

fanc 96

THE ONE YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR—
ALL THREE OF YOU...Oct.-Nov. 1963:

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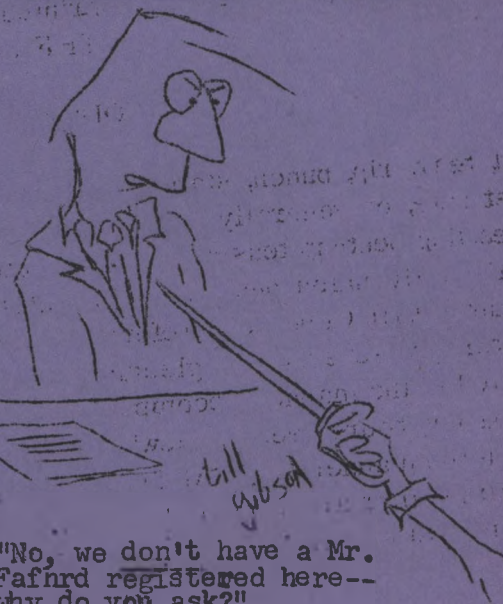
THE LONG WEEKEND% OUR DISCONTENT

DISCONNECT DEM FANS, DEM STF FANS... Perhaps in some obscure way symbolic of the whole con weekend was the greeting I got from a NYC Sanitation Dept. truck when I climbed out of a taxicab at 73rd & 3rd at 10 AM Friday 30 Aug., preparing to make a dash for the waiting Lupoff Cadillac convertible: the moment my feet hit the street, the truck (on the other side of the taxi from me) suddenly turned on its hoses and drenched me, having not even the excuse that my feet were dirty....

As one might expect from the occupants of the car (Lupoffs, bhob Stewart, Chris Steinbrunner, Will J Jenkins), conversation swung, but it swung more around fantasy films and comicbooks than around SF. Dick Lupoff hinted about the speech he would be giving at the con, promising us how (among other things) he would characterize dedicated comics fandom as the sickest--whereupon bhob roused himself from a sunburnt doze and revealed that he is, or at least should be known as, the Forry Ackerman of comics fandom. It seems that about 10 years ago, bhob's EC FAN BULLETIN--the first comics fmz ever--inspired Ron Parker's HOOHAH!, from which the rest sprang up...

Arriving in Washington, we met with a gawdawful traffic tangle, getting lost a couple of times, but pulling into the hotel about 5PM. The first fans we saw were Sid Coleman & Dave van Arnam. Bellhops refused to take the Lupoff luggage until Dick & Pat had registered, regardless of protests or offers of tips: regulations or something. The Lupoffs were naturally reluctant to leave their bags in the outer corridor through which cars passed to be parked, for fear of getting them confused with others', lost, or stolen; and registration would be a loooong drag, as room clerks were swamped behind four long lines moving rather more slowly than army mess-hall lines. Several fans helped the Lupoffs out, and Dick remarked that it served the bellhops right: if they wouldn't earn their tips by carrying bags when they were really needed, they wouldn't be getting any tips at all. In much the same vein, he later mentioned to me that though their reservation had been for a room large enough to accommodate two cots for Don & Maggie Thompson, a room clerk refused this at the last moment when he learned that the Thompsons were adults--alleging "fire hazard", but really wanting to force them to take a much larger and more expensive

ROOMS



room: and so the Thompsons, instead, slept free in the traditional fannish manner. In such ways did various fans retaliate against an unusually unsympathetic hotel management.

Within a few seconds after I arrived, someone dragged me over to meet a photographer from the Washington Post. A reporter had been around most of the afternoon, interviewing fans and trying to get a coherent story on fandom and the con, and several had recommended that he look me up. He couldn't wait beyond 5 PM, but the photographer with him did, and as a result a bright eyed and bushy-bearded photo of me (captioned "~~...fan~~ whose IQ tops 200", and I don't know who supplied that description) appears on page A6 of the Post for Sat. 31 Aug., right above those of 13-year-old Mark Frank, erroneously billed as the youngest fan present, and Forty Ackerman. It's one of the few good pictures ever taken of me, partly because I was delightedly watching a girl in the same room, and was less camera-conscious than usual. The newspaper story itself doesn't mention me, but summarizes interviews with Sandy Cutrell, Les Nirenberg, Forry, Dan Caldwell and Dave Kyle. Aside from misdating Nyxon I as "1930", the picture of fandom as given by Stephen C. Rogers, the Post reporter, is fairly accurate as far as it goes, stressing fandom as an outgrowth of SF readership, and its members as having far broader areas of common interest than SF, and attending cons largely for social reasons. He quotes Forry as claiming that monster stories--an extension of Grimm's fairy tales--are a stepping-stone up to SF and a needed escape--FMoF is thus "Halloween 6 times a year". I heard later, but was not able to verify, that Les Nirenberg had attempted to give the reporter a snow job. Several different sources claimed that he greeted Rogers with a huge toothy grin and a line of baloney that would have made Laney wince: "Shake! D'ye want to meet the Average Fan? I'm the Average Fan--I'm a fag! Shake!" And that he tried to push PANIC BUTTON as the average fanzine. But probably this will prove to have been grossly exaggerated.

As no program items were scheduled for that evening, fans congregated alternately in the Art Show Room (though the artwork and ~~hucksters'~~ wares were not yet all in place) and in the corridors. One of the house fuzz objected to this last and finally removed all chairs and loungers from the halls. In the meantime, one I.D.Beale, in town primarily for the 300,000 integrationists' March on Washington, made an unpleasant scene by loudly telling all & sundry that Whoever Was Not With Us at the demonstration was Nowhere and probably a Dirty N----rhating Segregationist in addition. Beale (age about 18) claimed a sale to Fantastic, but provided no details. I managed to scoot off during one of his harangues.

And in the Art Show room the company was more congenial. Judith Ann Lawrence, the NY artist whose paintings made such a splendid impression at the Chicon, and who was to take honors at the costume ball, showed up, and I can testify that she is one of the more appealing people I've met in fandom, but I'll leave it to Ted Johnstone to provide further details, as he spent much more time with her. Les Nirenberg--much missed at the last two cons--circulated, taking PANIC BUTTON subs, and giving out IBM cards printed on the back:

THE PANIC BUTTON
presents
YOUR OWN I.B.M. CARD
for you to

fold, tear, rip, punch, staple, crush, crumple, spindle, deface, mutilate, spit on,
masticate, or generally wreak havoc with, in the process of
Releasing pent-up tensions and frustrations. Sublimation is dangerous.

Cast out all inhibitions. It is absolutely worthless. Destroy it!

This is what Nathan Cohen was referring to in his col, praising PB's annish, quoted in FANAC 94. -- I later saw several fans gleefully doing what Nirenberg suggested, and several of these cards treated in the manner recommended.

The next few hours seem somewhat confused; I recall them mostly as a series of vignettes, somewhat in the manner of my Midwestcon report: Ron Ellik on a couch, one arm around Ann Dinkelman, the other around Pat Oswalt ... John W. Ghod Jr. being positively affable, surprisingly so (he later sat at Pelz's banquet table) ... Fangab being drowned out by noise from the 5 or 6

other conventions simultaneously in session (the montebankious of the "Sign a Fraps" as someone dubbed the group of high school fraternities) ... David Trotter attempting a felt-pen portrait of me, goofing it up, putting a lot of red lines over the original black, and later entering it in the Art Show under the name "Messiah" (no, I don't know if it actually sold) ... the trek up to the N3F room, which shortly became extremely crowded as nobody seemed to know where any good parties were being held ... meeting Dave Ettlin, asking him searching questions about the N3F Tape Bureau in line with Harry Warner's criticism of it in FANAC 93, and receiving (to my surprise) completely sensible and mature-sounding answers, without the slightest hint of Daugherty Project about them (friendships begin in the damndest ways, don't they, Dave?)--and the October TNFF proves it ... working a ouija board with a couple of neos (Robert Peeler and Dave Keil), obtaining names of Hugo winners save for Little Fuzzy (which everyone expected to get it), Anaï og (ditto) and Emsh (ditto ditto) but correctly predicting the rest, including No Award for drama; correctly ascertaining that Avram & Grania Davidson were at that moment somewhere in Ohio (MZB told me later on of getting a pocsarcd from them, pmkd Madison, Ohio, over that weekend) and that they would take three months from the time of departure to get permanently settled (see CoA, FANAC 95) ... Phyllis, alias "Lis", Brodsky collecting signatures of people supposedly willing to join her at 9:30 Saturday a.m. to climb the stairs of the Washington MONument in a "protest march against protest marches", and actually getting Asimov and Hal Clement (although they didn't wake up in time) among the more than 25 signers--from what I hear, perhaps a half dozen fans managed to make the pilgrimage ... The FANASS group, stabilizing as Nirenberg, Gary Deindorfer, Gerber, Demmon, Koning, Lee Thorin, Jon White and a few others (some reportedly booted out of the N3F room by Janie Lamb at one point), starting out as a recreation of the Pittcon Quadrumvirate and ending up a couple of days later diminished in numbers and on the icy side, owing partly to the unfortunate effects of liquor on a couple of members, and partly to the still more unfortunate effects of Lee Thorin on others ... Paul Williams's suggestion that the con adopt as its official anthem a folksong intituled "Dis Con is bound for glory..." ... A house superfuzz calling himself the "District Director" (of what?) busybodying his way into the N3F room and insisting that all doors (including inner ones) be kept closed, under threat of closing up the whole operation ...

