trying to find someone else who was going to decide where to go and with whom. Finally Rick said he would go with Stan Woolston and myself, as it was almost impossible to get a decision to go to eat from more than three fans. We walked to the block-away drive-in, acquired a following of six or seven other hungry fans on the way. We stopped to meet Bill Blackbeard, who now has a white beard, but didn't shake the mob, and it took several tables to seat us. Allan Howard, of ESFA, New Jersey, sat with us, and the Ellingtons and others sat at another table. Good food there and open 24 hours, so we were not dependent on the hotel at any time.

I mentioned to Allan that this neighborhood, a few miles square from Western to downtown, and 12th Street to the hills, was filled with landmarks of LASFS history. Rick said he got to know this part of the city just by coming to LASFS meetings, over the years. I wonder if someone could publish a historical map, perhaps on the cover of some LASFS fanzine? ((Ed. note: A project for Bruce Pelz.))

We found a new way back into the hotel, and perhaps this was the main entrance to the convention, as there was a sign saying "Westercon." We went up a flight of stairs and there was the registration desk and con hall. Going through we heard snatches of singing from somewhere. It sounded like "Pinafore."

The movies were at 8 p.m. and the place was packed. F.H. Busby had said he counted the rows and there were only 150 seats, but there were many standing now and the hotel people brought in more chairs. As usual, trouble with the lights heightened the anticipation. The chandeliers blinked on and off eerily, like a mysterious message from outer space. I saw many fans I hadn't seen till now, among them Al Lewis, who had been spending the day at a model airplane exhibition. Donald Reed, the polite President of the Count Dracula Society, was calling people "mister"—that really is another fandom.

Several of the movies were entertaining and quite good, and all were good considering they were amateur and student-made films. A Mack Sennett-type comedy featured Sylvia Dees as the heroine in need of rescue from the descending screw. The next was pure hand color work, with accompaniment of zany Goon-show music to the fast-moving blobs. I mentioned to Rick Sneary that it looked like the hand of Rotsler, but it was a British film. A Superman parody made up of flashing stills wasn't so hot.

A Poe silent--the Fall of the House of Usher--showed its worth by following the comedies without evoking laughter. Again Sylvia Dees, with Steve Tolliver, in some effective acting. I wondered where they got the ancient arched passageway, until the credits showed it was filmed at the Mission Inn in Riverside. All in all a very good movie program.

Then followed the Gilbert and Sullivan parody--first of two at this convention, believe it or not! Seems that the Northern and Southern G&S companies had similar ideas at about the same time. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, I was only able to see one of them, so I am happily unable to make a comparison. F.H. Busby saw only the other which he said was great. I leave it to others to prove that comparisons are odious.



"Captain Future Meets Gilbert & Sullivan" was the high point of the convention for me. I had expected (and expected to enjoy) a hilarious riot full of mistakes; instead it was marvelously well acted and sung. The music was from Pinafore, and the script a funny one written by Steve and Virginia Schultheis some years ago. This combination made for an interesting play to add to the fascination of watching fans perform.

The singing Futuremen were Grag the Robot, played by Len Bailes; Otho the android, by Chuck Crayne; and Simon Wright the brain, a box constructed by Don Simpson. In came Captain Future, played by Ted Johnstone, whose comical strut was fabulous. Lois Lavender was the heroine, Joan Randall; Fred Patten did Ezra Gurney; and Sally Crayne played the G&S part of Little Asteroid (Little Buttercup in Pinafore). Bruce Pelz was the villain, the Master of the Universe. A good feature was a pause after each number, to allow the audience to gather its wits (and the cast to rest). Dian Pelz directed and Katya Hulan played the piano. The script is available from Bruce Pelz in one of his Filksong books.

Next was an announced open party in the Town House Room, which turned out to be a swinging one. It was just as noisy as any other party but there was more room for the decibels to dissipate, and the lack of furniture created elbow-room.

Jerry Jacks spilled a can of beer on Karen Anderson. There was someone with a guitar, and music could occasionally be heard through the din. There were a lot of boots and beards and hippie clothes among the younger fans--I could hardly recognize Steve Salo in his long hair. A big guy with a shock of bright red hair turned out to be Lonny Whitledge. I talked to Greg Benford about our collaborative epic, and he introduced me to Vernor Vinge, a rising young pro who had words of encouragement. He said he read the story and it reads like an Ace novel (yes, but it's too short and Ace has already rejected it). I said to Greg that at least the fannisms weren't intrusive, and he wouldn't even know they were fannisms. Maybe Campbell won't recognize them either. I told Vernor Vinge I thought he was a pen name because of the alliteration. He has appeared in NEW WORLDS and ANALOG among others. See "The Accomplice" in the April 1967 IF.

Zeke Leppin, one-time LASFS host, was there. I asked him how he'd been doing lately and he pulled out not a manuscript but a published story, under some pen-name like "J.K. Nipp" or something, in a girlie magazine. I didn't read it--I can't read anything at conventions.

I sat a while in one of the few chairs and tried to listen to Roy Lavender explaining about UFOs to Stan Woolston, and gave it up when I couldn't hear most of it. I then just sat and took in the scene. It was pretty unbelievable. One cute little girl trotted about in a miniskirt and green leggings. Male costumes (and they weren't costumes, either) were even weirder. But no one was actually boisterous, or acted strangely--just like ordinary fans.

I talked to Stan about the NSF & while, then saw Erik Fennel of PLANET STORIES fame, and went over to meet him, chatted with him a while along with Bill Ellern and Neal Clark Reynolds. Fennel said he'd like to see a magazine like PLANET or THRILLING WONDER again. He said someone gave him a formula for success with that kind of story; what you're selling is not plot or characters, but emotion. He discussed Campbell interestingly--ballbearing mousetraps came into the conversation--I forget most of this.

I wanted to talk to Bruce Pelz about the NAPA troubles but he said he wanted to enjoy the convention, which sounded sensible. There were other parties that night, I suppose, but I didn't find any. I remember meeting Ed Baker in the elevator. "Say something in Esperanto," I said. He said something, which he translated to "this is a very enjoyable convention." Which it was. The open party was still going strong. Sooner or later it got to be two A.M., and I copped out.

Sunday morning bright and clear, and so was I. After breakfast I went to the fan floor. There was nothing on the vast airy



reaches of the program until 2 P.M., but I found fans up and about before 10. In the huckster room I made some purchases, then gathered up some application blanks and title books in the thought that the best way to sell things at a convention is to carry them around under your arm. I met F. M. Busby and Burbee in the corridor and we talked. Burbee remembered the Town House hotel as a fancy place, and had never thought in his youth he would ever be a guest here.

In the Commonwealth Room, there was Ross Rocklynne, looking with nostalgia at old AMAZING QUARTERLIES. I bought a December '26 AMAZING for football prices. Malcolm Willits was ordering replacements from Ed Wood of Advent for his Collectors' Book Store.

In the art room Poul Anderson was talking to a jovial character whose name-tag read Harry Harrison. "Sir Harry", corrected Rick Sneary (he is a Knight of St. Fantony). Rick said he was still humming G&S tunes from last night. I think I saw Jock Root here, and Clyde (or Claire) Beck. Ellie Turner and Sidonie Rogers were comparing frilled pants. I toured the art show proper. Luise Petti was selling sketches--I don't think she sold many. Johnny Chambers was looking at the bids on his art and observed there were none, with a wry green dinosaur expression. I have already mentioned I thought this was a low-spending convention crowd--I may be wrong. Paul Herkart had a tripod and was methodically taking photos of every work of art. William Clark and Aubrey McDermott were sitting at a small table in the Goldstone room, and Bill said, "Are you buying or selling?" Selling, 50¢" "How much with your autograph?" "That's another 10¢", I said. Later

he said McDermott wanted one too, and I sold five books all together at this convention. Wowee. But then I haven't been able to sell many anywhere else either. I still have several hundred left. They're 50¢ to NSF members, 47 pages, photo-offset, giving an alphabetical list of 1600 titles, with all the other misleading titles the stories go under. I've got an addenda of 600 more titles worked up, ready for publication, but what's the use? I don't want to make money, the books have paid for themselves in the club, but there's just no sale. I'm not giving them away, though, if that's what you're all waiting for...

