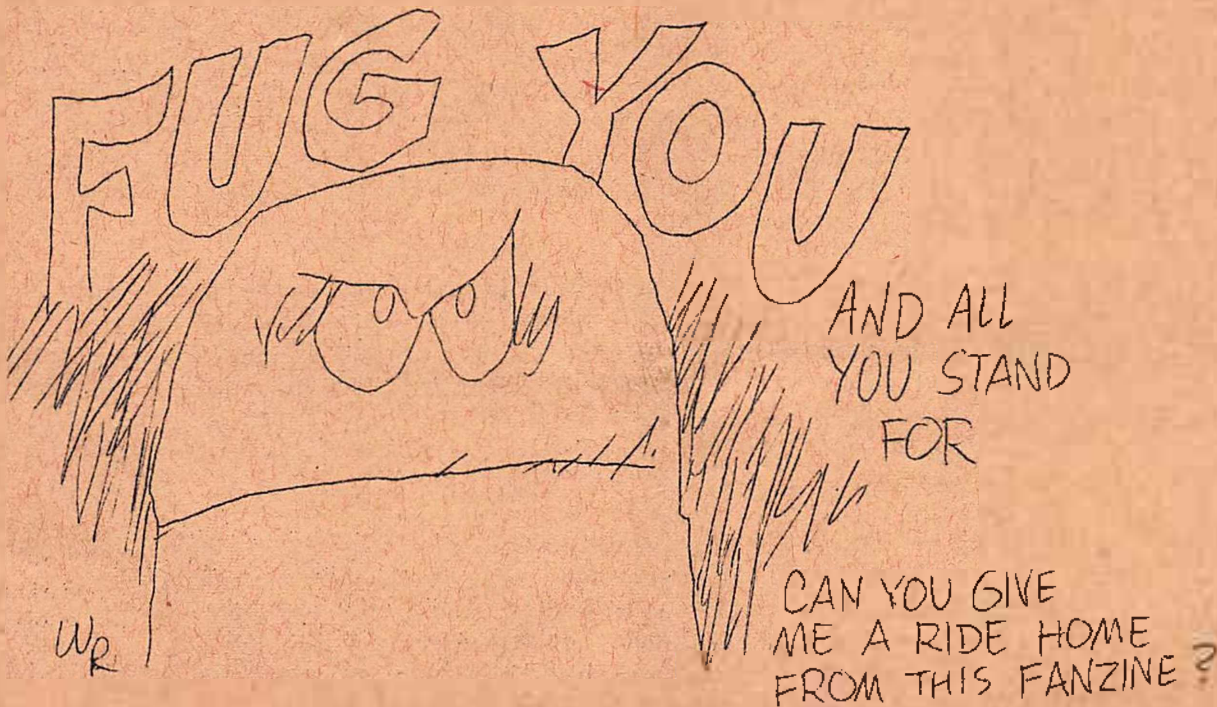


FOCAL POINT, Volume 2, Number 30, is edited by Arnie Katz (59 Livingston St., Apt 6B, Brooklyn, NY 11201). Invaluable Help: Joyce Katz. Editors Emeritus: Rich Brown and Mike McInerney. Published bi-weekly, it is available for LoC, trade, or 6/\$1. Illustrations by Kinney and Rotsler. May 31, 1971.

EASTERCON 22 PROGRAM BOOK An ad purporting to be from the Rare SF Mail HAS "AMAZING" JIGSAW PUZZLE Order Co., which appeared in the Eastercon Program Book turned out to contain a puzzle which when assembled turned out to be a picture of a guy wiping his ass with pages from a copy of AMAZING. Malcolm Edwards traced the ad back to its perpetrator, who turned out to be Charles Platt.

Platt made sure everyone would know how clever he was by sending letters of complaint under a phony name to various fanzines including FP. Platt told Edwards he was just having one on long-time enemy PWeston.



Quick, now, what's happened only three times since fandom began and may never happen again?

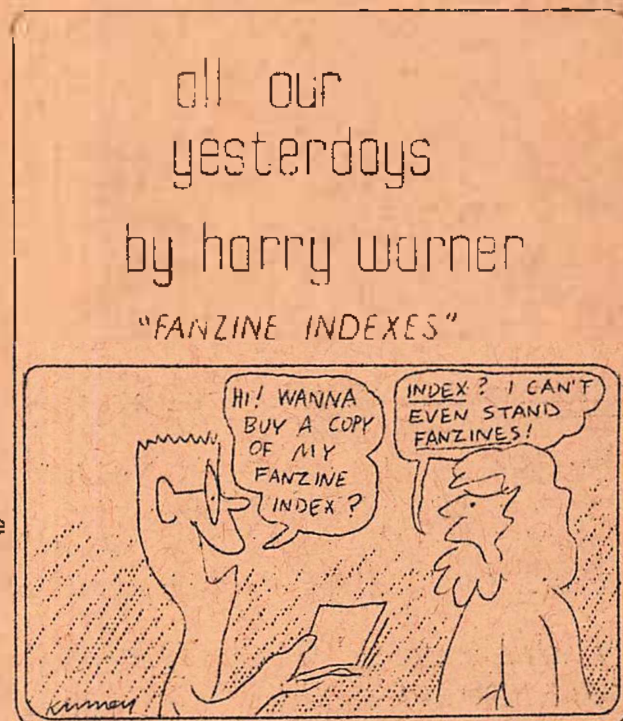
Publication of a fanzine index, that's what has taken more than four decades to make its three appearances. I'll be terribly surprised if the next four decades produce a repetition of this rarest of fannish events.