ME TO YOUR SPEAKER TAKE : Being very hungry on Saturday morning, I went out with the Lupoffs for brunch at some local greasy spoon (recommended by a fan whose stomach must have been made of sheet lead, Teflon, or something equally inert), instead of accepting an invitation from Jim Blish and Ajay Budrys to join them in bar-hunting--and I didn't stop being sorry until 2 or 3 days after the con. Whether or not milk might have been available at the bar, the food at the greasy spoon was abominable and probably contributed in some measure to the diarrhea which plagued me until well after I returned to NYC. (I hope we can get together at the Pacificon, Jim.) We all chortled over Jim's report that Night Shapes is to be filmed shortly, on location (!) in Upper Kenya, starring Dorothy Malone, and including every cliché Jim had stuffed into it...though it's problematical whether many film viewers (if any) will see it as the deadpan spoof intended. (The reception of The Raven may be a good sign, though.)

I didn't see this, and heard about it only later, but it seems that John Boardman, in his sorcerer's robes as intended for the costume ball, broke up a swordfight between Fritz Leiber and L. Sprague de Camp. Swordplay seems to have been a common feature of this ERB-haunted con; a number of other instances of this kind of thing remain to be mentioned, and if there was one fan wearing that sort of ironmongery, there were twenty or more.

Immediately afterwards, and just about on time, George Scithers officially opened the con program, introducing committee members, then bringing on Jim Blish. Blish's speech was titled "An Answer of Sorts". I missed part of it, but what I did hear was pretty much along the lines of his WARHOON columns; Ettlin's or Dietz's tapes, or the Kemp Proceedings, should provide a Fair Witness version. According to Blish, British reviewers, publishers and editors are far and away more competent than their American counterparts in handling SF, and one big reason for

this is that the Britishers care about SF as literature (whereas the American purveyors regard it as a commodity--as so much kitsch.) Blish remounted his hobbyhorse of having prozine lettercols function as straws in the wind. I won't repeat his arguments here--go read 'em in the last few Wrhns; they're valid.

Indisposition of some kind forced Jim to interrupt his speech, and Scithers was confronted with the problem of having to fill in the next half hour or so with program items before the pros scheduled to appear had arrived. Silverberg and Leiber (substituting for the still unarrived Ed Emsh) began their "Ring Around an Illustration" panel, joined later on by Emsh. Agberg went into detail about what he called the "natural war between artists and writers", whereby writers often get presented with a coverillo and are expected to account, in their story, for every little detail of the illo--often being able to do so only through patent subterfuges, sometimes even in deus ex machina fashion. (Randy Garrett once even went to the length of inventing a REMSHAW Drive to account for Emsh's signature on a vacuum tube.) Emsh admitted as much, saying "I do a cover--writing the story's their problem", but adding that he is delighted when authors can make any sense out of his kind of nonsense. "The problem is when they write a story I have to illustrate." Fritz Leiber asked if Emsh had a cover story in mind when doing a coverillo. Emsh cracked, "You're assuming I have a mind!" (Chuckles.) "A coverillo is a poster with a gimmick; a story is an evolution, and I don't try to tell it in the painting." Leiber then wanted to know to what degree editors or publishers dictated to cover artists what to paint. Emsh said, predictably, that they vary a great deal. Agberg managed to get off one more good crack--"Tell me, God, do you paint in a dirty bathrobe?"--during the ensuing discussion of cover stories which didn't get into the zines for which they were originally intended, or into the wrong issues, and of covers unrelated to "cover" stories, etc.

I noticed that the Presidential Room (where all this was going on) was too small; several extra rows of chairs had to be brought in during the proceedings, and even then fans were sitting on the floor and the steps at the back of the hall. Many of the latecomers apparently had just come from John Magnus's fanzine huckstering setup (in a room next to the Art Show room); he had many thousands of zines for sale, but the only one I could have used--HYPHEN 2--went to Paul Williams or someone just before I got there. Jon White bought a bunch of ancient FAPAazines, including some issues of HORIZONS of WWII printage, but Paul Williams--who spent hours looking through the lot--was probably the biggest buyer.

Since the program was still ahead of schedule even after the Agberg/Emsh/Leiber panel, Scithers dragooned Katy McLean and Lester Del Rey into delivering a couple of extempore speeches. Katy insisted that there was very little creative thinking going on in present-day society, but that pros and fans were among the few who were doing any, and that eventually their ideas filtered down at nth-hand to mundane society--a variant of Rog Phillips's "People are Parrots" notion. NRA was nothing more nor less than an imitation of certain features of Bellamy's "Looking Backward"; other social experiments of the last few decades have been ultimately inspired by more or less sfnal utopias. Technocratic cubicles were eventually replaced in turn by decentralized experiments along the lines of Eric Frank Russell's "...And Then There Were None." (Or perhaps Paul Goodman's Paradigm II in Communitas, which is a blueprint for utopographers.) In line with the "give the public what it wants" idea, cigarette ads used to feature sexy femmes, but they now include fresh air (!!) and greenery. Moral: consider carefully what you put into your utopian thinking/writing...you'll eventually get it! (Attention Ted Sturgeon, RAHeinlein...)

Del Rey wasn't really arguing with her, even though he was supposed to be replying to her speech. The real barbarians (said he), so far from being in the jungles (or the Hyborian Legion!), are on Mad Avenue; and it doesn't really matter how conformist our artifacts, so long as our intellects remain free. (Applause...but I wonder how long that last remark could remain true, given a sufficiently thorough MR program. Cf. Gravy Planet...) Lester then attacked the educational system, more incisively than its recent KIPPLE critics had managed to do. One unfamiliar point: Remedial Reading has become a Religion. He also defined a "conformist" as one who chronically agrees with himself. (I tried to get him to clarify this pregnant but obscure aphorism

later on, but he couldn't help much as he didn't recall exactly what he meant at the time. As nearly as I can make out, it can be understood in terms of its antonym, the healthy or open-minded type (including at least some stfnists), flexibly able to change hiser mind when confronted with new facts which shake up previous acceptances; someone not system-bound or otherwise doctrinaire.) Though fans & pros used to be a tiny minority of nonconformists, few remain so now; by & large, SF has ceased to argue with itself, and has become conformist. While piously quoting the rubric that SF should be Adult, we give Hugos to writers of juvenilia for juveniles; we have joined the barbarian mainstream. (And Lester inserted here a number of barbs intended for J.W. Ghod Jr.) Though sex has been in SF ever since 1926, the fan reaction to it has always been--and still continues to be--"how daring!". Conformity is all in the mind; but SF had better be in the gonads as well.

These two speeches didn't sound as disjointed as my report makes them seem. Katy and Lester are smooth and forceful both, and all I tried to do was touch on some of their more salient ideas. I admire anyone who can instantaneously organize an extempore speech rather than merely nattering to pass time; clearly Katy and Lester merit such admiration. --Their speeches brought the program back to within a few minutes of its original schedule, and Scithers lost his slightly worried look.

"Hippocrene & Hyperspace", the next item, at 2:10 brought on Jim Blish, Gordy Dickson, L. Sprague de Camp, Fritz Leiber and Ted Cogswell reciting or reading some of their own poetry. Among the poems I recall in particular: Fritz Leiber re-established the old and too-often-forgotten truth that the poet's primordial function is invocation--specifically invocation of the Goddess as Muse. His brief poem sent the chills chasing each other up and down my spine, the hairs individually standing on end--the true poetic frisson which was poor tormented A.E.Housman's test for a real poem. (I hope this and other similar ones by you get published, Fritz.) Cogswell's long essay sounded like a brilliantly improvised series of verbal/visual punning free-associations--a technique reminiscent of some of the hallucination sequences in the "Nighttown" episode in Joyce's Ulysses. I would be reluctant to judge it in more detail without seeing it.