Alva Rogers gave me a new First Fandom membership card, as I wasn't going to make the meeting, and said the vote for this year's Hall of Fame had gone to Edmond Hamilton, with Jack Williamson pretty much of a certainty for next time. Since these are the two authors I first read in AMAZING, I didn't object to that. We also agreed that the award should always go to a living person. The Keller award had been already voted before his death.

I stalled too long before getting dressed for the banquet, and for once got there on time instead of too early. As a result I got on the end of the chow line, which was all right as I got to talk to numerous people. Someone said to grab a table place and reserve it first, or have someone hold it for you, then get back in line. (Otherwise, I might have to take pot-luck and sit with strangers? I remember the Chicon, where I was holding places at the LASFS table, and turned away Ed Emsh and Hal Clement.)

I asked Bjo Trimble, what's with the chow line? She shrugged and said it was mostly Bill Ellern's idea. Ron Ellik was there, in impeccable lederhosen. Forry Ackerman pointed out Fritz Lang sitting at his table. Ron Ellik begged Forry, squirrel fashion, to tell him about the sunflower seeds. Barney Bernard said he had misplaced his program booklet, and wanted to know what was on the program. I said, "I know it by heart, there's nothing on it," which seemed to amuse Ellik and John Trimble. However I informed Barney about the evening's entertainment, which I was going to have to miss. Beverly Warren told about Forry's "monster fan" who camped on Forry's doorstep all the time. The buffet style banquet wasn't so bad. People didn't have to wait to eat after they had waited in line for the meat to be carved, and juggled the plates over to a table.



This time I did get the last table, squeezed in at the back, in the corner, furthest from the speaker's platform. But there was Al Lewis, for some reason. The reason became apparent when I saw that another man at our table was Charles Schneeman, and Al obviously wanted to talk to him. "I always admired your work and I may be the next con chairman and..." went the pitch. Then Al listened to Schneeman talk, and once he got started he did not stop, until interrupted to be introduced. The subjects seemed to be artwork and flying saucers, though I didn't hear it all due to interruptions from the head table.

Brandon Lamont introduced the committee again, and Earl Thompson, for one, got a standing ovation. Walt Daugherty handled the introductions, though I could see they were written by Forry—who else would say, "those living legends, Rick Sneary and Charles Burbee"? Among pros introduced were Fritz Lang, (Now vanished from his table), old-time SF writer Ross Rocklynne, (who got a big hand), old-time and recent writer Emil Petaja (pronounced Pet-eye-a), new pros like Norman Spinrad and Larry Niven, fan-pros such as Walt Liebscher and Dorothea Faulkner, Jon Decles (whose real name is Don Studebaker), Philip Farmer, Harry Harrison, and regulars like Fritz Leiber, Poul and Karen Anderson, the Kris Nevilles, Ray Bradbury, Harlan Ellison and the Van Vogts. I had never seen Harry Harrison or Charles Schneeman before this convention.

Robert Bloch was the master of ceremonies and made a witty speech as usual, something like an unpublishable Bob Hope. He said he was given a list of names to introduce: Roast Top Round of Beef, Macaroni Salad, String Beans... You know the bit if you've ever heard Bloch.

Alva Rogers presented the Little Men's "Invisible Little Man Award" to Charles Schneeman, who made a short appreciative speech, saying he enjoyed doing science fiction illustration. Lon Atkins, who had been chosen as a representative new fan for Fan Guest of Honor, made a well-written speech, quietly presented, the main point of which is that he was a fan in the South where fans were few, and they became fewer by most of them moving to the West Coast. Finally he had to follow the crowd, and come west.

Bloch said he didn't know what subject Marion Zimmer Bradley Breen would speak about, and I don't think she was quite sure either. She rambled interestingly from fan to pro reminiscences, and at times she sounded like the IZB of the fanzine reviews, with references to "little neofans" (a term I never liked; neofans are just newfans, not necessarily little kids) and "I wonder if any of you here have ever seen a hecto?" (I saw a hecto being used at APA L recently). The main premise of the speech was that "fans had lost their goshwow"—the fannish equivalent of sense of wonder. I don't think this is true—else where did all these goshwow convention attendees come from? Frankly, since the supply of cheap egoboo seems to have decreased, fandom has to run on goshwow these days. She mentioned other hobbies, such as model airplanes, and everyone looked at Al Lewis. Marion closed her speech on a sentimental note, saying she had gone from fan to pro to fan again, her voice breaking on "now I have come full circle."

I think Harlan Ellison said a few words then, mainly that the party Tuesday was off. "There is no party," was about the way he put it. Brandon Lamont said that some had asked that the business meeting be moved up—it had been scheduled for 5 P.M. Tuesday, pretty late—and he said that since the only item of business was the bidding on the next Westercon, and that there was only one bidder, he surprisingly called for voting in Berkeley by acclamation. This of course followed, then some hasty consultation seemed to indicate he'd goofed. However, all was straightened out when he called on Alva Rogers "to make a bid for the site you have just acclaimed."

Alva plugged the Berkeley hotel, said that while the pro GoH was still under wraps, the Fan Guest of Honor would be Walt Daugherty. This effectively did away with the Business Meeting, no loss. It also brought on a parade of announcements, one of them being that there was to be an open party Tuesday night at the new LASFS slant shack—"We expected to get the overflow from the Ellison party—now we will



have all of you." Brave fans. Ed Wood huckstered for the hucksters--"You're here to spend money!" he cried, and a couple others made announcements. Brandon Lamont closed the banquet by announcing the auction as starting at 5 P.M.--"half an hour ago"--though he was reminded it was only 4.30. Con Chairmen lose all track of time.

I went home early Sunday and missed several important items on the program, the Fashion Show, "H.I.S. Trek-a-Star", the late-late debate and the First Fandom meeting. You can't win 'em all. The last thing I saw as I drove out of the parking lot was Fritz Leiber striding along the sidewalk with extremely long steps, like one of his own characters.

Monday I had to go to work, to pay for my prozine purchases. Monday afternoon I got a letter from Roy Tackett saying: "Go ahead and write a Westercon report. I'll pub it." Up to then I really hadn't intended to write a con report. I had just said this as a joke, since Tackett had once published a postcard of mine in DYNATRON as a Pacificon report. Even now I just thought I'd put together a few remarks. I took no notes, I don't have a photographic memory, but later I made a list of fans (about 175 of them) that I had met, put down the order of events, and wrote this around them. It's taken a long time and it seems to have grown to huge proportions, but I hope Roy has room for it, even as a serial. I probably will never again write another con report. Since this is also my first one, it may be unique.

It felt like going to a new convention Monday afternoon. There was no parking space left, so I parked in the underground garage. I arrived in the con hall just as the auction was about to start, so this is where I had come in, twenty-four hours previously. I seemed to have just missed a two-hour speech by Harlan Ellison, but I can imagine it or reconstruct it, having once seen Ellison. They say he knocked Star Trek or at least Roddenberry. If so he must have faced a hostile audience, as the most popular button selling at this convention was "I Grok Mr. Spock". I can picture the clash of colors as Harlan's eyes met the green buttons of the Spock-grokkers.

My own opinion of the show is negative (except as a boost to science fiction in general). I have only watched three episodes, and finished one. The reminded me too much of the post-war ASTOUNDING, when exploring space-ships began to be manned by crews of government experts, instead of by mad inventors and their friends, an innovation that took all the joy out of space travel.