Hardly anyone still has a complete set of the first of the fanzine indexes, which R.D. Swisher published and then revised during the late 1930's and early 1940's. It was hectographed, didn't have a big circulation, and never appeared in complete bound form as one volume. It was done at a time when there was still a reasonable chance for a nearly complete, accurate fanzine index to be published, and Swisher was the ideal person to accomplish the task. It's doubtful that anyone in fandom has ever had his persistence and thoroughness as a compiler of facts. He's remembered today only for the fanzine index, but he also compiled for his own satisfaction similar indexes on prozine stories, activities of fans in printed form, and goodness knows what else.

It would be ridiculous to say anything derogatory about a person whose pioneering index made possible later efforts in the same direction. It wasn't Swisher's fault that nobody with similar persistence turned up in later years to complete new editions of the index on the model he'd created. But you can't help wondering if fanzine indexes would have appeared more frequently in the years that followed, if Swisher's original creation had been a trifle less thorough. He listed where known the number of pages in each issue of each fanzine, the method of reproduction utilized, the size of the pages, together with the date when known and the volume and number. Digging out all those figures about page numbers and sizes magnified the task stupendously for those who followed him, and this information may not really be as relevant to users of the index as some kind of designation on the general nature of the fanzine - genzine, apa publication, polemic, or whatever - and the address of its editor or publisher.

Strangest of all was Swisher's determination to include a listing for every fanzine he could find mentioned anywhere, even if no issue of a given title had ever appeared. It made his work all the harder, and it must have discouraged many a fan in later years from deciding to bring his index up to date, out of the conviction that fandom would expect the same meticulous inclusion of imaginary fanzines that existed only as titles in fiction about fans or a vague publishing idea that flitted briefly and without further consequences through the mind of a neofan.

Swisher himself found the fanzine chronical toil so giant that by the mid-1940's, when he seems to have abandoned the activity, he had fallen five years behind on reading the prozines, with great harm to his complicated file cards which were coded to show his opinion of each story, then averaged out to create relative standings of quality for each author. I'd assumed that Swisher was either dead or so completely gaffiated that nobody would ever find him again, when nearly a quarter-century went by with no new mention of him in



fanzines. But just recently I discovered that he's alive and well in Missouri. I notified some fans who live near his present home, in the hope that they could sound him out on a return to fandom and on the whereabouts of whatever may remain of his file cards. He may even still have some things important for the sercon fans, because he was one of Campbell's best friends and safeguarded numerous unpublished and incomplete Campbell manuscripts.

Starting in 1952, a new series of fanzine index instalments began to appear. Bob Pavlat and Bill Evans, two Washington D.C. area fans, undertook the updating of the listing which was already a half-dozen years out of date. They published at intervals over the next seven years a new complete rundown of fanzines from the beginning through 1952, this time in a thoroughly legible mimeographed format, retaining the basic format of information that Swisher had created, but omitting the titles known to have never materialized. They had some problems Swisher hadn't encountered, such as figuring out how to list Metal-Mag, Ackerman's fanzine that was published on army dogtags. They also had to make some decisions on the beginning of the trend for fanzines to spread out from their original subject matter and move into different fields. Thus, Max Brand was the subject of a fat publication by Rev. Darrell C. Richardson; the Pavlat-Evans index included it, even though its connection with fantasy or fantasy fans must have been quite limited.

This second fanzine index is still quite valuable as long as you remember that fandom had already grown so large in the 1950's that it was almost impossible to be as nearly complete as Swisher had been. Thus, through my fault, this index lists very few of the fanzines that were distributed through VAPA. I had one of the few complete sets of VAPA mailings in the possession of a still active fan. I promised on their request to provide all the necessary facts; I never got around to it, and so you'll not find listings for quite a few fanzine titles that belonged to people who are today quite celebrated professionals.

The third fanzine index to be published was essentially identical with the Pavlat-Evans achievement. Harold Palmer Piser was active in fandom so recently that most readers of Focal Point should recognize the name, even if they know little about him. He was an elderly man who claimed to possess absolutely no interest in fandom, had a low opinion of most fans, but was retired, had lots of spare time, and had a mania for indexing things. He decided to bring the fanzine index up to date through 1965, planned to rename it the Bibliography of Fanzines, and started out by reprinting the Pavlat-Evans volume within one cover, in looseleaf format. For reasons that I've never understood, he insisted on a strictly sic reprint, including totally irrelevant paragraphs that had been published in reference to non-index matters in the original serial production, and not making the least effort to correct and augment the listings with the things Piser had already discovered in the course of his own labors.