Blish resumed his interrupted speech at 2:40; I earlier summarized the ideas I recall him putting across. Afterwards, Scithers or someone introduced notables, saying that "Those of you who do not get introduced may console yourselves with the thought that it's better if they ask why you weren't introduced, than why you were." "Notables" consisted of Isaac Asimov, H.Beam Piper, Randy Garrett, J.Ben Stark, Larry Ivie, Forry, SaM & Christine (and the applause died with the latter name, exactly as last year), Dirce Archer, JWCjr., Will J Jenkins (not to be confused with Will F "Murray Leinster" Jenkins), Julius Schwartz, and nobody else. I wondered then at the omission of pros such as Wollheim, Pohl, Hal Clement, Sky Miller, Willy Ley, etc., or of BNFs such as the Coulsons, Kemp, Leman, Dave Kyle and many others.

One of the most surprising, and funniest, program items followed. This was the Lupoff/Ivie slide talk ("Me To Your Leader Take") on SF illustration & art in comic books. Again, I can only touch on the highlights, particularly since many were purely visual: Despite the lack of any post-WWII rationale, there were approximately ONE THOUSAND imitators of Superman in the comic books (a clear attempt to cash in on a seemingly successful formula). ... Turning their own logic (?) back on them, the notorious Comics Code Authority (which was created primarily to kill EC) must be credited with ^{some} responsibility for an over 20% jump in juvenile crimes of violence which occurred within six months after promulgation of the notbrious Code--a jump greater than any occurring in any other 6-month period before or since in history! ... Finlay's later work, after he became a worn-out hack, displayed obvious plagiarism from earlier comicbook art, especially and specifically that of Frank Fazzetta (sp?). ... But the real overlap between SF and comics comes in that many of the comicstrip/comicbook characters, from the original Anthony "Buck" Rogers to the present day, have been SF, and many SF pros--Kuttner, H.L.Gold, Alfred Bester, Edmond Hamilton, Otto Binder among others--have written comicstrip or comicbook continuity. It was ultimately this SF/comics overlap which inspired XERO and COMIC ART...but (and this is a big but) Lupoff blasted comics fandom, by & large, as largely a sick imitation of ours. For

kids, comics fandom is a blind alley if it does not lead (as Forry fondly hopes monster fandom will lead) into something bigger. SF reading can lead to a wider appreciation of literature, utopian and otherwise; monster fandom can lead, maybe, to SF: but comicbooks! You can grow up with SF (said Dick), but only grow old with comicbooks. Adult comicbook fans, serconly or dedicatedly devoted to their subject, seem offen sick or immature. Some neo raised his hand and asked, "Do you realize that this is the nonfan attitude to SF fans?" Lupoff replied, in ringing tones, "THEY'RE WRONG!!" Tumultuous and well-deserved applause.



Now why can't they
make up their #&&&
minds!?

Hanging onto the schedule for dear life (and so returning to con chairman tradition), Scithers brought in Willy Ley at 4:30 for a talk billed as "Mysteries of Astronomy", but which was really a sort of continuation of his Chicon speech. It developed out of a question some boy had asked him: "Now that Venus turned out to be so different, what planet would it be safe to write about?" Papa Villy briefly referred to the recent findings that Venus has a probable surface or near-surface temperature of ca. 800° F. and a pressure above 150 psi, and the Sagan theory that Jupiter's greenhouse effect might be intense enough to produce water oceans much like those on earth. He then described the OAO, or One & Only Orbiting Astronomical Observatory project (a "streetcar" satellite with a payload of different instruments within a 2300-lb. casing). He said he had suggested to the Big Brass that one of these OAO's be put into Syncom orbit around the sun, some 1,500,000 miles from the photosphere, to study sunspots. Considering the effects of sunspots on communications alone,

not to mention their putative effects on biological, psychological and business cycles, this would seem an absolute top priority application.

The rest of his lecture dealt principally with the moon and Mars. Locomotion on the moon would be a real problem: much of the surface was, in all probability, volcanic glass smashed up by micrometeorites and larger meteorites. Walking on the moon would therefore be like walking on sand full of broken bottles. The most elegant solution yet proposed for this problem is wheels consisting of leaf springs; the greater the pressure on them, the larger the "footprint" or area of contact.

A beautiful solution to the problem of communicating with colonists on Mars, if any (optimists think it will happen by 1975, pessimists by 1985), is to orbit a Telstar around Mars. But until then the problem of establishing for certain whether or not life exists on Mars is unsolved. An unmanned landing on Mars may teach us much, but apparently not answer that one question, despite many ingenious attempts at solutions. Dr. Wolfgang Vishniac devised the "Wolftrap", a transparent neutral culture medium for bacteria. Exposed to Martian bacteria, if they would grow on it at all, it would become turbid and acid, and telemetering could report both conditions. But dust, ozone, and other atmospheric contaminants (such as the oxides of nitrogen JWCjr postulates), could have similar effects...and a negative result could mean instrument failure rather than lack of bacteria. Dr. Levin's "Project Gulliver", using sticky tapes to pick up bacteria, reel them in, and similarly culture them, fails for the same reasons. Oyama's (and others') suggestion of gas chromatography to identify amino acids or hydrocarbons from any samples of Martian land mechanically collected at unmanned landings fail because the presence of amino acids and/or hydrocarbons does not indisputably establish the presence of life. American scientists think petroleum requires living organisms; Soviet scientists think not, and the question is still moot. (I would add that the famous Miller experiments at U. of Chicago in 1953 prove that amino acids did not require the presence of life.) And after a discussion among scientists on these topics, a woman representing Lockheed complained that she couldn't report to her employers what spacemen's main activities at a manned Mars landing would be, as nobody would accept that said main activities would consist of putting samples into sealed jars! The speech was warmly and deservedly applauded.

SATURDALIA : Returning from supper and gradually edging toward the Presidential Room, where the costume ball was to take place, I spotted a tall slender figure with a Sensitive Fannish Face, did a double-take and went over to him immediately, one finger pointing at him and the other outstretched in greeting. "Harry Warner!" Harry--without badge or other identification--was surprised at being recognized by a stranger, but identified me in turn by my bushy trademark. We quickly became at ease with each other, and wandered into the Presidential Room together, discussing FAPAn and fanhistorical stuff.

Scithers did not exaggerate: the setup for the costume ball was very nearly ideal, except that the public address system was fouled up to the extent that announcements of names and titles of costumed characters frequently came out unintelligibly--no fault of his or the committee's, though one might have asked the hotel to test the equipment before the con. As a result, I left Harry and circled around the raised platform, listening to judges' comments and to Asimov's sidesplitting asides (a typical one: when Steve Tolliver, dressed in nothing much more than his own muscles, paraded before the judges as a Red Martian warrior from "Chessmen of Mars", Asimov stage-whispered "Beefcake yet!"), and verifying names and titles on my own, in the event that I might actually write a conreport--at this juncture I wasn't yet sure that I would even draft one.

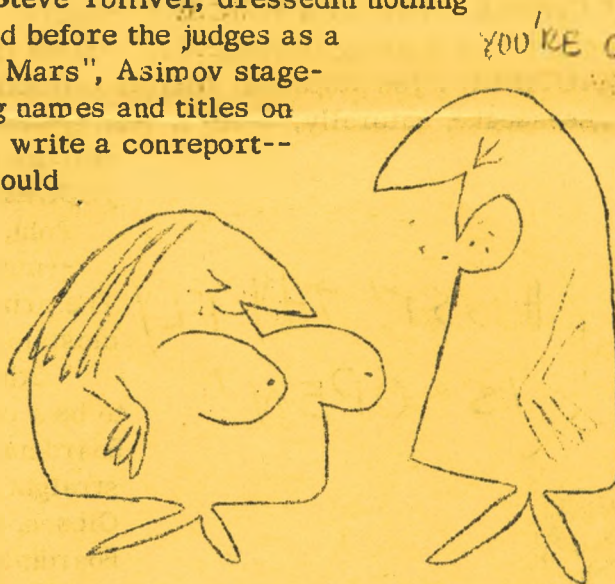
The actual parade of the costumed characters was preceded by a surprise: Carlton Frederick, a NY clubfan, traversed the raised platform in kilts, playing his bagpipes. As pipers go, he wasn't at all bad: he was at ease and obviously in practice, and the result was not only startling but actually musical. After this fanfare, the regular music, provided by Ira Sabin & orchestra, seemed pale by comparison, though obviously a little more appropriate for the occasion, complete with attempts to fit the tunes to the characters, drums pointing to particular schticks, etc.; the musicians seemed often amused or even occasionally crogged rather than bored--one might guess that none of them had ever played for this kind of scene before.