Walt Daugherty handled this auction alone as it was a small-spending one. The fancy costumes from "Trek-a-Star" didn't have a chance, and they were withdrawn. Walt had to bid on some of the quarter items himself. There was some good material, and I got a bunch of FANTASTIC ADVENTURES and some other junk. Stan Woolston was there, and some new acquaintances of his from Garden Grove, Don and Kerry Walker. Daugherty auctioned off some Jack Harness paintings, appropriately wearing a Jack Harness-type shirt. Most of those attending auctions are neofans these days, and Daugherty does a good job entertaining them and making the bidding fun.

I saw Wally Weber in the Games Room (yes there was a Games Room there, one of the extra con rooms) watching a game of Diplomacy. I had a deck of ESP cards I had bid on, and told Wally to pick a card. When he picked a star or circle or something, I said it was the ace of spades. They all say ESP on the face, which I explained meant ace of spades. I hardly saw Wally at all during this con. Maybe he was attending that "other convention"--the one you read about in the comments on con reports--"that must have been some other convention than the one I attended."

I trust that no one will say that about this con report. At least some of the incidents related, many of which are true, ought to be familiar to everyone who attended, and some who didn't.

I met Ron Ellik in the Commonwealth Room and I bought one of his E.E. Smith books, and he autographed it, mentioning the NBF. Someone with an English accent was there--Trevor Herndon, who knows Ella Parker.



There was a display of Bok portfolios there that Emil Petaja had put out. Fine, but everybody goes overboard for Bok these days. Could it be because he's dead? Why not more honor for living artists and writers, before we starve them to death with our lack of financial rewards?

I asked Ed Wood why the plain black and white dust jackets on Advent books, and he said extra color printing is more expensive. Then why not some other single color than black? (A few are dull brown). I met Jo-Ann Wood, whom Ed won at a Midwestcon--some collector Ed is. Eon Ellick was selling a book to Barney Bernard--a hard sell proposition.

On the stairs I met Don Fitch and FIBusby, carrying big bags of "books"--underneath the top book was beer and vittles for a small party to be held in Don Fitch's room, after the masquerade.

I got dressed in plenty of time for the costume ball--I don't come in costume but I feel I should wear a suit, as at a formal party--but when I got out on the fire escape there was a line and a jam-up. The door to the ballroom was closed and the crowd got bigger, many of them in costume, packing the open ramp between hotel buildings (they must have knocked two hotels together for the con, it seemed). I remarked to Dean Grennell that if this thing collapsed, it would be an unprecedented disaster to fandom. Bill Donaho, in his business suit (cerise robe and cowl) was standing in the middle. Grennell asked me if I was the one who had visited Fond du Lac once in his absence and left a fanzine. I surmised that this must have been Don Durward, a friend of Bob Lichtman, who had once also visited Bloch in Wisconsin.

Soon the long-jam broke and we filed into the hall, the same hall that had served in other functions, but excellent for this purpose, with its raised platform or stage, and two areas, so that when the actual judging started the waiting costumed folk could be put in the front area, while the audience remained in back. I found a place to lean against a pillar and so had a standing view of the whole scene.

Before the judging began they had Entertainment--some kind of nightclub singer and dancers. Then came Notables--some of the cast of Star Trek including William Shatner mingling with the mob of admirers such as Dejah Thoris and Ray Bradbury. (If Leonard Nimoy had come in I would have known it by the screams). Shatner made a short speech, appreciative of the support for the show and said, in closing, "Frodo lives!" I'm glad to hear that this Frodo, apparently a member of the ST cast, is on the road to recovery.

I can't put back the memories of the costume ball in any kind of order. It seemed to me the most colorful one I had ever attended. The hit of the show was the dog-man act of Shepard Hertz, I think it was (the young fan who was Spider Man a year ago), who won the popular vote and also the grand prize. I can't remember who the judges were, outside of Dan Alderson, but they did a good job. There just weren't enough awards to go around! Two unknown fans were dressed as Grip Reapers, in black robes and with scythes. There were many medieval and legendary characters with staffs and pikes, and the overall effect of the milling mob with scythes and sticks waving overhead was that of a peasant's revolt in The Wizard of Id.

Chain mail jingled (Owen Hannifen's normal attire), swords clashed on shields, Romans wandered about in togas, and science fiction was forgotten. (Not really, there were many authentic SF and fantasy costumes, they were just outnumbered by the medievalists.) Elmer Perdue had on what appeared to be a bullet-proof vest, but was on closer look a collection of metal chauffeur's licenses. The entire Anderson family was in costume; Poul with a Time-Patrol uniform, Astrid as Dejah Thoris, and Karen as a "Leigh Brackett character looking for a story." Ed Baker was resplendent in a fancy uniform of the "Aggressors" with U.S. gold buttons. Jean Bogert was the abominable snow woman. George Scott and friend played medieval woodwind musical instruments. What did they play on these elongated ocarinas? Why "Greensleeves", of course.



Appropriate canned music accompanied the display of costumes on the stage. The parade was well-handled by George Scithers and Al Lewis. The costumes and names were announced, the contestants walked (or lurched) onto the stage, stopped in front of the judges (who were below and facing away from the audience), did their bit or schtick, then walked (or lurched) off. There was very little delay--once Al Lewis announced "There will be a moment of silence; in respect for a snag in the proceedings." The photographers were nicely curbed, contestants not in action sat down on the floor in front to permit a better view for others, and I may venture to say it was the best-handled costume ball ever. (I haven't seen them all, of course.) Bernie Zuber was quietly in charge of the event.

Many fine costumes received no award, or only honorable mentions, although the judges seemed to improvise as best they could. There were two "most beautiful" awards, to Dorothy Jones and Dian Pelz--"white" and "black" categories. Dian must have started out with a colorful costume, but there was this box of powdered graphite on the top shelf and... Bruce Pelz, as a character from "Titus Groan", won for Best Presentation. While the dramatic bits add to the enjoyment, this seems to have been carried too far, so that everybody makes a speech. When a Russian comes out with drawn saber and says "Long Live the Czar!", that's enough. Longer speeches are less effective since everyone isn't the actor Pelz is.

There were a couple groups--Walter and Marion Breen and Paul Zimmer as something from fantasy or the Bible; and William Rotsler, Paul Turner and others, with colorful banners, as "peaceful citizens of the year 2000." Jerry Jacks as a Byzantine emperor. Betty Knight was something (not a rabbit, though). Bill (or Dick) Glass seemed to be a monk or friar. Steve Tolliver and Sylvia Dees had colorful red and blue un-costumes that were striking, "The Illustrated Woman and the Tattooed Dragon." Charles Schneeman went around taking pictures--isn't he the artist who draws from photos, and searched skid row for characters? A gold mine here!

There were hootchy-kootchy dances by Luise Petti and others, to appropriate music, accompanied by Arabs, such as John Decles. Ellie Turner, in green face and pointed ears, claimed to be a relative of Mr. Spock. David and Barbara Pollard appeared in Japanese costume, publicizing and collecting for the Trans-Oceanic Fan Fund.

After the judging fans milled around as usual. There was a bar in the back, and people stood around in groups. A. E. van Vogt was surrounded by a group of neofans who asked him to explain about the Sevagram (it's a Hindu word and means village, or universe). A man in reflecting aluminum Arab costume walked past on the way to the bar and I said "Harry Harrison, I presume," and he nodded, but maybe he wasn't. When menaced by the passing TOFF kitty-bank, Helen Smith remarked, "Why not a fund for impoverished fans?" (Why not judo-chops?) TAFF and TOFF are rewards for work done for fandom, not charity. Fandom can't really afford charity, as such.