The 141-page volume appeared five years ago. Piser was even unhappier with fandom when it failed to sell well but refused to make any particular effort to merchandise it. He couldn't understand why dozens of orders didn't arrive in each day's mail, or why it would be more likely to sell if he arranged to have a pile of copies available at each regional con than if he simply announced its availability in some fanzine or other. Nevertheless, Piser continued to work on his bibliography. He asked fans to supply information on fanzines to him, but he really wasn't satisfied with a fact unless he'd personally written it down after holding in his own hands the fanzine to which it referred. This led to his borrowing entire collections of fanzines and the ensuing near-disaster to several important collections when Piser suddenly died a couple of years ago. Most of the borrowed fanzines seem to have found their way to survival, but all his research work was destroyed, and nobody seems to know what happened to the unsold copies of the reprinted Pavlat-Evans index.

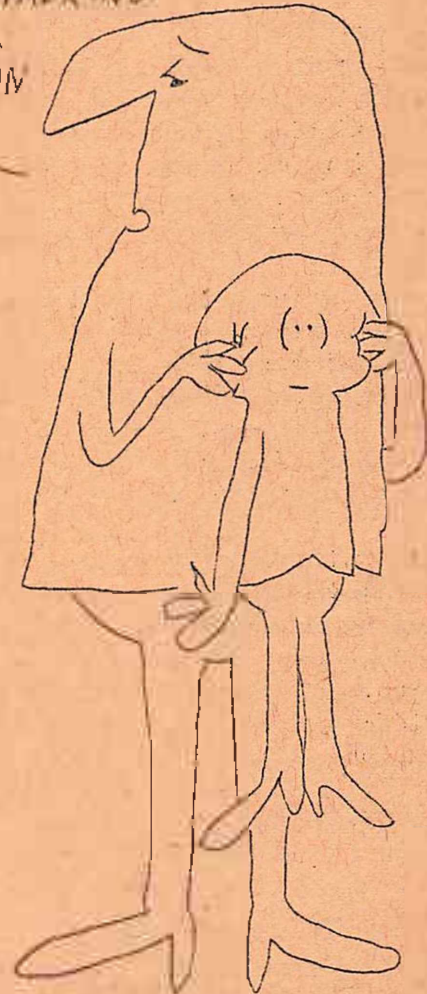
It's unlikely that another Harold Piser will come along, and I have doubts that there will ever be another fanzine index that attempts to cover everything from the beginning to the present. The magnitude of the task is staggering. Doing the job on just one current year in fandom of today's size and diversity would probably be as large as Swisher's labors when he covered fandom's first ten years or so. Neither Swisher nor Pavlat-Evans had any great problem with such contemporary facts of fannish life as the semi-secret apas, the fanzines that exist in a dozen or so nations where English isn't the native tongue, or such phenomena as comics fanzines and monsters fanzines. The fan who decides in some future year to follow in the footsteps of Swisher must do some awful soul-searching. Comics fanzines have been even more numerous, ephemeral, and small-circulation in recent years than those in the direct science fiction fandom tradition. But you can't conceive of a fanzine index that omits Xero, and if you include Xero, by what criterion do you omit a fanzine published by a 13-year-old for two issues about the Dynamic Duo?

If it's any consolation, such an indexless future for fandom has its parallels in other hobbies. I'm most familiar with the lack of a comprehensive and complete catalog in record collecting fandom. Recordings are published professionally; most of them are listed in catalogs issued by the producing companies, and they sell thousands of copies, which would seem to make the task of publishing a complete list of all records quite simple. But there's no such thing. The person who collects records must do the best he can by hunting partial listings: a few giant volumes that listed all available recordings of serious music when they were new, reprints of old catalogs of the major recording companies, "discographies" of various composers and performers, as many of the Schwann catalogs as he can find and afford, and improvise with these the best he can.

I wouldn't be surprised to see the fanzine index of the future split up in somewhat the same way, instead of embodying one thousand-page volume that would drive the compiler to an early grave and bankrupt the dozen fans who tried to finance its publication. It's quite practicable to plan and accomplish complete indexes to the important apas; old-time fans who have spent most of their careers in a large city might in their dotage amuse themselves by putting out indexes to all the fanzines published in and around Los Angeles, Philadelphia, or Bloomington; and someone might begin to publish an annual index to the fanzines of the past dozen months. It may not be too late to think about revising the Pavlat-Evans volume to increase its accuracy and completeness for the period it covers. Fandoms in European and South American nations are young enough for complete indexes to non-English language fanzines to be compiled.

(Continued at end of Lunacon report)

BE WITH YOU IN A MOMENT—
I'M TALKING
TO A
NEOFAN



LUNACON

PART TWO



AFTER THE BALL IS OVER

After an enjoyable evening of partying with friends, my Saturday morning mood at the Lunacon was considerably better than the one I was in Friday afternoon.