Ben Stark, the Lupoffs, Jim Warren, Bob Leman, and Fritz Leiber were the judges, and seemingly in honor of the last-named (though actually no earlier announcement had been made) many fans impersonated characters from Leiber's stories; more than an ERB con, this was a sword-&-sorcery con, the sorcerer being Boardman and the swordsmen being too numerous to list. I should credit here the committee's thoughtful act in stationing guards at the door to limit attendance to registrants; this decision saved us a great deal of harassment from Sigma Fraps, about some small part of which you've probably read in Dick Eney's conreport, or will read there.

I'll name the prizewinners first, from the judges' notes and an official list provided on the spot by Scithers; spellings are as given there, and my apologies if any errors have crept in. (I'm uncertain about only one winner's name; I got it as Bill Bowman, but the spelling "Bowen" has recurred.)

AUTHENTIC SF: Judith Ann Lawrence, as the Birdwoman from "Day After Doomsday"; this title was provided by the judges as an appropriate change from her own earlier designation "Ambassador from Capella IV". A magnificent creation, mostly of feathers--I hope Dr. Mary Martin's or someone's color photos are reproducible.

JUDGES' CHOICE: GROUP AWARD--Pelz, Johnstone & Dian Girard, as the "Night's Black Agents" group, Fafhrd, Grey Mouser, and the 7-eyestalked Ningauble. Pelz looked about fourteen feet tall in his bleach-blond beard (which he promptly shaved off: the



YOU'RE OVERDOING
IT!

bleach had been earlier concealed by some soluble black dye). Ted was a very effective sidekick, and Dian displayed a terrifying head over a sexy body. They came back individually, but won prizes only as a group.

HEROIC FANTASY : Jock Root & Adrienne Martine, as Maragon the Subtle and Claire LeBrun, of the Hyborian Legion; extremely impressive, and a labor of love that (I can personally verify) took weeks to create. Adrienne was almost matter-of-factly certain that she and Jock would take a prize, long before the con started; woman's intuition, I suppose, but with a certitude often lacking in the latter.

MOST BEMMISH : William C. Bowman, age about 11 or 12, as a little blond wolfboy; as much for his enthusiastic acting-out of the role as for his costume, which consisted largely of blond fur applied directly to most of his visible skin. He drew laughter and cheers as well as applause.

JUDGES' CHOICE : SWORD & SORCERY --Larry "Swordman" Kafka, as Conan, King of Aquilonia. ("The Walking Garbage Can"--from the amount of ironmongery he wore.)

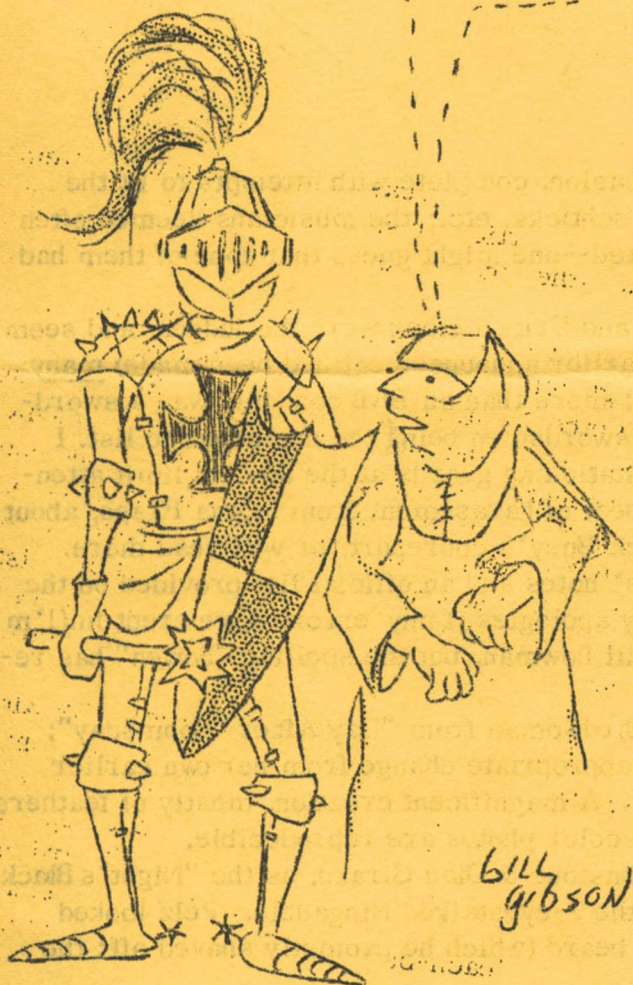
MOST BEAUTIFUL : Jon Stopa and Yoni(ex-Cornell) Stopa, as Incubus & Succuba. Beefcake and cheesecake, naturally; Yoni, it seems, had been verbally molested by Sigma Fraps enroute into the Presidential Room.

JUDGES' CHOICE : "NAVEL SCIENCE"--Carol Pohl, as Donna Creery, from "Reefs of Space"--more cheesecake, naturally.

ASSST! THY FLY
IS OPEN!

The prizes were framed pictures; I didn't get a close look at them.

Other remarkable costumes--not intended to be a complete list, of course--included John Boardman as Sorcerer, looking like something straight out of a medieval grimoire; young Bill Gibson, as a priest of the Beetle God; Perdita Boardman, as a Real Fan (featuring a huge fan covered with fanzine pages and sequin'd fanzine titles)--the fan later was given to Randy Garrett "so that he could have a Fan Club of his Very Own" (says John Boardman); Harriett Kolchak, as the Queen of Hearts from Alice--she came close to winning a prize; little Jim Davis as a green anthropoid Ogre of the Apple Tree; Barbi & Dick Johnson as a couple of characters from the Enchanted Forest, looking as though they'd stepped straight out of a couple of Barbi's prizewinning Seacon paintings in this series; Peggy Rae Mc Knight, as the Priestess of the Black Butterfly; Paul Zimmer (MZB's kid brother) as another Conan; the Kemps, as a couple of indescribable bems; the much-photo'd Sylvia Dees, as High Priestess of the Bird Goddess (a fertility cult, if my eyes deceive me not); Randy Garrett, very much in character as Nicholas van Rijn; a bearded Ed Wood as "SF Past, Present & Future" (I hear tell that some people wondered if he were Walter Breen: but at least nobody asked me if I were Ed Wood, which may or may not prove anything); Larry Ivie, as Frankenstein's Monster; Ginny Schultheis, as the Witch from Bradbury's



Something Wicked This Way Comes; Mike Mattingly, as Gully Foyle / NôMAD; Ruth Shelby, as Lewis Carroll's Alice; a pair of femmefans whose names I didn't get, as a stfnal clothesline, bearing between them garments which could only have been worn by bems; and--one of the hits of the con--tiny Betsy Wollheim and Heidi Saha (daughters of Don W. and Art S.) as the Reluctant Dragon and its tailbearer. Many of the ones I named were called back to parade as semifinalists, in addition to those who actually won prizes.

The judging over with, a few couples danced, but most stayed around (in or out of costume) to talk, and some of the swordbearers indulged in impromptu battles. This was probably the time when a fed-up Pete Graham cornered a couple of Conanites, faced them with each other, had them raise their swords, and then shouted "Charge!" at them--only to find that they promptly charged at him instead.

Afterwards, nothing was left to do but go to parties. House fuzz raided the SMOF party and dispersed it, herding various fans back to their rooms. I spent much time in a different party of much quieter sort, mostly inhabited by Baltimore people. La Brodsky made a nuisance of herself by claiming that it was mostly inhabited by queers, to which I replied "Then what are you doing here?" As the party grew in numbers, it also grew in noise, but every once in awhile it would quiet down as someone came in with a report that the house fuzz had been around to still another party. After Carlton Frederick came in, sans kilts or pipes, La Brodsky hatched the plan of having him (with as many other fans to join the procession as dared or dared to) get his bagpipes and serenade the Soviet Embassy. The procession actually formed, with Carl and pipes in the lead, but failed of its object because in the 2 a.m. darkness nobody could find or recognize the Soviet embassy! Instead, the group proceeded to Dupont Circle, where folkniks had been nightly gathering, and provided similar entertainment to a more appreciative audience.

