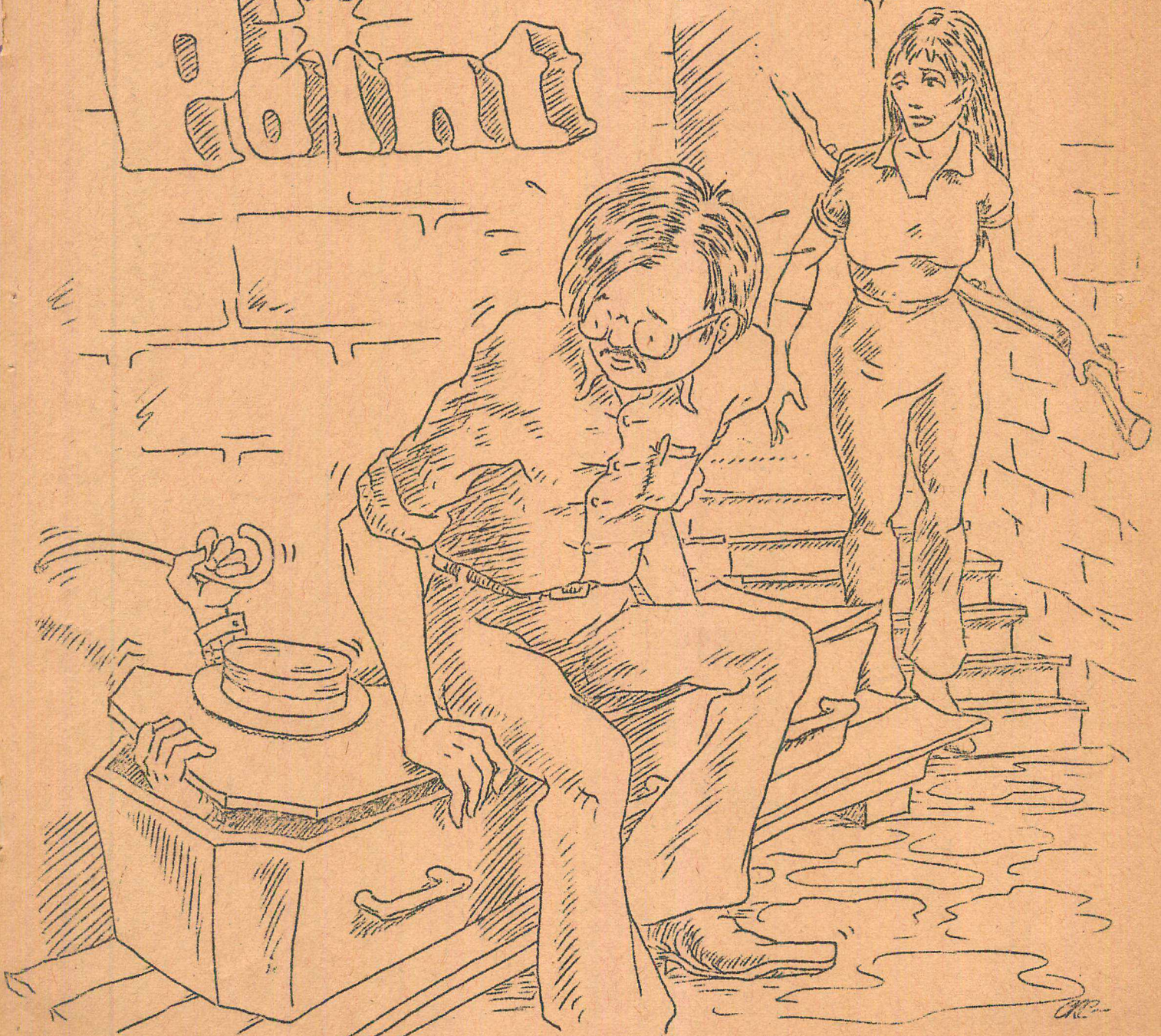


Animal Paint

Vol 5 No 1



THERE'S A GENZINE INSIDE HERE--KICKING AND SCREAMING TO GET OUT.





FIRST

ISSUE

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KATZENJAMMER



This is the first issue of the rest of this fanzine's life. Though it would be easier for me to keep quiet and just get on with the business of publishing a would-be fabulous fannish fanzine, I think I owe you readers, who have supported this fanzine so handsomely, an explanation.

When rich brown and I revived FOCAL POINT in April 1970, I had a pretty definite set of goals in mind. It goes without saying that I wanted to have fun and publish a good fanzine, but there was more to it than that.