Joyce and I helped ensure the continuence of our happy outlook by leaving the convention at 9 am to go out to Long Island to get the blood tests which are a prerequisite for a marriage license.

"What?" you say, "you left a convention filled with hundreds of wonderful fans to ride 20 miles on subway and bus to let a doctor poke needles in your arm and take your blood?" The fact is, though, that I didn't leave a convention filled with hundreds of wonderful people, I left the Lunacon. That is not the same thing at all. You had to have been there, meyer.

No one was there, just faceless nobodies and friends of Ted Pauls.

Unfortunately, we got back in plenty of time to attend the program right from its exciting beginning, the Faneds' Panel.

Moderated by that veteran fanzine publisher Elliot Shorter, the panel included Charlie Brown, Mike Glicksohn, Richard Harter, Debbie Langsam, and Janet Megson. A windy explanation was given as to why these people deserved to be on a fanzine panel, how they had all been chosen for their knowledge of the fanzine field (except Janet Megson, who was chosen for her ignorance). This clever rationale was undermined by the actual panel. Only Megson performed up to her advance notices, though Glicksohn, to be fair, would have talked about something interesting if there had been anyone who wanted to talk about it with him.

I dislike Charlie's attitude toward fandom, with its odious commercialism, but I can see the validity of naming him to a fanzine panel. Likewise, Glicksohn, as a rising young fan, merited a place. What the others were doing there was anyone's

ARNIE KATZ

guess. The only topics that seemed to interest them were such winners as the best source for mimeo paper in New York City. Charlie Brown underlined the vacuity of the event by abandoning any pretense that he was trying to entertain the audience and trying to hawk LOCUS from the speakers' podium.

With the audience now on the edge of their seats (perparing to leave no doubt), the Fanzine Panel gave way to a "Talk Show" starring Hans Steffan Santesson. This was an unscheduled item, arising from the fact that Schuster had booked two people who dislike each other onto the same panel without telling them about it. When Little Name Editor A found out, he withdrew from the panel. A third participant, possibly getting wind of the situation, elected to stay away from the convention entirely.

I didn't stay for the rest of the program. For all I know, it was great stuff, though I don't remember anyone running up to me to tell me I'd Really Missed Something, Boy.

I went into the Huckster Room and found that, with the exception of such stalwarts as Big Hearted Howard and Rusty Hevelin, most of the dealers were comic book fans. If anyone doubts that excessive commercialism might be a bad thing for fandom, I suggest he cruise a room filled with comic book hucksters. A typical practice is to buy a dozen copies of some comic book fanzine for an outrageous \$1 a copy from the publisher and then turn around immediately and resell it for at least \$5 a copy. I saw a comic book there less than a month old which had been jacked up in price by 400%.

BANG, BANG BANQUET

Joyce and I had gotten tickets when we registered, only to find out later that none of our friends were going. The committee had a hard time selling tickets, and, I was told, one could have gotten a banquet ticket for a couple of bucks from the committee if one waited until just before the banquet. That ought to make those who paid full price feel Just Fine.

Except for the waiters' unfortunate habit of taking away the food before it had been eaten, it seemed like a good enough banquet. We didn't stay for the whole thing, though, since Alex Panshin came up to us just before ~~d~~essert and told us a party was starting in our room, whether we were there or not.

I gave him the key, but in a little while, after mulling it over, we decided we'd better join our guests. With a few mumbled good-byes to Jerry Lapidus, Lisa Tuttle, and the Bushyagers, we retired from the banquet hall and went up to our room.

We knocked on the door. They showed an initial reticence about letting us in, but they eventually warmed to us enough to open the door.

It was really quite a party.

Thinking ahead, we'd gone out earlier in the day and bought some cartons of pepsi

and bags of various kinds of snack foods. With the addition of some room service glasses and a little room service ice, we were in fine shape to hold our own minicon right in the middle of the Official Convention.

Those present through most of the festivities were Ted and Robin White, Alex and Cory Panshin, Bob and Barbara Silverberg, Terry and Carol Carr, Bob Toomey and a girl introduced simply as "Eva", Jay Kinney, Bruce Telzer, Steve Stiles and Gale Burnick, Brian Burley, Dennis McCunney, Chris Couch, Cecil Krislov, Alan Shaw and Bob Whalen. Mike and Susan Glicksohn and Rosemary Ulliot were there for awhile, but moved on to greener pastures.

As one would expect with such a group of mighty minds, the wit flowed freely. Someday, I may even remember a tenth of what was said. I made a stab at taking notes, gang, but somehow I didn't give it all the attention it required.

Agberg did get off one nice sortie that I remember about a projected line of pro-zines pitched at special interest groups. He maintained that the reason sfzines were in a rut was that they had no specialized appeal to anyone except average, everyday science fiction readers. Bob put forth such modest examples as Spade Science Fiction, S.F. Romances, and Gay Fantasy. I had one for heads which I thought might have a commercial appeal, Spaced Stories.