In the meantime, a rather touching little scene occurred. Twelve-year-old Steve Patt, a particularly enthusiastic ^{& well-} Baltimore SF & ERB fan, was the beneficiary of a ceremony organized behind his back by some other local fans. At one of the auction sessions he'd been seen, forlornly and hungrily standing next to the auction table, bidding up to \$10--all the money he had with him--for the galley proof of ERB's Savage Pellucidar, and being broken up because it went far above that amount. Phyllis Brodsky noticed this; she and others chipped in to buy it, privately turning it over to Myron Seligman. At this ceremony, Myron--with a brief speech--delivered the galley proof to young Steve as a gift, this plan having in the meantime been kept secret from him. The strange mixture of incredulity, delight, crogglements, excitement, bewilderment, etc., chasing each other across the kid's face when he realized that what he wanted most of all out of that auction was being literally dropped into his hands--well, I doubt even a pro's first Hugo would have elicited such a wonderful reaction; you should have seen it. Afterwards, Sandy Cutrell showed up with guitar and usual repertory...

Later on, I found myself in Gregg Trendeine's room, where FANASS was assembled in full weakness with the Lupoffs and some outsiders. As much as Insurgent types approve of drinking, I doubt they would have approved of the condition to which it reduced a couple of unfortunate fans; one of them had literally to be dragged outside, the other was making himself extremely unpleasant. Sometime during the proceedings, I found myself in a very interesting degree of rapport with a girl whom I'd first met through Sandy Cutrell some months earlier. The party broke up then (about 3:30 a.m.), mainly to give me and her some peace and privacy, but partly because the others were in a modd for something to eat. However, no more than 15 seconds had elapsed after that--not even enough time to get the doors closed--before a bunch of neofans came in with "Where's the party?" Gregg Trendeine finally returned, shoed them out, and the girl and I resumed where we'd left off...

ASIMOV JOINS THE CLUB : The N3F hospitality room is in some ways an improvement over regular restaurants at breakfast time. For someone who (like Bjo or me) abominates most of the commercial breakfast foods, not to mention the atmosphere of the local greasy spoons, even the fairly hohum NFF Fare of hot chocolate, crackers, and congenial

fangab (the latter hohum only from sleepiness) can seem very welcome by comparison. Despite all the scurrilous remarks flung at the N3F, the hospitality room is one project without which a worldcon would be a far worse place. Judging by the numbers of youngsters present, whoever had the foresight to provide hot chocolate or tea in addition to coffee (was it you, Eney?) acted very wisely indeed; future con committees should take note.

By the time I got downstairs, with a few friends who joined me in the N3F room, the Rumio Suzuki film "Astro Boy" was already going on. Billed as "a Japanese SF cartoon film in English", it's far nearer to being a movie version of some post-Code comicbook, perhaps intended for a TV kid show. It brought plenty of audience laughter--but not for anything intended as comical by its maker; why it was brought to an SF worldcon is just my guessing. (If Lupoff revealed it, I missed his explanation.)

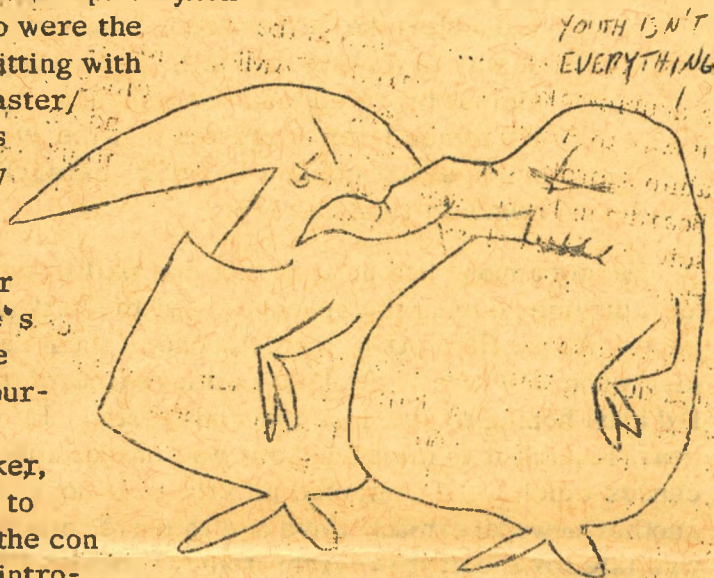
However, the next couple of (unscheduled) films made up for this ridiculous nonsense. The first of these was bhub Stewart's "The Year the Universe Lost the Pennant", in a version much revised (and considerably improved) from the one formerly shown at NYC art theatres, and with bhub's live dialogue with his own filmed voice at the climax as always. Instead of seeming to be a Dadaist collage of film clips, the creation now has a point: through juxtaposition of contrasting images, mostly having to do with transportation, bhub is telling us in several different ways that things are beginning to happen, and to change, too rapidly for human comprehension to keep up with them, and that human minds are beginning to crack up under the strain. An additional improvement at this showing--unfortunately hardly possible for later presentations--has the final scene (where the live bhub has run off the stage screaming, and the filmed bhub is desperately trying to extricate himself from a garbage can) pointed up by not only filmed sound but a live performance of the toccata finale from Prokofiev's Seventh Sonata, played by Les Gerber--demonic and overwhelming music, exactly appropriate for the inhuman tension these closing moments demand. I have the impression that with a few further revisions the film would be still more improved, as there are two or three diffuse areas remaining in it, but bhub tells me that such revisions would be very expensive at this point. There was some talk of sending me the script, having me do the live part of the dialogue for a performance by Canyon Cinema in Berkeley; but I have heard nothing more on this since returning west.

The other unscheduled film was the dream sequence--something straight out of a Doré Bible, and a good deal farther out in horror than most monster movies--from "Dante's Inferno" (XXth Century Fox, 1935, starring Merle Oberon, though she doesn't appear in this sequence). Forry tells me that the dream sequence was still older, originally from the silent film epoch. This item had many viewers gasping in sheer crogglement; though brief and out of context, it had immense power. Fred von Bernwitz gets credit for taking Bob Tucker's role as projectionist.

Afterwards came one of several musters of the Highly Boring Legion; I didn't stay around, but instead returned to fangab and to attempts to find suitable tablemates for the banquet. I had heard no announcement of a SAPS or Cult table, and efforts to assemble enough members for an APEX table were in vain. I found my way to a table enlivened by Terry and Carol Carr, Boyd Raeburn, Esther Davis and Henry Dupree (and their trip to the con in Esther's beat-up Jag would make a saga in itself), Les Gerber and Bill Gibson (wearing his sword). Discussing the Hugos, Les made up a dream Hugo Acceptance Speech: "I am especially pleased to accept this award, because I have been impotent since last year, and my wife hoped I would win it." Terry, referring to Buz's justified Chicon complaint that it is impossible to set up airconditioning in a banquet hall so that both the lowcut gowned ladies and the coat-&-tie set would simultaneously be comfortable, cracked that "this time they had the air conditioning set for the guys with ties"--Carol and Esther were chilly, and I noticed the low temperatures myself.

Banquet food is proverbially wretched, but this time I was pleasantly surprised: coq au vin is not the usual fare, and it was quite acceptable; even the vegetables were well above average. I don't know if this was the committee's responsibility or if the hotel routinely provides the bill of fare for the banquet, but I can testify that this is one of the three best banquet meals I have eaten among some ninety (over the last twelve years) in hotels all over the USA.

At length the introductions began, with a little p.a.-system trouble as before. I never did figure out who were the several unfamiliar figures at the head table sitting with the committeemen. Isaac Asimov, as toastmaster/mc, was his usual Falstaffian self, even to his deprecating the con with a one-word summary -- "dignity" (evidently he'd not been at some of the same parties I saw or heard about)--and to his insistence on being, like Sir John, "in the vaward of our youth" (though Ike's phrase was "in the latter days of youth", to be sure). He was a raconteur, ladies' man and purveyor of japery (including a deadly parody of SaM)--in short, save perhaps for beer and poker, what the Insurgent crowd would like everyone to be. And he was far more than a mere foil to the con G o H, Will F "Murray Leinster" Jenkins, in introducing him, but I won't try to reproduce his witticisms here, lest I ape the Duke of Kent in King Lear and "mar a curious tale in telling it". So too with WFJ's rambling collection of "it could only happen to a SF writer" anecdotes, though to his remark that occasional experiments found in antiquated physics textbooks are surprisingly profound even today, I would add that I learned more number theory from an 1893 Irish text on "higher arithmetic" than from most of the standard modern texts on the subject. But even this is hardly as crogging as WFJ's quotation from Alain de Lille's medieval description of the universe as a sphere whose center was everywhere and whose periphery was imaginary--a most extraordinary anticipation of the Einstein-Minkowski concepts!