For one thing, I thought that fandom was languishing, and that it would continue to be in decline until something positive was

done to turn things around. I don't consider this misdirected altruism on my part, just enlightened self-interest. I enjoy fans, fanzines, and fandom and expect to remain a fan in some form for many years to come. I'm selfish enough to want to maximize my enjoyment of the hobby, and do everything I can to keep fandom vigorous and entertaining.

It's possible that my ego may be on the large size, but it's never been so large that I thought it was possible for me to hoist fandom upon my shoulders and lug it in the direction I desired by brute force. It wouldn't have been much fun that way, either, even if I somehow could have pulled off the feat. Still, I did think there was something I could do that would nudge fandom in the desired direction

When we began publishing the current run of FOCAL POINTs, large circulation fanzines were exercising a tremendous influence on fandom, bit by bit warping its mores and aesthetics. Due to their large circulations, such fanzines were reaching the newer fans, the ones who had no idea of what fandom at its best could be, and locking them into the 8th Fandom aesthetic before these neofans could learn about the alternate possibilities.

Disdaining the work involved in publishing a huge circulation fanzine, fannish fans turned their talents to the production of fanzines of moderate circulation, often unavailable on a subscription basis, because faanish fans are usually not interested in commercializing what is a very enjoyable hobby. There's nothing wrong with a circu-

lation of 150 or giving away a zine for a show of interest -- I prefer that type of free and easy publishing myself -- but it doesn't make the best fannish writing very obtainable by the average neofan.

FP was conceived as something a little out of the ordinary, a hybrid which would give the news yet would also present material such as is published in a genzine of fannish orientation. Rich and I hoped we could draw fandom a little closer together by spreading the fan news and at the same time, give the readers something extra -- exposure to the traditions, personalities, writings, and attitudes of fannish fanzines. We hoped that the faanishness, something a little different than what was then the typical fanzine fare, would be accepted more readily in this form than if we came out with an overtly Fabulous Fannish Fanzine.

I like to think it was.

A look around at the fannish resurgence, moving forward on every hand, will show that the seeds planted by such fanzines as METANOIA, EGOBOO, MICROCOSM, POTLATCH, ZEEN, and FP are beginning to bear fruit.

I think we may have reached the point at which the particular kind of fanzine which FOCAL POINT has been is no longer necessary.

There is still a need for a newszine that takes a more fannish approach than LOCUS, a newszine more interested in what is happening at the LASFS, the LUNARIANS, and the Insurgents than in writers market reports. I think such a zine, possibly four pages every two weeks, would be extremely popular if done well, and I hope someone tries it, now that the field is clear. I'll be happy to help anyone who wants to make the attempt with news, advice, contacts, or whatever, but I won't publish that zine myself. Maybe after awhile I might come back to the newszine field (I have an interesting newszine idea I would like to try out), but for now I think I've shot my newszine wad.

To paraphrase a well known fanzine editor who recently folded his Hugo-winning fanzine, I am basically a genzine fan. I have genzines inside me kicking and screaming to be born.

Since I generally try to do the fanac which interests me, FOCAL POINT is, with this issue, dropping news coverage and going monthly. It will feature the same type of material I've been using in the non-news portions of the zine, only more of it, by most of the same people and a few new ones. The Monthly FOCAL POINT will also have some additional goodies which didn't fit into the space limitations of the old format, such as a fanzine review column and a good-sized letter column. (the speedy arrival of many leyters permitting, of course.)

I briefly toyed with the idea of maintaining the biweekly schedule, but sanity quickly reasserted itself. After more than a year of publishing at least 12 pages every two weeks, I'm a little tired. The biweekly schedule became an almost endless round of publishing, particularly after rich had to sharply curtail his participation in October

and the circulation passed 250 and never looked back.

FOCAL POINT, unlike LOCUS, is run as a hobby, not a business. I never made money on it, and I had no desire to do so; the subscription price was meant to keep us from going broke, not provide a supplemental income. When break-even approached on the short-term, I usually just published an extra large issue to use up those piles of unsightly money. No one is working full time on FP, and no one will. I think fandom is much better as recreation than as an extra job. So I'm not looking to spend another year or two on a fanpublishing treadmill which had us committed to doing about a fanzine a week.

Joyce did yoeman work, particularly after rich cut back, typing most of the stencils, serving as printer's devil, doing her full share of the collating, and taking care of the labels until recently when Brian Burley began doing them by computer. Still, it was only two people putting in their spare time, and it did get to be something more than we could easily handle.