PARTING IS NOT SWEET SORROW

Sunday was an anti-climax, despite the fact that JWC was scheduled to speak. I didn't bother, and I doubt that many others did, either. Everyone seemed to have one foot out the door from the morning on, possibly wanting to put as much distance between them and the Lunacon as possible.

Sunday was also the day the committee's chickens really came home to roost. One bit of prize fuggheadedness was perpetrated by Ted Pauls who let thrity or so kids roam through the huckster room he was in charge of in the middle of the night. How about that, Big Hearted Howard?

I spent a pleasant hour with Dave Hulvey, talking about fans and fandom, which helped end the convention on a bit of an "up" note; Dave is developing into a very interesting fan.

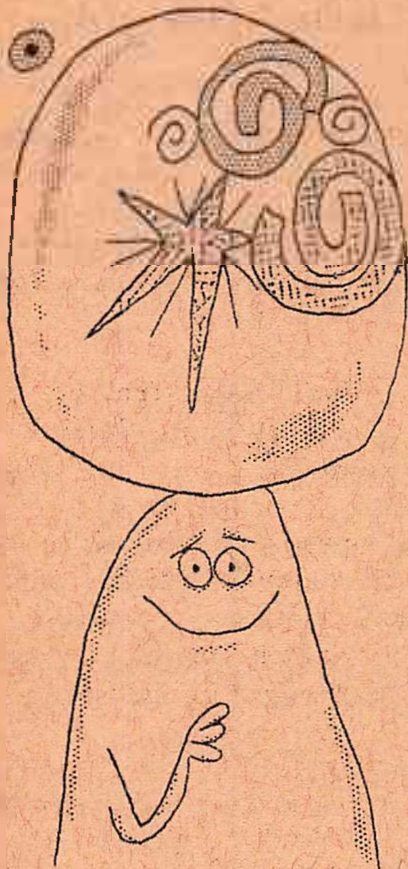
Finally, with a lot less reluctance than I usually feel at such times, I suggested to Joyce that it was time to go. She raced me to the door.

-- Arnie Katz

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS (continued)

If someone out there in fandom has been secretly completing a complete and up-to-date fanzine index, and wants to gloat over my discomfiture by sending me an advance copy to prove that I'm a poor prophet, I hope he waits a little while. I'm under doctor's orders not to lift more than 15 lbs., and I don't think that the new edition could be published under that weight limit.

-- Harry Warner



TERRY CARR

THE INFINITE BEANIE

I'm just back from the Disclave, a convention that I enjoyed lots, and I don't think that's just because I was Guest of Honor, either. Bob Toomey traveled down and back with Carol and me, and he had a good time too, as did any number of other people who commented on the con to me. For one thing, the Shoreham Hotel is a beautiful con hotel: large, comfortable rooms, good convention facilities, and Jay Haldeman told me there was just no trouble with hotel detectives or any of that nonsense. (King Feisel of Saudi Arabia was staying at the hotel with his retinue that weekend, and his suite was directly below the con suite; I hear he complained about the noise of the nightly open parties, but apparently his static didn't reach upstairs.)

Of course, it rained most of the weekend, but so what, who goes outside a con hotel anyway? (Except for meals, in this case: the Shoreham's restaurants were stupidly expensive and there was a fine variety of eating places within two blocks. Two blocks isn't too many, even in the rain.) And Sunday afternoon Bob Toomey and I had a delightful barefoot walk through the grass-and-clover grounds in back of the hotel to dig the rose garden, which was really beautiful. Smelled beautiful, too.

Before I went down there, Bob Silverberg told me the Disclave people treated Guests of Honor well -- Bob having been GoH a couple of years ago -- and I found he sure was right. Why, Alice Haldeman went beyond the call of duty, I thought, but I'm not complaining.

One thing that helped the con immensely was the presence of several nuts, among them Gardner Dozois and Piglet. The opening item on the program was a New Writers Panel that included them plus Joe Haldeman and Bob Toomey. Ted White was supposed to moderate it, but he didn't come in from Falls Church in time so I filled in, and I had a ball. For one thing, it started off nutty before we even said hello, because each place at the speakers' table had a sign in front labeling the panelist behind it Homer Eon Flint or Stanton Coblenz or etc. Ted's moderator's position had a sign that said "The Ted White of His Generation," and I felt a little strange sitting behind that when I replaced him, but it was good for some joking around. Before we even started Piglet (George Alec Effinger is the byline he uses on his stories, in case you're trying to place him) went up on the speakers' platform, picked up a mike and began to deliver a lecture on the use of the slider in baseball. He was marvelously deadpan about it: "Now, you'll recall that last week we explained that the slider will move in on the left-handed batter and out on the right-handed batter, always assuming of course that the pitcher is right-handed, as most are..." When he started I thought he was just going to do a throwaway line or two, but it soon became obvious that he knew what he was talking about and could go on all day if not stopped. So of course he was stopped, and the panel got underway.