In announcing the Hugo awards (and hoping that the recipients would break their necks), Ike built his entire presentation around his perpetual complaint that he had never gotten a Hugo himself, since his own spate of Hugo-quality fiction preceded the establishment of the awards. And he laid it on thickly this time; whether sincerely, or in the manner of the cat meowing for hunger in an attempt to divert attention from a recently-emptied birdcage, I won't even conjecture. Anyway, herewith the winners--and strange that almost none were present:

NOVEL--Philip K. Dick, for "The Man in the High Castle", accepted for PKD by Jim Blish. (But nobody mentioned the I Ching, the Oracles of the Goddess Kwan Yin, the actual heroine of the novel, as pointed out in Avram's review, June '63 F&SF.)

SHORT FICTION--Jack Vance, for "Dragon Masters", accepted by Fred Pohl.

DRAMATIC PRODUCTION--No Award (to loud applause). Asimov asked Forry to come up and accept the No Award as on former similar occasions.

PROFESSIONAL ARTIST--Roy Krenkel, of all people; accepted by Don Wollheim. This was one of the two crogging upsets. Conjectures abounded that it was for Tarzanical and similar stuff rather than for sfnal illustrations.

PROZINE--F&SF, to tumultuous applause. Asimov, by default, accepted it for Avram; whereupon Ruth Berman reminded Ike of his wish anent recipients' necks. This was the other big upset; everyone had expected Anal og to get it as usual.

FANZINE--XERO. Accepted, to an ovation, by Dick Lupoff, who called out "Is this the right design? Where's the lady with the daggers?" (Laughter.) No surprise at all, though I do tend to agree with Red J Boggs's comment that this particular Hugo is a wreath on a corpse.

SPECIAL AWARD #1--P. Schuyler Miller, for "The Reference Library". He mentioned seeing a copy of I, Robot on a book table in Pittsburgh's biggest dept. store: unsurprising except that the books were all supposed to be autobiographies.

SPECIAL AWARD #2...Ike opened the envelope handed him by Scithers (or whoever), did a double-take, and roared, "DAMMIT, MAN, YOU'VE RUINED THE WHOLE BIT!" It was to Asimov himself, "for adding science to SF". Whereupon our toastmaster almost broke up, and the audience stood and cheered. About time, I say...John Boardman later suggested that the award might as well have been labeled as for Ike's science-fact column in F&SF, paralleling Papa Villy's science-fact cols which won Hugos in 1953 and 1956.

Hardly anyone had noticed that one wall of the banquet hall, normally curtained, had been de-curtained during the speeches, and the next room occupied by a contingent of Balcony Insurgents. As we filed out of the hall, one of them called me. It was Dave Bell, local fan and musician whom I'd met at the 1960 Disclave (therefore one of my longest-term fannish friends), whom I'd been hoping to see since the con started. He was carrying a record he'd long wanted me to hear, loaning it to me because it was unavailable in any shop. After a year's worth of reminiscences which we'd crammed into the next hour or so (interrupted by my being interviewed by another newspaperman), Dave had to leave, promising to return the next day (which he did), but I was late for the next program item. This was the L.Sprague de Camp / Leigh Brackett / Asimov / Ley / Emsch/Leiber panel, "What Should a Bem Look Like?" What I heard of it was fun, though just about what one might have expected. Form follows function; function, in turn, is pretty much determined by body form (there were discussions of dolphins as an important test of this idea, should dolphins prove to be sapient--though information available to the participants seems to have been confined to sources earlier than the John C. Lilly book). This in turn led to discussion of what would be an ideal mammalian body; arguments about the plausibility (or lack of it) of various life forms--and some already known on earth or in the oceans are pretty implausible, come to think of it. Among the farther-out questions, someone brought up the praying mantis as a possible prototype of nonvertebrate sapient life, or of something that could evolve into such. Bems need not be repellent to human aesthetic criteria, which after all are pretty much based on familiarity; and this triggered off another argument about the definition and nature of beauty: is it after all purely subjective? if so, is it arbitrary, or are there forms which all would agree to be beautiful, and are such judgments necessarily culturally conditioned? And so forth...

This ran on late, and could have run on for hours more; there was no supper break.

Seabury Quinn, incredibly ancient and fragile survivor of the prehistoric days of Weird Tales, author of the Jules de Grandin series, spoke briefly on fantasy vs. SF treatment of a theme. Being plagued by the same diarrhea that had made me miserable the day before, I could not stay to hear him, but doubtless his speech will be fully reproduced in the Proceedings; or else you can get one of Dave Ettlin's tapes containing it (they are now ready, according to the October TNFF).

Following another of the numerous short auction sessions, the business meeting was held. I slipped into my seat, still animatedly conversing with Joe Mayhew, a brilliant and loquacious club fan who should become a valuable contributor to fanzines in the next few years. The major item of business was handed to all present: a one-sheet constitution of WSFS--this time emphatically NOT "Inc."--; "an unincorporated literary society whose functions are to choose the recipients of...the Hugos,...the location for the annual (Worldcon)..., and to attend the annual (Worldcon)." It was drawn up by a committee consisting of Howard DeVore, Noreen Shaw, Steve Schulteis, and others. Members of the new WSFS are all dues-paying con members; its managers and responsible parties are the successive worldcon committeemen. The only unexpected clause in this constitution was in the eligibility criteria for the drama Hugo: "In the case of individual programs presented as a series, the separate programs shall be individually eligible, but the entire year's production taken as a whole under the title of the series shall not be eligible." This establishes a parallel with a clause similarly excluding series of individual short stories or novels from eligibility as series; had this latter been ^{earlier} in effect, "The Long Afternoon of Earth" would have been barred, and as it is, "Twilight Zone" will no longer be eligible. One wonders how often from now on the drama Hugo will be awarded at all? Anyway, the WSFS thing was adopted by acclamation.

Forry presented the annual "Big Heart" Award, this time to James V. Taurasi; SaM accepted it for the absent JVT. There was then an award from First Fandom to DocSmith, billed by SaM (the presentor) as first of a series of annual SF Hall of Fame awards, to be given to individuals who have made singularly important and lasting contributions to SF. (It was a matching pen & pencil set with a mobius strip mounted above.) Anyone can pretty well guess the names of some obvious later recipients: Uncle Hugo, JWCjr, Forry perhaps, Heinlein, Asimov. SaM harangued us on Doc Smith's precise contribution, which (as he put it) was a breakthrough: no SF writer before Doc Smith had conceived his stories on such enormous scales with whole galaxies as fields of action. (JWCjr echoed this very point later on in the Editors' Panel when he admitted that he was looking for stories with just such a breakthrough.) There was, to nobody's surprise at all, a standing ovation for Doc Smith. After this, everything was pretty anticlimactic. Janie Lamb presented a \$20 cheque to TAFF. Advent: Publishers promised a printed Proceedings for the DisCon. Big Hearted Howard informed the con that for various

reasons Ben Jason could no longer make Hugos, that the aluminum sand-casting method now used yielded an uncomfortably large number of rejects, and that the MisFitS will produce the trophies at cost (a noble gesture indeed), but we need to get in touch with anyone in fandom or on its fringes who thoroughly knows the cire-perdue or lost-wax method of casting. (Attention, STAN ABRONS: The address is Howard DeVore, 4705 Weddel St., Dearborn, Michigan. Same for anyone else who might have such information.) Boyd Raeburn moved acceptance of BHH's report, Fred Lerner seconded, and the con enthusiastically agreed, but nobody stepped up to help BHH. The final item of business was the foregone uncontested award of the 1964 con to the BAarea group, Don Franson first spoke on their behalf, then Ben Stark as official representative, followed by Ellik, Kemp and BHH. And following Seacon-Chicon tradition, the first Progress Reports were given out to fans joining the Pacificon II during the remainder of the DisCon. (Last I heard, some 221 had joined during the con.) \$1 for overseas, \$2 for stateside nonattendees, \$3 for people who know they will be there; cheques to Bill Donaho, Treasurer; address PACIFICON II, Box 261, Fairmont Station, El Cerrito, Calif.

"The Editors Speak", originally scheduled for Monday noon, was for some reason moved to the next spot, 8:00 Sunday evening, there still having been no supper break. Pohl moderated a panel consisting of JWCjr, Ajay Budrys and Cele Goldsmith. (Don Wollheim couldn't stay for it, having been called back to NYC owing to the death of his father.) Budrys croggled almost everyone present by mentioning the high rates for stories--including SF--paid by PLAYBOY, of which he is Editorial Consultant. Cele Goldsmith said in rebuttal that the SF prozines pay authors some \$100,000/year--much more in the aggregate than PLAYBOY pays out for the tiny bit of SF it uses. To which Ajay replied, still more crogglingly, by quoting A.C.Spectorsky (of the PB editorial panel) to the effect that many prozine stories would have been accepted by PB had they been submitted there first!! Cele Goldsmith said she was looking for stories of 3,000-4,000 or 7,000-word length; JWCjr, as I earlier mentioned, wanted "Breakthrough" stories (maybe these don't have to be psi propaganda); all agreed that it was undesirable to slant stories in their direction, though I wonder just how sincere John W. Ghod was in this.