I met Bob Lichtman, who looks the same as ever. I saw Wendy Ackerman, Nieson Himmel, Jerry Stier, Gail Thompson, Robert Bloch, Lin Johnstone, and other fans too numerous not to mention. Dwain Kaiser had a measled face, part of an incompleated costume. In addition to those in costume, there were those whose non-costumes were costumes, if you get what I mean. Some remarked to Elmer Perdue, "Where did all the hippies come from? It looks just like Haight-Ashbury on a Saturday night." I said, They may look like hippies, on the surface, but down inside they are just ordinary people like you and me."

The crowd thinned out, music recommenced, and some began "dancing". Fans never did dance much, I've noticed. Noticeable exceptions were Alex Bratmon, Dejah Thoris, Larry Niven, and Marie Louise Ellington, whose real name is Poopsie.

It was midnight and fans headed for the parties, wherever they were. After changing into more comfortable clothes I went to Don Fitch's boom and found no one there but Don and the Busbys--the calm before the storm it turned out, but always a party where I could hear people talking to me.



The Busbys have a color television and are great fans of Star Trek. They also like The Avengers and on Friday nights the Nameless meetings always recess to see this. One effect of watching a particular program, Buz said, is that you eventually become interested in the program that immediately precedes it, as you turn the TV on early. Nevertheless, I didn't see any TVs turned on in the party rooms.

Don Fitch was a good host, providing all sorts of refreshments. Elinor remarked that this was the first con party she'd seen that had food as well as drinks.

Jim Benford and wife Hilary came in, together with Greg and his fiancée Joan, who is becoming acquainted with science fiction through Heinlein and other masters. The usual Heinlein discussion followed. F. M. Busby said that "By His Bootstraps" was the perfect time-paradox story. I claimed that Heinlein has been polishing old rejects and unfinished stories recently, especially the three parts of "Farnham's Freehold", but Vernor Vinge didn't agree with me. My theory is that even H. G. Wells declined in later years, why not Heinlein? That's not saying anything against the man. Buz said that Don Wilcox's "The Voyage That Lasted Six Hundred Years" was a forerunner of "Universe" and I said that Hamilton's "Son of Two Worlds" anticipated "Stranger in a Strange Land", but the general opinion was that Heinlein took all kinds of plots and did them better.

Buz and I discussed science fiction quite a bit. Elinor is a listener, but she was listening to Al Lewis talk about the L.A. police and other mundane subjects. Buz said Elinor types manuscripts for Alan Nourse from tapes. Buz thinks they encouraged Joe Green to get started, first with him "buying" the time of Fred Pohl at the Seacon, then with submitting to NEW WORLDS. Vernor Vinge and Greg Benford talked about the perfect prozine; they would take over ANALOG and improve it; "First fire Christopher Anvil."

There was a bottle of white wine being poured, so I had a quarter-inch in my 7-up glass, taking the place of my annual can of beer. I don't like the taste of beer anyway--can't see why people are crazy about it. Fans don't really drink as much as they claim. Other conventions and parties are wetter than fan cons and parties, and create more trouble for hotels.

Buz's bent empty can of beer reminded me of a Vonnegut story--the one good one--where souls left their bodies in storage and came back occasionally to parade in them, one choosing a tall Texan who crushed beer cans with one hand. Buz says now that's easy since beer cans are aluminum instead of steel. Buz said the prototype of all the recent British disaster stories was "Deluge" by S. Fowler Wright. It was so interesting sitting talking to Buz that I occasionally looked up and saw an entirely different crowd of people in the room.

Joe Rolfe was sitting on the floor discussing Ellison's latest attack on Hollywood. He said that these critics always use the phrase "this town", meaning that they may hate the place but all agree that "this town" is where the action is. After a long time in one place Buz and I decided to circulate, sincere there must be other parties going on. I heard there was a party in Ed Wood's suite on the 11th floor, and of course there was another party waiting for the elevator, and in the elevator.

The 11th floor party was one of those crowded, boisterous ones, and I don't remember a thing about it. Eventually I worked my way into another room, where there was a little group around Poul Anderson. I sat next to Elinor Busby, and there also was Rick Sneary, Stan Woolston, Steve Perrin, Dick Daniels and two or three others I didn't know. Poul is an interesting talker, and I sat there for an hour or so (next to Elinor Busby) listening to him tell about his youth in the South (yes, east Texas); the Byzantine Empire, which, despite Jerry Jacks, lasted a long time; and writing.

Elinor remarked that writers shouldn't expect to be paid for what they enjoy doing, which raised hackles. All I could think of was, how about baseball players? Poul said he could be sailing which he'd rather do than write, that there were



certain obligations, and went on to tell how he had worked on his costume when he could have been enjoying the convention. I think Elinor just thoughtlessly threw this in to make conversation, but it was the same thing M.Z. Bradley said seriously in her speech (which the Busbys didn't attend). IZB mentioned a writer, unnamed but obviously Damon Knight, who wanted to form a union so that writers would get paid, which she thought ridiculous--writers should exist on their goshwow or something. This attitude --that it isn't work unless it's drudgery, and if it's fun it should not be paid for, is impractical in the long run. Does anyone expect artists to sacrifice more than other people, to work at two jobs, one for a living and one for free, without losing some of that valuable goshwow?

From time to time other fans came in and left. Finally Ed Wood came by and said he was going to start throwing people out at 4 AM. After all, this was his bedroom.

The Fitch party had long broken up, I'd heard, so I expected to go back to my room and to bed. As I stepped from the elevator, I found a row of fans sitting on the floor in the corridor, leaning back against the wall and talking quietly. I joined F.H. BUSBY, who said that the house-detective had come by and not objected since we were quiet. There he came again, stepping over us with a greeting. There were about a dozen there, but all I can recall offhand are Ted Johnstone, Mitch Evans, and Barry Gold.

Suddenly the elevator door opened, out popped Jane Lamont; she said, "Is this all that's left?" and popped back into the elevator. We didn't know quite how to take this. Mitch Evans (I had somehow first taken him for Lon Atkins) talked interestingly about many subjects, and Ted Johnstone gave him a punk hotfoot in his sandal, which we watched burn down slowly, but before it did, a door opened, Don Fitch came out of his room, and beckoned us in. So we all went in and the party resumed as before, but quieter.

Ted Johnstone and Mitch Evans discussed old time radio shows, imitating the voices of announcers and telling jokes about the programs. Suddenly it was 5 A.M....

The party broke up and I thanked Don Fitch and Buz and left. Here was the last stereotype, the final quiet party. I went to bed about 5.30, so I had been up 24 hours. I didn't feel a bit tired.

I checked out around noon Tuesday, but all else was anti-climax. There was to be a tournament in Lafayette Park, but I had seen movies of previous ones and it must have been a brawl. I don't know how the Ellison party turned out, or if it was even held. For me the convention was over at that last A.M. party. I gathered up my two bags of new Lovecraft books and old pro-zines and lugged them down to the car. In the huckster room I saw Greg Benford and Lon Atkins planning the perfect fanzine, the Breens looking at books and Ed Wood extolling Ross Rocklynne. And there was Ruth Berman checking out, flying back to Minneapolis. How far do people come to a Westercon anyway? There was the usual number of east coasters, even without the Nycon crowd.

I thought this was a very successful convention, and I enjoyed it very much. I had no complaints about the hotel, nor the committee, nor any of the fans who attended. I'd had a few misgivings about this convention beforehand for three reasons: first, because it was closely bound in with the fan feud of three years ago by its choice of guest of honor; second, because fans look like hippies, and that minor infractions might be magnified; and third, because this was only a week after "June 23rd" and some political controversy might erupt. Nothing of the sort happened; there was no trouble, nor even angry talk, at least that I heard. It was just an ordinary, run-of-the-mill swinging Westercon.

Where did I put that wind-up key?

DONALD FRANSON  
July 24, 1967

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IT'S A STRANGE, STRANGE WORLD WE LIVE IN.....

by

C. W. JOHN

Our esteemed editor wanted to add "Master Jack" to the title there but I suggested that there might be some copyright problems. He says if there is then most of fandom is in trouble.