It was a jolly panel, and Piglet and Gardner weren't the only nuts on it, either. Bob Toomey, who'd stayed up all night, responded to my first question by falling off his chair and snoring. I asked Piglet about his reaction to the economic pressures imposed on writers by the spread of the recession in the publishing industry and he said he was considering turning to a life of crime. Gardner kept asking the audience if anyone wanted to see his left breast; he was so insistent that somebody asked what was wrong with his right one. Joe Haldeman managed to inject the only note of sanity into the panel aside from my own remarks, and I kind of wonder about myself: I found myself quoting lines from Stanton Coblenz to justify our signs.

Jay Kay Klein followed with another installment of The Decline and Fall of Practically Everybody, his slide-show-with-comments, which had more funny stuff in it. Jay, by the way, was the first fan we ran into when we checked into the hotel Friday night; he was coming down the hall as we arrived at our room. He was also coming down the hall the next two times we went to our room. After that, when we went to our room to drop off coats or something, I said, "If we turn this corner and Jay Kay is there, I'm going to fall down." So we turned the corner and there was Jay Kay, and I fell down. He was so busy staring oddly at me that I don't think he took a picture.

Saturday night Ted White threw a party in our room, dragging me away from the open party in the con suite, which I was enjoying. I was so annoyed that when Ted left the con early the next day, grouching that there was no one at the con he wanted to talk to, I suggested he might try listening to someone. He ignored me.

The party was fun, though, because there were good people there. Also, the Pittsburgh party was right next door, so I was able to slip over there and mingle a couple of times. The second time I was leaving, I noticed Jay Kay Klein playing guitar and singing. I went over to him and said,

"I'm leaving, but I wouldn't want you to think I'm going away because of your singing." "That's okay, I wouldn't think that," he said. "I mean, it's not that your singing stinks or anything," I said. "I understand," he said. "Really, I'd be leaving right now whether or not you were singing," I told him. "Don't worry about it," he said, "I wouldn't have noticed you were gone anyway."

After the party in our room Saturday night plus all the group singing that went on at the next-door Pittsburgh party after ours broke up, both Carol and I were a little blah Sunday morning. I got up first, and noticed that Carol was making odd sounds from her mouth periodically; I listened carefully and found that she was talking: she was saying, "Aspirin...." So I went and got a couple of aspirin. And five minutes later she was still murmuring, "Aspirin...." "But I just gave you two aspirins," I said. "No," she breathed, eyes still closed, "you didn't." And suddenly I realized what I'd done: after I'd got out the two aspirins my brain had gone on vacation and, finding myself with two aspirins in my hand, I just went and took them. I got Carol a couple more and we made it downstairs for the day's program, which was to include my Guest of Honor speech.

I started the talk by admitting that I felt like the Bob Toomey of my generation, which brought immediate sympathy from the audience. A little later Bob himself came into the hall, and as he walked up the center aisle I said, "Fall down, Bob." He collapsed on the floor instantly. He really does it beautifully -- just goes completely limp. I told him later that he fell down better than I did, and he smiled proudly. "But I get up better than you do," I added, and he laughed and called me a name.

Anyway, I talked for about an hour on the general subject of fans vs. pros, their similarities and differences and the place of each in the 20th Century. It was a minimally-structured rap, actually, sidetracking for jokes and anecdotes whenever I felt like it. The point that I meandered to was that fans seem to feel vastly inferior to pro sf writers these days and that I find this silly: if you've read much of my fanwriting over the past year you know my feelings about faneditors who think they're scoring a coup by publishing Andy Offutt's esthetic paradigms for his latest novel from Paperback Library. My feeling is that the pros have their talents and the fans have theirs, and that if a fan chooses to worship pros indiscriminately or to try to imitate them, then he's automatically categorizing himself as a second-class citizen. "There are no second-class citizens in science fiction," I maintained, and called for a Fan Lib movement.

(Charlie Brown didn't dig the part of the speech that dealt with his attitude toward LOCUS, which he'd told me just before that he publishes to make money and in which most of the stuff he publishes is of little interest to him; he came forward and took the mike and denied having said any such thing, which one earwitness to the original conversation called a lie, though since Charlie's an honorable man I prefer to believe his memory was playing tricks on him. Charlie isn't as young as he used to be, after all: he's as old as I am.)

That night we played with balloons and Charlie and Dena Brown's yo-yo (they're both better with a yo-yo than I am; rats) and heckled movies like The Blob and The 7th Voyage of Sinbad as the con drew to a close in the pre-dawn hours. Nice con committee; nice people at the con; good con.

CLIPPING SERVICE: In case the regular news and stuff seems to lack zip this issue, here's a page of things I've been collecting and sticking in a manila folder for years. First, a somewhat science fictional news item from the New York Post, Nov. 5, 1966:

Barney and Betty Hill, who revealed their "extraterrestrial" experience under hypnosis (Interrupted Journey, John G. Fuller), are a mixed couple; Mr. Hill is a Negro, Mrs. Hill white. When their car was stopped by the little men, the Hills had their dog along. Barney Hill says: "If our experience is genuine, the extraterrestrial people will think all Earth men are dark, all the women white and all the children long-eared dachshunds."