Afterwards came a demonstration of stenciling artwork ("De Stijl mit de Stylus," oog) by Juanita Coulson, TedWhite and the Thompsons. I found it almost impossible to get a good view of what was going on, so many fans were crowded around the mimeoscope. After this there wastalk



I can't afford to join the Pacificon and the NFFF too!

of sharing a cab up to some jazz night spot where John Coltrane (to be followed the next night by the unique Roland Kirk) was featured, but somehow nothing came of it.

Having mentioned the auction sessions above, I suppose I should indicate a few of the highlights from them. Ed Wood and Steve Tolliver were auctioneers, perhaps without the verve of Harlan Ellison and Tyrannical Al Lewis, but good enough in their own right. Some of the prices were utterly preposterous, e.g. the unfolded map of Barsoom from the Lupoff & Co. "Readers Guide to Barsoom & Amtor" bringing \$2.10 or more than the Guide itself; others testify to the presence of more than one specialist with money, such as the \$20 brought by a copy of The Hobbit autographed by Tolkien (his autographs are very rare, it seems). Bill Gibson bought this one; I might have gone higher myself, but I didn't want to bid the kid up, and some other people went on & on. The autographed Lord of the Rings trilogy went to Chuck Hansen at \$36, less than I had expected; one woman who'd promised to go as high as \$50 if need be was absent from the auction session. The Gestetner--a reconditimed Model 260--went cheaply at \$101 to Pelz. Rumors that he resold it at a profit have been flatly denied. (I would have gone much higher, but crating and shipping costs from Washington to Berkeley would have nearly doubled my cost; I still need a Gestetner, but will probably have to get it via one of the army surplus auctions. Pelz also bid up to \$100 the Emsh cover for "Glory Road" part I; Fred Patten carried off the framed Rogers cover for "Stolen Dormouse" at \$90, and someone else went up to \$75 for the Krenkel "Tarzan Triumphs" cover. A complete set of XERO went at \$28. Two Judith Ann Lawrence coverillos brought a reported \$25 and \$28; I did not see these nor the Hannes Bok b&w.

Of the various parties that followed, the one I recall most clearly was the California Victory party (thrown jointly by the LA group for sliding out from under the responsibility for the '64 con, and the Barea group for winning it unopposed), which was extremely crowded, noisy, hot, smoky, with abundant liquor (despite someone's having stolen some \$42 worth of it from Ronel) for strong-stomached traditionalists and nearly as abundant soft drinks for the younger element. It is said to have continued until dawn, but I didn't stay around that long; I have since heard that for many it was the high point of the con. I circulated around various others, the oddest of these

No, that's only the editor--you should see the monsters.

being a pro party in Jim Warren's suite, where Blish, Ajay and a couple of wives--Barbara Silverberg and Carol Pohl?--were playing bridge, not for stakes, with some of the strangest rules I ever encountered, and where other pros--Lester Del Rey among them--were indulging in strange conversation; though most of the liquor was gone by the time I arrived (or should that read "because"?), everyone seemed in a strange elated mood. I hear that Doc Smith attended a First Fandom party the same night and made a thankyou speech for his Award.

Boyd Raeburn tells me of another incident which might as well go here: the ubiquitous and disgustingly boorish "Sigma Fraps" (frat rats, appropriately rhyming with brats, beside whom the noisiest of Forry's little monster fans would seem a model of decorum)

were holding some kind of dance-cum-comedy show in the ballroom. Boyd, Ted White, Jon White, Pete Graham & Terry Carr tried gatecrashing to watch the band, only to be ejected. Eventually Jon White (17 and looking younger) slipped in through a side door, got promptly taken for a fellow Sigma Frap and delegated by officers of one of the fraternities to guard the door against crashers! Needless to say, the other FANASS people got to watch the band after all...

*Cartoon by Wally Weber, reprinted from SLUG 50, SAPS, July 1963
with thanks

THE MORNING AFTER : At 11 a.m. Lester Del Rey and Fritz Leiber were scheduled to appear on TV channel 7, "Woman's World", but either nobody awake and around and known to me at the time had a TV set in his room, or else all such people were at another of those musters of the Highly Boring Legion. Proving to themselves that this was a Burroughs Year, they stayed for the next program item, "Swords Against ERB", a panel consisting of Dick Lupoff, L. Sprague de Camp & Sam DeCamp was replacing Wollheim. I didn't stay around, contenting myself with a prolonged look at the Art Show material.

A good deal of credit goes to the Coulsons and Eney and others who helped arrange the material, putting some ATom pieces pp from the sketch table to the panels (where they competed for prizes, and where they sold for a great deal more than they would have on the sketch table), and for the most part making the whole array quite eye-catching. (Someone goofed on Don Simpson's extraordinary "Mananaan's Castle", putting it so low down on a panel that would-be viewers had to squat; but there were no other real foulups I can recall.)

Aside from that, my only grouch was at the number of Prosserthings (including some of his most disgustingly sadistic items) on display; but this is my own personal reaction, and apparently many of the sword-&-sorcery crowd, among others, do not share it.

Prizewinners: FANTASY--1. Don Simpson, "In Mananaan's Castle"; 2. Judith Ann Lawrence, "Country of the Blind". Hon. men., Ted White, "Krazy Kat" group. (Not for sale, as they were his mother's property, loaned for exhibit.)

SF ART--1. Larry Ivie, "Lost World"; 2. Don Simpson, "Lensman" group; 3. John Wilson, "Revolt of the Machines; hon. men., Phil Normand, "Barsoom".

OUTRÉ--1. Judith Ann Lawrence, "Coven"; 2. Don Simpson, "Artifact Found Off Innsmouth" (a carving).

CHILDREN'S FANTASY--1. Barbi Johnson, "Encourager's Recalcitrant Guide"; 2. Joni (ex-Cornell) Stopa, "Frog Chorus". (No, I don't think they were chanting Brekekekex koax koax. I also believe that had Mrs. Casseres exhibited her best drawings from the series illustrating GAUL rather than some of the least convincing ones, she might have placed in this category.)

CARTOONS--1. ATom, "Martian Invasion"; 2. Ryotaro Mizuno, "Space Fishhook"; hon. men., Kantaro Hamada's untitled contribution.

HEROIC FANTASY--1. Jim Cawthorn, "Earl Aubec and the Golem."

ASTRONOMICAL ART--1. Bobby Lee Martinez, "Landscape".

JUDGES' CHOICE--Sylvia Dees, "Witch Boy" (from "Dark of the Moon").

OPEN--Don Simpson, "Death" (another carving).

PHOTO: Color--Pelz, "Männerdämmerung" B&W--Chriz Moskowitz, "Greetings from Earth" (a tabletop study, if I remember rightly).

There were no awards in the Fellowship of the Ring, Most Promising, Story Series Photo or Experimental Photo categories.

POPULAR--Sylvia Dees, "Witch Boy".

Clearly, Don Simpson--with four well-deserved awards--was the star this time. Much missed: Cynthia Goldstone and Bjo, among others. I do not know who the judges were, but they obviously knew what they were doing.

The Sylv "Witch Boy" painting was up for bids. Esther Davis had put me under a geas not to bid her up on it, or I would have gone well above her \$35 or so. After a fantastic amount of bidding, the painting finally went at \$62 to Kathy Boswell; a very attractive blonde with long braided hair; Kathy is the girlfriend of Dave Hartwell, Paul Williams's longtime mentor. This painting is uncannily moving and difficult to forget--a slightly inhuman, almost elvish, head in startling tangerine tones--and it testifies to Sylv's maturation as an artist. A few clods were heard to insist that it was merely a copy of a photo. This is one of those partial truths that is proverbially worse than an outright lie. Sylv admitted--as does every representational artist--to working with photos; but the composition, choice of colors, chiaroscuro, and various subtleties of line, densi-

ty, facial expression, etc., were all her own.