One of the projects the Albuquerque SF, Hot Air and Gourmand Group has going is book discussion. We are supposed to be, after all, some sort of a literary society and I can't figure out how Tackett got in--he's illiterate. Actually this is sort of a last ditch attempt to keep the membership interested. Which is not necessary either. All that is needed to keep most of that crowd interested is a large supply of food.

So I finally got around to reading DAVY which was written by Edgar Pangborn and published in 1964. Only four years ago. That's not too bad. I may be up to 1968 in another seven or eight years. DAVY is sort of an adult juvenile or maybe an adolescent juvenile. I find it difficult to classify a story in which the main character is only 14 or thereabouts. And I often wonder why an author would have his main character of that age. Nostalgia, perhaps. Maybe it is the way he would have liked to grow up.

At this late date most everyone should be familiar with the book so there is no need to summarize the plot. Mainly it is Davy's world that interests me anyway. The time is oh, maybe 500 years in the future, perhaps Pangborn was specific but if he was I missed it. There was a nuclear war and while the world wasn't destroyed, modern civilization was. The people apparently had gone back a long way, not all the way to barbarism, perhaps, but certainly back to a peasant society. Back to the dark ages. And, like the Dark Ages after the fall of Rome they were sustained by religion.

And there was something very familiar about all this which sent me to the shelves to find out what it was. Leigh Brackett's THE LONG TOMORROW, of course. THE LONG TOMORROW is closer to the close of the atomic war than DAVY is...in the Brackett book only two generations (50 years?) have passed since the great technological civilization of the western world disappeared but already one can see the pattern taking shape. The survivors were the peasants--who else? And the priests who always manage to survive. I suppose that is because it is such a good business. The priest of any religion can convince the peasants that he's got a direct line to salvation and thereby insure his survival.

I don't know if THE LONG TOMORROW provided the inspiration for DAVY, perhaps it is just coincidence, but certainly one can extrapolate from Brackett's post-atomic war world to Pangborn's. If you haven't read either recently then read them as a pair. Read THE LONG TOMORROW first and then take up DAVY as a sort of sequel. Two good books. The Brackett just might have the edge, too.

Miss Brackett is one of the notable exceptions--a woman writer whose works are worth reading. I can think of only one other in the science-fantasy field and that is C. L. Moore. These two are exceptional stand-outs. I think that, on the whole, science-fantasy is a man's field and women just don't fit in. They don't have the feeling for the off-trail and unusual that makes a good S-F writer. It takes a desire for adventure and most women do not have that. Which is probably just as well.

Of course, women'd don't have a feel for politics either but that doesn't keep them out of it. There are some political jobs that seem to be reserved exclusively for women. In this state the post of Secretary of State is always filled by a woman as are the posts of county treasurer and county clerk. So there's three positions I never vote on. I don't think women should be involved in politics and will never vote for one.

Better they should stay home.



Mentioning politics and elections and the like...by the time you read this the professional politicians will have met in the great national conventions and selected the people's choice for us. Not that it really makes any difference. With the exception of George Wallace there is little to choose between any of the candidates. On the Democratic side Senator Eugene McCarthy has based his whole campaign on ending the war in Viet Nam--or at least our involvement in it. Other than that he really hasn't said much. Vice President Humphrey smiles and says we never had it so good. Mr. Nixon says it is a Republican year and Gov. Rockefeller says, yes, and he's the Republican for the job. It really doesn't matter which of these four are elected. A pair of tweedledees and a pair of tweedledums.

George Wallace is something else...yes, indeed, and he scares me. Anybody who would vote for Wallace has a hole in his head--or likely will have. Brrrr.

Since it really makes no difference I will probably vote for the Republican candidate, whoever he turns out to be. This is because I have embraced the political philosophy of the editor of this magazine. Tackett says, always vote against the incumbent--it helps to keep them honest--and besides it is a sort of share the wealth plan--no sense in letting the same bunch get it all.

A couple of months ago Albuquerque's city commission took up the question of flouridating the city's water supply. And you know what happened then. Right. Besides those who were more or less legitimately either pro or anti flouridation it brought out every nut for miles around. The arguments were heated. On the night the commission met to "consider" the question the hall was packed. One dentist dramatically drank a glass of @flouride" to prove it was harmless. ((Editor's note: I just realized that one idiot column writer has had the u and o transposed in fluoride and one idiot editor failed to catch it until now. Gomenasai. RT)) The commission passed the bill--as was expected--amid the protests of the antis who immediately charged off into the night and in less than a week had gathered enough signatures to force a referendum on the question. The city fathers reluctantly called for a vote on 15 July.

Radio, television and the newspapers have been filled with propaganda on fluoridation--most of it in favor. The pro-fluoridationists really managed to pour the money into the campaign. (When one considers that the pros spent thousands and thousands of dollars on this campaign one wonders why...) The antis had less to spend but they seem to have worked a bit harder. The voting was held on the 15th and it was close but the measure failed by around 400 votes. It was the biggest turn out ever for a local election of this sort--over 15,000 went to the polls which is remarkable for Albuquerque. (Our 1960 population was 250,000 and is guesstimated at around 300,000 now. The chairman of the city commission, in a public statement, didn't seem very happy at the outcome but agreed that "the people have spoken!"--some of them anyway.

I didn't vote because it really didn't make any difference to me although if I had I would probably have voted "No" on the theory that if the measure had passed it would have cost us more in taxes in the long run. How about you, old esteemed editor?

C. W. JOHN

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Ed.Note: It makes very little difference to me what you city types do. I don't live in the city and don't have city water and don't pay city taxes but I am encouraged to note that some people finally got off their duffs long enough to force a referendum. It should happen more often.



## WRITINGS IN THE SAND

Egad! I must confess to a certain laziness. Too lazy even to use the stylus any more to do the heading for this column. That's what comes from having an electric typewriter that does whole lines of dots just by holding down the key. Or something.

I thought I should do a bit of sand scribbling here before I get on to the letters. We have a few this time. The problem with the letter section is that most of my former letterhacks now do mailing comments instead. In addition to general distribution Dynatron is also sent through FAPA and N'APA and there's a herd of letterhacks hiding there.

And talking about letterhacking let me suggest that you all rush a buck to Vera Heminger, 30214 108th SE, Auburn, Washington 98002, and tell her to enter your subscription to CRY. Yes. In case you didn't know, CRY is back. Getting to be just like the old days. (Shudder. WRR is back, too.)

FAPA note. Sorry to have missed the last mailing but I missed it by that much. Ye OE received DYNATRON the day the mailing closed. I think mail bound for the east coast has to go around the Horn.

Yes. The sun is over the yardarm. Splice the mainbrace.

According to the cover blurb The Two Best Thieves In Lankhmar (FANTASTIC Aug68) is Fritz Leiber's "Greatest New Gray Mouser Tale", which, when you analyze the statement, may be correct--it depends on how many new Gray Mouser tales Fritz has around. Be that as it may, The Two Best Thieves In Lankhmar is a minor entry in the legend of Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser which really doesn't make it any less enjoyable. Minor Mouser is better than some of the "major" works of certain of the other pros in the field. In this one our two heroes, but recently returned to Lankhmar from points south, attempt, each in his own inimitable way, to swindle a couple of dike jewel dealers. Needless to say the tables get turned and our woebegone heroes end up crying in their wine. Well, Fafhrd does--the Mouser just goes out and loses himself.

The illo is by Jeff Jones who really doesn't impress me--particularly when compared with the St. John reprinted in this issue of FANT.

It would be a delight if some enterprising publisher would collect all the Mouser tales between bookcovers.