Here's something Phil Dick copied for us several years ago from Stanton Delaplane's column in the San Francisco Chronicle:

...I wrote something the other day about "the couple were married." The editor changed it to "the couple WAS married. WAS! WAS!" "Can I say it went on its honeymoon?" I asked. At one time--in more violent days--I wrote: "The couple, which was married last year, was divorced by Judge Splitwell. It left the courtroom by different doors and did not speak to itself."

Here's a brief note from another news item in the New York Post, though I didn't write down the date for this one -- recent, I think:

A Brooklyn man has been charged with killing his mother by jumping from a window with her in his arms.

I find that...poignant. The following quote is perhaps equally touching, especially to us fans who live in symbiosis with the U.S. Post Office; it's an inscription from the Post Office Building, Dept. of Commerce, in Washington D.C.:

THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, IN ITS CEASELESS LABORS, PERVADES EVERY CHANNEL OF COMMERCE AND EVERY THEATRE OF HUMAN ENTERPRISE, AND, WHILE VISITING, AS IT DOES KINDLY, EVERY FIRESIDE, MINGLES WITH THE THROBBINGS OF EVERY HEART IN THE LAND. IN THE AMPLITUDE OF ITS BENEFICENCE, IT MINISTERS TO ALL CLIMES, AND NEEDS, AND PURSUITS, WITH THE SAME EAGER READINESS AND WITH EQUAL FULLNESS OF FIDELITY. IT IS THE DELICATE EAR TRUMP THROUGH WHICH ALIKE NATIONS AND FAMILIES AND ISOLATED INDIVIDUALS WHISPER THEIR JOYS AND THEIR SORROWS, THEIR CONVICTIONS AND THEIR SYMPATHIES, TO ALL WHO LISTEN FOR THEIR COMING.

How's that for credibility gap? I don't know where that inscription is located in the Post Office Building, but even if it's up front I don't think it's up front. But speaking of that, here are four lines by a Chicago third-grader written after a poetry assignment:

I'm a little teapot,
Short and stout.
Sock it to me baby,
Let it all hang out.

-- Terry Carr

Comic

A COLUMN BY
DENNY O'NEIL

Problem is, how to report this?

I considered an Analog-type lead.
Vis:

"Great Ganymede," gasped the lovely
Micronesian biochemist. "It's been staring
us in the face. There is intelligent life here!"

Yes, readers, there was intelligent life at the Terrace Ballroom,
for contrary to rumor, comics book people can be intelligent...

* * *

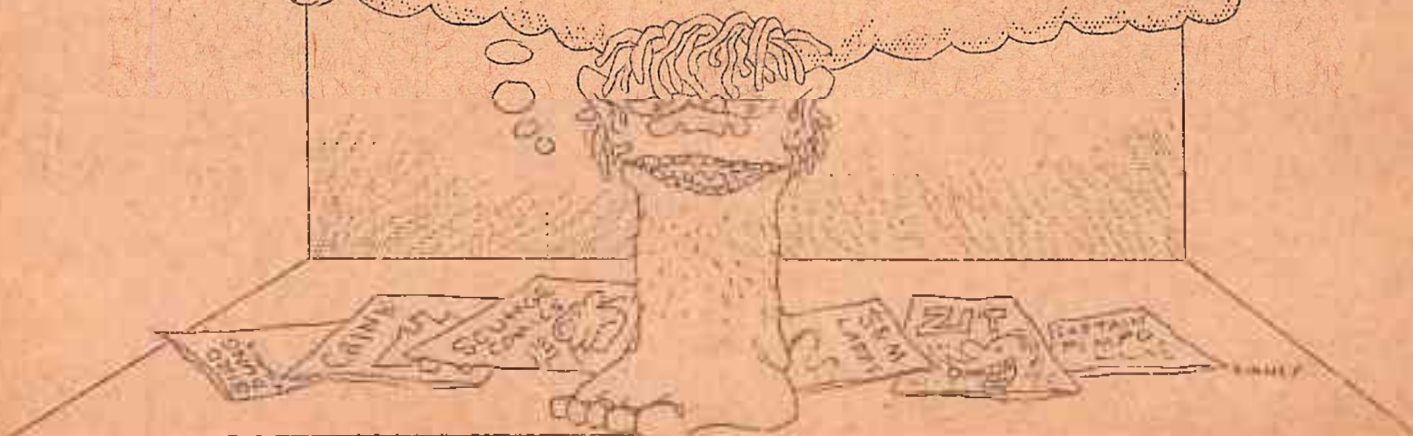
But a little of that does go dreadfully far, doesn't it? Maybe I'd
better simply state facts, a la any J-school's objective ethic. Baldly.
Brutally. Vis:

The Academy of Comic Book Arts held its first annual awards banquet at
the Statler Hilton Hotel's Terrace Ballroom on May 12. The meal consisted of
chicken au cordon bleu, a concoction resembling the contents of an airline's
little emergency bag... (Ooops. Blew the objectivity. Begin again.)