My own favorite among all the paintings there, however, was Don Simpson's "In Mananaan's Castle" (this spelling is correct; Mananaan MacLir, also "Manannan Mac Lyr" in some accounts, was a Goidelic Sun-hero, predecessor of Fionn and Cuchulain). Seemingly unrelieved darkness at first, it reveals at closer look a shaft of sunlight from a slit in some unimaginably high vaulting, and architectural details; at still closer look there are more or less human figures, and yet closer examination reveals more. For some unknown reason, the painting is uncannily moving but in a different way from Sylvia's. So, too, was the Janice Hartwell anti-war poster which had formed the cover of WITHIN 3. Art Show sales reportedly exceeded \$500--which is right away proof that PAS is a growing concern. Many art galleries would be very glad indeed to sell \$500 worth of paintings over a single weekend. And what was this we were hearing about Broke Fandom?

I saw only a small part of the distaff side panel, "Life With a Stf Writer", in which Barbara Silverberg, Carol Emshwiller, Carol Pohl and Edna Budrys compared notes on just exactly that, agreeing in complaints that mss. scattered all over the house (and emphatically Not To Be Disturbed) made housecleaning difficult. I only wish Karen Anderson had been there to take part... Mrs. Emsh hardly needed to admit that she posed for many of her husband's paintings: it was delightfully obvious.

After the intermission came the presentation of the SMOF Award, to Ted Sturgeon "in consideration". The award is a coil atop a wooden base, after Eric Frank Russell's "Space Willies". Forry accepted it on Ted's behalf from Hal Clement, promising to ship it on. The initiated will know why Forry's confusion and Hal's suspicion did not ring true; in print I can only say that some such award will be made at every worldcon from now on, and that it is less a gag than it might seem. SMOF actually exists, and it is the same group responsible for the poster on the table beside Magnus's fanzine huckstering display (Magnus took over the SMOF table, concealing the poster, until some member complained to authority and Magnus found himself the recipient of a chewing-out). SMOF is also the group whose party got raided on Saturday night and completely dispersed by the house fuzz. SMOF is--but let it go at that.

Hal Clement then went into a debate with Sky Miller on whether the SF story is a "mental exercise" in the manner of a whodunit. Hal's position was that "what if?" is the stfnal counterpart of "whodunit?". There wasn't much real argument, and the points made came fairly close to those Lester Del Rey made in a debate with Randy Garrett at the 1962 Lunacon (see FANAC 87). To someone's point that all stories SF or otherwise, embody a "what if?", one might reply that not all what-ifs are equally far-reaching or equally well worked out in detail; some--in mundane--embody only the what-if of a man's particular relationship with a woman and its vicissitudes, while stfnal ones characteristically embody the what-if of an entirely new social order (or disorder) as influenced by, and influencing, its technology.

At 2:30 George Scithers, Ben Stark and Earl Kemp, with the aid of Forry, Wally Weber, various MiSFits, Dave Kyle, Sky Miller and others, all being present or former worldcon committee members, indulged in "The Fourth Convention", a discussion which was less mutual backslapping than a realistic appraisal of the committees' criteria of success of a con. That title has been related to Robert Bloch's remark that there were really three cons in any worldcon--writers', editors' and fans', but it might equally well have related to the three named in Ted Sturgeon's Chicon speech (fans', pros' and readers'). I shall have more to say about various fan criteria of success of a con below, but the committees' criteria --aside from big attendance, gate receipts & good publicity--included such less-often considered things as how successful were the various negotiations and compromises necessary with the hotel management, how few schedule foulups, how few other foulups, how little trouble with officialdom of any kind, etc. The discussion ended with the passing of the gavel from Scithers to Ben Stark. Someone announced that con membership exceeded 820, attendance exceeded 583, banquet 442. This 583 attendance figure seems to have been the biggest for a worldcon since Nycon II, and very likely it would have been still larger save for the decision of many west coast people to attend the

Westercon instead.

Final official program item was a skit, mostly concocted by Don Studebaker, with Judy Merrill, Fritz Leiber, Katy McLean, H. Beam Piper, and others, taking roles as patients of Randall Garrett as the magic doctor. It didn't quite come off as a whole, though there were some hilarious lines, and Randy's asides and randyisms added a great deal. Part of the trouble was in the general idea; part was in that of all the pros taking part, only Leiber was part of a tradition of Shakespearean acting. But Sandy Cutrell deserves credit for his overture to it, which was a rendition of "The Old Stef Peddler", after Tom Lehrer; and doubtless the suggestion that SF is addictive, or at least habit-forming, was deliberate. I had fun anyway, with a girl on my lap during much of the performance...

The Mercurian Club of Philadelphia--a SF group under the tutelage of Harriett Kolchak, it seems--presented Scithers with an award, and all dispersed.

While awaiting the beginning of the two big parties scheduled for this evening, I accompanied Paul Williams, Dave Hartwell and Kathy Boswell up to Paul's room to view some paintings and indulge in more fangab--only to find that Paul's mother and three of her other kids had shown up at the hotel, entirely unexpectedly. Despite the traditions of young fans' Parent Trouble, Paul is exceptionally fortunate in this respect; his mother is sympathetic and understanding. I enjoyed meeting her and will welcome another meeting should the opportunity arise when I am back east.

One of the two parties was the DisCon Committee's farewell shindig, the other was the Baltimore party. During a lull in the former, I went up to the latter, and shortly found myself in a discussion with Hal Clement on, of all things, Hapgood's book Earth's Shifting Crust. Hal had some sharp criticisms of the book, mainly on grounds of mathematical physics (an area in which Hapgood was weak, and knew it), and I was at once ready to defend Hapgood's thesis (as I had done some work on the book) and to hear his counter-arguments. Fun, but nothing earth-shaking. --Long afterwards, when the Baltimore party was too smoky to endure any longer, I was sitting out in the hall with Paul Williams, only to be sternly chided by a house nightwatchman to the effect that we were violating every hotel rule in the book! I have never before, in all the hundreds of coin and other cons I have attended, encountered such rude hotel personnel in any part of the country! It has since occurred to me that the hotel fuzz this time were hypersensitized because of the Sigma Fraps, but that still hardly excuses rudeness...We circulated between the Baltimore and DisCon parties until both had pretty well turned into groups of fen too sleepy to make entertaining conversation, and everything was all over but the goodbyes.

And those came the next morning, in the hotel lobby, while I awaited Sandy Cutrell and his two *girls* and my promised ride to New York City. _ _ _ _

Happiness is a cuddly girlfriend.

Everyone judges a con's success by different criteria. Aside from professional and committee criteria, and independently of the program, some of the commoner subjective criteria include, say, number of room parties attended (especially pro parties); amount of liquor consumed (especially free); number of people met (especially pros); number of new friends made (disclaimer); or, if one is especially lucky or especially on the make, number of new girls grokked. My own criterion, I guess, is partly the number of new friends made, and partly something having to do with reunions with friends met at previous cons, friends I rarely if ever see elsewhere. And by that standard, at least comparing this con with the two previous worldcons I'd attended (despite having promised myself to avoid such comparisons if possible), I found the DisCon a dismal failure. In particular, the DisCon was an exact, diametric, opposite of the Chicon in about every respect possible. At the Chicon, despite many blunders and goofs and foulups (most of them to be blamed justly on the hotel), the con was for me a resounding success --and withal (as my conreport showed, I think) the biggest single stimulus to my Sense of Wonder since I entered fandom. But this time, despite a very smoothly run con program & arrangements, for which the committee deserves and will get plenty of egoboo, this con was for me basically a very lonely time, and an occasion nearly devoid of S of W. I do not think that the program was

relevant, nor was the lack of material (satisfactory to me) and available) in auction or art show. It had nothing to do with girls, as enough people there saw me in an Insurgent role with two of them; the girls relieved the loneliness, but were not able to banish it completely. I do not even think that my reaction is attributable to changes in me, nor is it ascribable to any particular unpleasant incidents or people at the con.

Rather--and I believe this is decisive, for me at least--it is attributable to the absence of people whom I had counted on, or at least strongly hoped, to be seeing there. I kept hoping and hoping to find at this con some of the friends I had cherished at Chicago, new and old alike. I saw almost none of them, and the emotiness left by their absence is hard to ignore. Yes, Marion, I am thinking mostly of you...and I should also mention Poul and Karen, Tony Boucher, Heinlein, Sturgeon, Walt & Madeleine Willis, Avram & Grania Davidson, Buz & Elinor, Bjohn, Bob Tucker, Lee Hoffman, DAG, Bloch...and there are others of you who know who you are.

Cons are places to meet people you never know personally in any other way save through fanzines or correspondence, people whose very rarity of appearance makes the voids between so much emptier. And when so many of such Good People are absent from a con, disappointment is multiplied. For me, then, the DisContented motto must be that of the Dodgers back in their Brooklyn days: "Wait'll next year!", or, translated into fansprache,

See you at the Leamington.

F A N A C 96

"The Long Weekend of Our DisContent"

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