Ace has reissued Delany's THE JEWELS OF APTOR which first came out about six years ago in a somewhat shorter version. I missed it the first time around but managed to pick it up this time and am quite happy that I did. This is a delightful Sword and Sorcery tale full of rich description, vivid images and damned fine story telling. The cover blurb quotes Judith Merrill thus: "There is in Delany's work a mytho-poetic power comparable only to that of Sturgeon, Ballard, Vonnegut, and Cordwainer Smith." I wouldn't insult Delaney by comparing him with that crowd of nothing-writers. He is much better than any of them.



The Albuquerque Science Fiction, Hot Air and Gourmand Group held its biannual New Mexican 15 June and I think it came off fairly well. Jack Williamson and Donald Wollheim were the dual GoH's, as they were for the first New Mexican, and each gave a brief speech. Don Wollheim spoke of publishing and the different readers that make up the field--there is apparently only a small overlap between readers of SF books and readers of SF magazines. Dr. Williamson spoke of his current work at ENMU. I acted as moderator (for some obscure reason--Gordie should have but insisted that I take over) and presented both with honorary membership scrolls entitling them to a lifetime membership in the club. Whee.

I was going to do a full-blown Terry Carr type conreport but unfortunately I couldn't remember how many bites it took for me to eat my taco. 143 I think. With the taco (which was quite good) I had one enchilada, one tamale and assorted other Hindu delicacies. Vardeman had roast beef, mashed potatoes, peas, iced tea and a watery looking tapioca worthy of the cook on Lancelot Biggs's ship.

As I said, I was going to do a Terry Carr type report but I neglected to jot down what everyone else had to eat.

I hang my head in shame.

Fannish visitors to the Seitch have been scarce this year although those who did come were more than welcome. Buck and Juanita Coulson, along with some Bruce, pulled in on 17 July, traveling in a wheezy old Rambler. They had two weeks and were touring the Southwest and hoping to make California and then back to Hartford City via Salt Lake City before the Rambler wheezed its last. Speer and Vardeman and Mike Montgomery came down from wherever it is they live out on the east bench and we spent several pleasant hours in talk. What else do fans do when they get together? Speer arrived carrying a copy of VANDY in his brain case so that he could point out a grammatical error on page two and a typo and page six.

Buck declares that the YANDRO mailing list, not FAPA, is the elephant's graveyard mentioning that he had as faithful subbers many fen who had long gafiated from the general fan scene.

As for the Tacketts, they will be heading in the general direction of Baycon in August via Ogden, Utah, the canyons, and Los Angeles. An assortment of Albuquerque fen promise to be in attendance at Baycon and the first one I catch murmuring "Albuquerque in 71" is going to get five in the teeth.

Poul Anderson's Satan's World (ASF May, Jun, Jul, Aug) was something of a disappointment.

The tales of the Polesotechnic League, particularly those that feature Nicholas van Rijn, are favorites of mine and in Satan's World we have not only old van Rijn himself but also the Trader Team and this combination should have added up to a crackerjack story. And it was with lots of action and color and old Nick pulling strings and plotting plots and the Trader Team involved in its usual involved antics. An excellent story of the type Poul Anderson does so well. BUT we were given a big build up about this rogue planet and its comet-like pass of a blue giant star and what the conditions would be like and all that. Yes. And all Poul gave us was just a few paragraphs concerning Satan--the rest of the yarn was set on Luna and other assorted non-remarkable places. I feel cheated.



For many months now I have been amused by a great deal of wordage in fanzines--and elsewhere--about a supposed great New Wave that is sweeping over the science fiction field like an all-engulfing tide. There is supposed to be this New Thing of "taboo breaking avante garde" stories that are "socially meaningful", whatever that means (I may get around to a definition before this little essay is finished). I have news for you. There ain't no such animal. There is a ripple of ineptly produced, badly written stories rehashing a lot of old plots, but a New Wave? Uh-uh.

As I understand it there are supposed to be three different schools to this New Wave: the Milford School, the British School and the Hollywood School. The Milford and British Schools are quite similar producing most of the vague "avante garde" stuff while the Hollywood School, which seems to center mainly around H. Ellison and N. Spinrad, is supposed to be producing those taboo-breaking gummy stories.

Actually all three schools have one thing in common and I think Langdon Jones, one of the newer British writers, summed it up neatly: "SF is the easiest thing in the world to write, much easier than mainstream writing for mainstream writing requires a writer to do much research while with SF you just imagine a situation and write whatever comes to mind."

In other words, lazy writing and making no effort at all to get facts correct or a solid background from which to extrapolate. Anything goes so long as the action is placed in the future on Arcturus XIV or in some "alternate world". What we have then are stories that even the writers no longer label "science fiction" but prefer to call "speculative fiction" instead. Fantasy, if you will, and not very good fantasy at that.

The Milford School seems to specialize in the avante garde stuff that nobody understands. Because nobody understands it we are told it is full of great symbolism and significance. It is difficult for me to believe that the authors of this stuff are really serious. More likely the writers are gleefully putting on the pseudo-literary types who are fawning over them. If they do take themselves seriously, nobody else should.

The British school also goes in for a lot of vague writing that has no real meaning--except it helps to keep the writers eating. In the last couple of years they have been all hung up about the end of the world. One can hope that some enterprising writer will come up with a tale that not only ends the world but the whole new British school of SF, too.

And then there is the Hollywood School and this is where we're really getting down to it, baby. Yessir. This is the school that is turning out all those taboo breaking stories about sex and religion and sex and madness and sex and gore and you name it and let's not forget sex. This is the school that really gets down to the true human being. The real thing. Used to be that our heroes were never portrayed as using a toilet or anything like that but now, well, baby, we not only portray him defecating we come right down to the nitty-gritty: he shits. Yessir.

Which, you see, gives us the origin and content of most of this New Wave stuff.

New Wave. New Thing. Ha! Man and boy--or boy and man rather--I have been reading SF in its various guises for more than 30 years and dabbling in fandom for almost that long and I tell you there is nothing new in the New Wave. Nothing. The themes of these alleged taboo-breaking significant avante garde stories have all been done before although, I must admit, not quite so crudely.

Taboos in SF? I suppose so if you consider only the prozines these days. The prozines are aimed at younger readers and the older generation types who edit and publish the magazines know that certain things are deemed unacceptable for young people. (Whether they really are or not is moot but not germane to this essay.) There have always been taboos in the magazines albeit not in all the magazines. Some



of the old pulps really deserved their reputation. Books, however, have always been more wide open than the zines and much has appeared in book publication that would never have seen print in the magazines. Whenever a writer had a story cooking that he knew he couldn't sell to the magazines he made a book out of it and if it had any merit at all it sold.

One of the points on which New Wave writers keep pounding away is that SF is too specialized, clannish, in-groupish, ghettoized. SF, they say, must be written to formula and this stifles a really great writer. And when they try to experiment within the field those clannish, in-groupish readers jump all over them.

Would I deny it? Would not.

SF is a specialized field just as is the mystery story and western story field. And, as with mysteries and westerns, SF stories are written to formula. The formula is rather elastic, however, and gives the SF writer a goodly amount of room to play around. But, yes, there are limitations and these limitations can be stifling on a writer. The list of writers who felt they had outgrown the field and moved on to other types of writing is quite long. Some of them have been successful, some not. The point is that when they felt they were ready for something better--for a splash in the mainstream of literature, they left the field and had a go at it.

Which brings us back to our New Wave writers and their complaints regarding the SF field. One asks why they don't plunge into the literary mainstream instead of wasting their time in the stfish backwater. The answer, invariably, is "because I love SF". Translated that means they've tried to make it in the mainstream and found they didn't have what it takes. Their nonstf literary efforts were either ignored or else put down by mainstream critics.

So they come back to the stfish backwater and play the role of the big fish in the little pond. They are still too lazy to do the research necessary for good writing but the stf field is small and they can make a lot of noise and, because the fans are young for the most part, our New Wave writers will be listened to and have recommended for awards stories that would be rejected by any mainstream editor.