Alex Bennett, controversial radio personality who looks like he has an
undamped nuclear reactor just behind his eyes...that is, Alex Bennett served
as master of ceremonies. The Shazam Awards--handsome sculptures of metal and
lucite--were presented by ACBA president Stan Lee. (Except the damn things
weren't ready, and we had to make do with a single flimsy mockup and certifi-
cates. But I digress.)

Among the celebrities participating in the ceremony were Alain Resnais,
renowned French film director; Lenny Price, well-known young comedian; and
Harvey Kurtzman, creator of Mad, Little Annie Fanny and a whole school of
panel-art satire. Another proto-celeb also participated, but I objectively
loathe him too much to mention his name.

The winners were:



Best letterer - Sam Rosen.

Best colorist - Jack Adler.

Best story - "No Evil Shall Escape My Sight" from Green Lantern/Green Arrow #76.

Outstanding achievement by an individual - Jim Steranko, for his book, "History of the Comics".

Best foreign title - "Legionarios del Espacio" written and drawn by Estaban Moroto, of Spain.

Best new talent - Barry Smith.

Best inker, humorous - Henry Scarpelli.

Best penciller, humorous - Bob Oksner.

Best writer, humorous - Carl Barks.

Best continuing feature - Green Lantern/Green Arrow.

Special recognition outside the field - Nostalgia Press, for its reprints of classic strips.

Best inker, dramatic - Dick Giordano.

Best penciller, dramatic - Neal Adams.

Best writer, dramatic - Denny O'Neil.

* * *

You see why I had reportorial problems? You don't. Well...

For years, I've daydreamed about winning an important award. I fantasized making a witty, urbane and thoroughly charming acceptance speech. When the moment came, I could only struggle to control my shaking knees and quavering voice, and blurt thanks.

Because, as Dick Giordano said, (in a witty, urbane, charming speech), it is enormously gratifying to be called "best" by fellow professionals, men who understand the difficulties, the frustrations, the woes.

Neal and I were especially pleased that GL won in every dramatic category. It's nice - that a project on which one has lavished all available craft, concern and skill be recognized. Comics can be a cynical business - they're the bastard child of creativity and yard-goods; so these occasions are hope-giving. Somebody realizes what we've been trying - to push our beleaguered medium another short way toward Art. We're gratified.

* * *

ADDENDA.

Carmino Infantino, heretofore Editorial Director of National Periodical Publications, was recently named Publisher of the line by the parent company, the Kinney Corporation. No man can say what changes the promotion bodes. Mr. Infantino promises greater creative freedom for editorial personnel and better comic books for fans...Attention, aspiring young artists: Billy Graham, the artist, not the Bible thumper, does his distinctive drawings with a plain old 19c Bik ballpoint. Consider yourselves tipped. (I don't know how the preacher does his thing, and my speculations are libelous)...Next outing, I'll abuse FOCAL POINT's hospitality by spewing some intensely personal reactions to the revised comics code.

-- Denny O'Neil

There's a lot to be said for Burbee, but not in a family fanzine.

MORE NEWS

FINLAY PORTFOLIO NOW AVAILABLE

A folio of unpublished work by the late Virgil Finlay is now obtainable from Gerry de la Ree, 7 Cedarwood Lane, Saddle River, N.J. 07458 in a 450 copy edition. The price per copy is \$10. The bulk of the illustrations are from the 1933-35 period, before Finlay turned pro in WEIRD TALES. Another highlight is a pen and ink drawing which was to have illustrated "The Hobbit" in an edition never actually produced.

FINAL UNCLE BOOK MAY NOT BE PUBLISHED

Dave McDaniel has turned The Final Affair, the projected end of the

UNCLE series over to Ace, but it may well not get published. Recent books in the series, cheapie reprints of English UNCLE novels, have not done well, and Ace is affraid to publish another one in the face of what it sees as dwindling demand. This despite the fact that TAJ's UNCLE books have sold better than most of the others in the series.

SAPS TO REMAIN QUARTERLY

The second oldest quarterly apa, the Spectator Amateur Press Society, has voted to remain quarterly, instead of stepping up frequency to bimonthly. The vote was 8 to 6, which means it was probably just as well; that's pretty apathetic.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Harry Bell, 9 Eskdale Gardens, Lyndhurst Est, Lowfell, Gateshead, Co. Durham,
NE9 6NS, England

Ron Bennett, British School, B-7010 SHAPE, Belgium

Arthur Jean Cox, 1528 Winona, #11, Los Angeles, California 90027

Archie & Beryl Mercer, 21 Trenethick Parc, Helston, Cornwall, United Kingdom

Edith Ogutsch, 411 S. Mariposa Ave., #14, Los Angeles, California 90020

FOCAL POINT

Arnie Katz

59 Livingston St.,

Apt 6B

Brooklyn, NY 11201

FIRST CLASS MAIL



MICHAEL WARD
447 LERIDA AVE
105 ALTOS, CA 94022