In the final analysis the New Wave is a wave of noise generated by unimportant writers--unimportant even in the small science fiction field--in an attempt to sell the readers on stories that are poorly written, trivial and meaningless.

ROY TACKETT

After that I think I'd better dash into the lettercol. Editorial comment will, as usual, be set off ((like this)).

SATOSHI HIROTA  
27-1 JINGUMAE 5 CHOIE  
SIBUYA-KU  
TOKYO, JAPAN

I received your fanzine the other day. I would like to thank you for sending me an issue. ((And I want to thank you for commenting on it.)) I wanted to write earlier but because of an exam I was a little busy.

I enjoyed reading Donald Francon's article on the Westerncon the most, but this may be because I have never been to a convention. After reading this I have planned to go to the Japanese SF convention (Tocon 4) going to be held this year somewhere in Tokyo. I will write to you about it if nothing stops me from going. ((Good. I would like very much to have a report on Tokon.))

I was very surprised to see your Daughter Diana, who is only 14 write such interesting "Couple of words". I am 16 years of age myself.

humor mag!

I think you should make DYNATRON into a



WILLIAM DANNER  
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16374

I hadn't read far in "Tokyo File" before I glanced again at the heading and then turned the page to look at the byline at the end. "It must be written by a Japanese," I said, but he certainly is a master of English." The whole thing flows so smoothly that I decided he had lived among English-speaking people. You can imagine my reaction to the statement near the end that "...the production of a single page in English is a whole day's work for me." If just half the fans in this country and in England could write English half as well as Shibano reading most fanzines would be a pleasure instead of a chore. Perhaps some of those fans who publish reams of ungrammatical, misspelled trash should follow Shibano's example and spend a little time on their outpourings instead of letting their two forefingers and their typewriters do their writing without any help.

The thing by Carmie Lynn Toulouse had me fooled for a bit so that I was wondering what this bona-fide report was doing in a fanzine. The last sentence of the fifth paragraph is, of course, the tip off but it is so skillfully inserted that it is almost as likely to fool the unwary as Mark Twain's "...solitary aesophagus floated on motionless wing." Get some more from Carmie, whoever he/she may be. ((She is a genuine anthropologist with a sense of humor.))

There is more truth than poetry in Gilliland's article. After being burned by them several times I swore off any and all book and record clubs, since they are operated by computers with whose operations no mortal dares to interfere. The same is true of subscriptions to practically all the big national magazines, in which case the brainless machines take three months to get a subscription started and very likely never get around at all to making a change of address, from all reports.

Thanks for the dope about Dr. Fox. Since I get no newspaper except the TERRITORIAL ENTERPRISE I hadn't heard about his achievement before. Perhaps when homo Tewler, led by all those Christian Fundamentalists, has succeeded in wiping himself out entirely some of Dr. Fox's cells may be left to start things over again. In this case the final result may eventually become civilized. Who knows? ((Who cares? Computers can be handled very easily by folding, spindling or screwing up the magnetic ink.))

PHIL MULDOWNEY  
7, THE ELMS,  
STOKE,  
PLYMOUTH, DEVON,  
GREAT BRITAIN

Another DYNATRON naytheless. Born on the wings of a dove perchance? ((A hawk mayhap.)) No, so unromantic, in the crabby old hands of the postman.

A never ending spate of sparkling comments! Perhaps you will be agnised to learn that NEW WORLDS has survived (at least for the time being) and the latest issue came out on July 5, No. 182 to be exact. Whether anybody could be bothered if it did sell or not I don't know. It seems now to have become the home of the "high" intellectual. The bright young men in their flying machines. As for Smith's, they are rapidly becoming the prudés-in-chief. Could not really care less about NEW WORLDS but this sort of extra-legal censorship annoys me no end. This month they have ended up banning the July issues of PLAYBOY and a new magazine, INTERNATIONAL PLAYMEN. ((INTERNATIONAL PLAYMEN? Cooo. Thoroughly agree about the censorship angle. We have the same sort of problem with the Beck News Agency, our local distributor. The problem exists because one agency has a monopoly. As with any monopoly, whether governmental or private the attitude is the public be damned.))

Ah no! The sailors won the competition because they have had years of practice. I mean the condition of British ships nowadays, the whole service is one long jigsaw. Now where the hell did this sentence come from? ((What does it pertain to?))

You asked why I find ANALOG boring. Well, not having the time for an essay at the moment, nor indeed the inclination to do the research, just a few thoughts off the cuff. The traditional fare in ANALOG nowadays (note that, not in years past) seems to be the general type of scientific



problem story, load it down with a whole hocus-pocus of heavy facts (which may well interest your bright young technologist but do not interest me), and then see how it is solved. Maybe the fault is in me, I am no scientist. But then again I do like the Hal Clement or Arthur Clarke story where the scientific problem is reasonably clearly explained to the lay mind, and I can understand at least some of what is going on. Now Campbell seems to be aiming at a specific audience: the scientist who likes to dabble in a little speculative (Ecch to you, too!) science. Okay, so that audience does not include me.

Second, Campbell seems to have a number of stereotyped basic plot guises, which he seems to trot out again, maybe in different clothes, but still the same basics. I am not an ANALOG expert, but the tricky earthmen conning bewildered aliens is one and I am sure there are others.

Then to the writing. In many cases the style is absolutely atrocious. Okay, one does not expect the bewildering word play and pyrotechnic display of a Zelazny every time, but Campbell seems to have perfected a peculiar form of near journalese (which is not necessarily bad in its right place) that often brings the whole magazine down to the level of uninspired mundanity. Not only hack writing, but basically uninspired, a sort of tired writing.

As for characterisation...well, sf admittedly has never been strong on this, sacrificing it for idea content, etc. In the old ASTOUNDINGS of the 40s and 50s you (or at least I) accepted it for the sheer entertainment of the idea and fun of many of the stories. But now so many of the stories have become so dreary, so empty, like a lifeless husk, the absence of nearly all real characterisation sticks out all too painfully. Papier mache was never the best material, but now, the uniform bright young men and comradely girl next door women are terrible.

To sum up: basically ANALOG has become a tired old zine and John W. an old grouchy man who will not accept hardly anything new and will not deviate from the fiction path that he has trod for 30 years. All laurels to him, he has done many wonderful things, but whereas many of his original authors have changed and developed John W. has encysted and is now running a magazine that is only a husk. All the sf authors have come to know John Campbell and his foibles, and many seemingly no longer bother with ANALOG although it is still a high-paying market. How many "name" writers are there now in ANALOG? Anderson, Harrison, Herbert, Garrett and I cannot think of many more. Although this may be a misleading criterion, it is an interesting one.

So why do I find ANALOG boring? Because the things I look for in sf--thought provoking writing, entertainment, enjoyment, etc., are no longer there.

Of course this is a great over-generalisation. There is some good stuff in ANALOG. I enjoyed THE TIME MACHINED SAGA immensely, the latest Poul Anderson story has me (although even here there are signs of stiffness) and I liked the Weyr series by Anne McCaffrey. But the exception is not the rule.

((I wish I could take issue with your arguments but, unfortunately, most of what you say about ANALOG is true. Let us consider the Aug68 issue. The serial is Part IV of Satan's World by Poul Anderson which, as I mentioned earlier, is good but disappointing. The Baalim Problem by Bruce Daniels and Appointment on Prila by Bob Shaw are minor problem stories. The concept of the Gray Man in the latter is interest-provoking but not developed. The Fuglemen of Recall by Wodhams is, I presume, meant to be humorous. It fails. I have not yet read Specialty so will not comment on it. Jump back 20 years to Aug48: Dreadful Sanctuary by Russell, Time Trap by Harness, Smaller Than You Think by Gray, Dawn of Nothing by Chandler, The Monster by van Vogt. 25 years ago, Aug43: The Infant's Brother by Leiber, Padgett's Endowment Policy, M33 in Andromeda by van Vogt, When is When by Jameson, One Way Trip by Boucher and C. L. Moore's Judgement Night. In the lettercol of that Aug43 issue John Campbell says, "One thing Astounding would very seriously like to do is to help



((more people retain the realization that the future must be different--but can be better." But it isn't. With the exception of Satan's World there is not a story in the August 1968 ANALOG that matches up to any of those of 20 or 25 years ago...As for name writers, well, I'll give JWC credit in that he seems to be developing a stable of new names but what good are new names if they write the same tired stories. I would like very much to see ANALOG become ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION.))

VERA W. HELINGER  
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98002

I was most interested by your comment that you were beginning "to suspect stfletterhacks are potentially a most powerful group." I am convinced it could be, and probably could move mountains, if it found a mountain worth moving.

Johnny Carson mentioned on a recent program that about the only way to get something done, or get a situation changed was for people to make their opinions known through letters, lots of them. He was at the time urging the listeners to take action about the pollution problems. Any such references to "letter power" always catches my attention; I am at present engaged in stirring some of that power in an attempt to get the sampling methods used by Nielsen reviewed by the Federal Trade Commission. A crusade? Why not? There must be a better way to gauge the tastes of hundreds of thousands of viewers than those reports from 1200 households. So often, a program condemned by Nielsen ratings to cancellation wins all sorts of popularity polls, in magazines or newspapers. I feel an improvement of sampling methods is de rigueur. In case anyone accuses me of single-minded obsession, I would hasten to say I have quite a few other pet peeves too; but let's take them one at a time. ((I could, I suppose, get worked up in a letter writing campaign about air and water pollution, but not at all about what sort of nonsense is shown on television or how the programs are rated. TV, considered as an entertainment medium, is of relatively little importance.))

Why buy a low priced car when for the same amount of money you can buy a high priced car?

STEVE JOHNSON  
1018 N. 31ST ST.  
CORVALLIS, ORE.  
97330

You know the English language is a fascinating thing; that's why I'm almost majoring in it in college. ((Almost?)) Fascinating. For instance, the position of the words in an English sentence is quite important to the meaning of the sentence, grammar aside--in many furrin tongues which have declensional endings and such esoteric devices, word order can be shifted about without damaging the intrinsic meaning while giving some variety to one's sentence structuring. But in English--like, if I were to begin this letter with "Roy, dear" instead of Dear Roy people might start thinking strange things about me. ((Yeth.))

Re the death of Stobler, don't you think it might be a case of too small a membership as much as anything else? Small intimate apas are nice, but if a member or two has to drop out, the group might be hurt irreparably. ((No. CAPA is limited to 5 members and is now into its 8th year with no signs of slowing down.))

Alexis Gilliland is no Krenkel, but his interior decorating sure says something. For a future cover artist, might I suggest Dick Flinchbaugh? ((Go ahead.))

Have you seen the series LIFE is running on ancient Egypt? It fair reeks of innumerable stories from WEIRD TALES. And speaking of WT, will Edco be back to review some more issues of that magazine? Or perhaps Unusual Stories or some other 30ish title? ((One hopes so. Edco?))

I suspect I should mention stf in this letter so: James Schmidt's The Witches of Karres is a very good book. If ISL needs a project maybe they could reprint Eney's FANCYCLOPEDIA. ((ISL doesn't need a project--it needs money.))



BILL WOLFENBARGER  
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I'm glad you printed Alexis Gilliland's thing on machines. The present American (& Western) culture is sterile from over-organization & people have virtually become one-man organization centers. We're hearing now of IBM cards which will pigeonhole us into those senseless slots, where every human being will be one punctured IBM card, portraying everything we've ever done. ((Do not fold, spindle or mutilate)) It's pretty funky & it's really very scary. 1984 is coming early, baby. So what can you do to avoid this? ((Go straight from 1983 to 1985.)) Can you believe that some people actually look forward to this?? ((Yes.)) One thing you can do is quietly say "no" & just cut the whole system & then you become a social outlaw of one sort or another, & they'll pass more sill-ass personal laws to curb you & if you still resist they'll track you down & get rid of you & your free mind any way they can. That's what history is all about. But there's another history, a freer history. It tells you that Man is in touch with the whole universe & that all men are brothers, & that even animals & plants & rocks & dust are part of us, & that there is a complete integration of all forms & that that is what Life really is all about. This History also says that the best thing you can do is to realize this & find out where it's at & start making love & never stop, it tells you to make music & all beautiful things.

GENE KLEIN  
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JACKSON HEIGHTS, N.Y.  
11372

Colophon--yes, I learned the meaning of that one about a year ago, but up until that time I always thought of it as another word created in fandom--as a matter of fact I thought it was a "Color Phone"--meaning, I guess, a very colorful person that talks on the phone or someone who rambles well...We each have to grow somewhat I suppose...

Ed Cox--why is it I received one issue of his AUSLANDER (which I responded to by sending a loc) and never heard from again? What did I do? ((You killed AUSLANDER--that's what.))

Regarding the Pyramid-like Structure--Yes. Have heard of it. Allan Burke (whose program just might reach New Mexico)((not to my knowledge)) keeps referring to the Bermuda Triangle which just might be this structure. ((Do you think so?)) Recently a young member of his audience volunteered to explain to him just what the triangle was...((Did he?))

this loc is too short; what can I do? ((Use longer paper.))

Damnit, but

ED COX  
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ARLETA, CALIF.  
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The proper use of "Alors" is actually "ALORS!" meaning for everybody-row-for-godsakes-the-saracens-are-gaining-on-us! ((That's most interesting.))

Now that 35/6th issue of Dynatron, which is probably the 36th altho one has their choice according to the colophon. Or maybe you were setting a trap for nit pickers. ((Wait'll Speer gets hold of that bit about one--theirs.)) You didn't say that this issue was the 35th((True)) (having just mentioned above that, that it indeed were the 36th) but that the 35th issue is devoted to, etc., etc., which indeed is true.

This is celebrate the use of "indeed" week here at the House on Filmore Strasse. ((Indeed?))

I think moving the Letter Colyum to the front saves people from leafing thru the fanzine first thing. Doesn't everybody read the letter-column first. I've read dozens, even scores, of issues of PLANET STORIES, FFM, TWS, SS, FN and even a few issues of WEIRD TALES letter-column first, not to mention not a few issues of DYNATRON...

lettercol first...))

Doesn't everybody? ((I don't read Dynatron's

I hope Alexis Gilliland was Putting Us All On. I mean, despite various truisms about politics and vested interests holding sway, as far as machines go, humanity isn't being taken over by them. Machines are, after all, tools.



Thank god for the proliferating family of computers! With the population expanding as it is, that means that many more records to be kept, whether simply birth-death-marriage, etc., statistics or automobile registration. Records kept by insurance companies, merchandising houses' inventory records, airline reservations, scores of major things. I suppose all this should be done by an army of people sitting on high stools with quill pens!? ((Why not? Why is it necessary to keep all these records anyway? )) Take away the automatic telephon dialing system and there aren't enough women in the whole country to do the "Hello Central" bit. But maybe his solution to the population problem is the answer. After all, it is the sheer numbers of people that bring on dependance on the machines. Of course, there'll have to be a lot more people around before parking lots are greatly needed in the Appalachians. ((I would favor sterilization of all women after they have given birth to their second child.))

Hey, you ol' HCRT, you didn't have to go and Tell Everything, did you? Well, you did anyhow and you've had it...as far as Anne is concerned. "Is that going thru FAPA?" she asked. "And to lot of other people as well," I said. I won't go into any more details but you'll hear about it. ((I will wear my armor.))

~~XXXX~~

FROM:  
Roy Tackett  
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TO:

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