Joyce and I have other things we like to do with our spare time -- even other fanac -- but it got so that we were always in the midst of doing FOCAL POINT: Having given this new schedule a try for June, we not only produced one large FP, but also PO TLATCH #4, and The Enchanted Duplicator (which will be mailed out as soon as my next payday rolls around....).

The new FP schedule ought to allow us to get both it and POTLATCH out monthly, satisfy our other fan committments like the FANNUAL, and still have some time for other things.

Incidentally, the fifty fans who got LOG might be interested to know that that personalzine is a casualty of the new set-up. I'm going to be doing a lot more writing for FOCAL POINT than previously, and I don't think I could sustain two monthly fanzines. I haven't decided whether the diary would make a good feature for FP or not.

I realize this isn't exactly the fanzine subscribers signed up for, though it has much in common, but I hope you'll all give it a few issues' trial before you decide its some kind of raw deal.

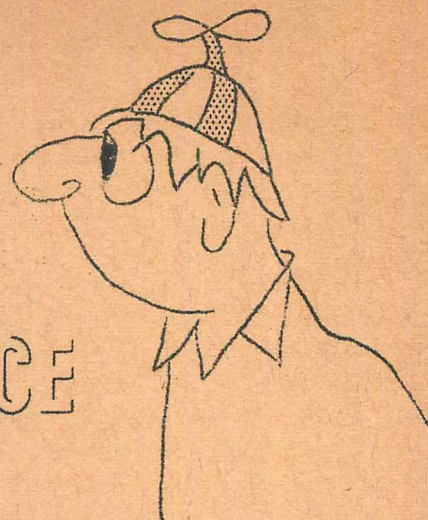
Outstanding subscriptions will be honored at a one-for-one basis, which is a pretty good deal, I guess, if you have something like a 12 issue sub for \$2. For now, I'm setting the new sub rates pretty low, 3/\$1. I want to keep FP fairly easy to get for those who like the material, but haven't worked up the courage to write a letter of comment, and I think fanzine prices have been moving unnecessarily upward so I want to set a good example. If you're entitled to FPs past #50 and really want a refund, write, and I'll send you a buck or two, though I hope no one will do that.

Though FP is obtainable for money, my preference is really for other expressions of interest. Letters of comment get issues, as do articles and faan fiction (fiction about fans and fandom, not amateur science fiction), and cartoons. Hope to hear from you all.

-- Arnie Katz

WORCESTER WITH SAUCE EASTERCON 22

JOHN BERRY



I arrived on Saturday, the second day of the con and a day later than I had intended. But then nobody except Pete Weston had any inkling that I was coming, so the surprise was just as great one day as the next. Indeed, I did surprise quite a number of people, although I'm sure the majority of the convention members took no note of my arrival. If it had been a small, intimate convention, instead of having over 400 registered members, and if there were now anything like the contact between British and American fandoms that existed in the 1950's, I might have surprised many more people. But then I probably would have had to meet many more people and my contact with each would have been more superficial. As it was the people I saw the most were those I had met when I was in England two years ago and those I knew by their fanzines whom I had not yet met.

The opportunity to appear unexpectedly at this year's British convention came from my being in France to study for six months. I took a very complicated series of trains, buses, and planes to London on Friday, but the journey took much longer than I had expected and I had to spend the night in London. The next morning I took another train to Worcester. On the way I met an utterly fascinating man, very sharp and in his fifties, I'd judge, who struck up a free-form conversation with me in the dining car, and we were soon talking as if we were old friends. We talked all the way to Worcester, and, besides the obvious benefit of meeting someone new and fascinating, the encounter limbered me up for conversation. It was the best possible preparation for a convention, and consequently Saturday was my best day at the con.

The very first person I saw in the con hotel was Pete Weston, who looked precisely like a harried con chairman. It wasn't until sometime Sunday night that I saw him relax, have a drink, and join the party; by then it was undoubtedly past that point I've heard so many con chairmen talk about, when you say, "It's out of my hands now; the hell with it!" Pete's wife, Eileen, provided a humanizing balance, but I don't think she had Pete to herself very much that weekend. After paying twenty-five shillings registration fee and picking up the very handsome program booklet, I went up to the lounge and into a crowd of not-quite familiar faces. I've seen enough photo-pages from past conventions that the crowd didn't look all strangers, but there was at first no one I knew. Then one of the faces came into focus--it was Darroll Pardoe, hiding under a heavy beard and long bushy hair the clean-cut Englishman he had seemed at the Baycon and Midwestcon three years ago. Since leaving the States he has acquired a wife, Rosemary, also a fan, and he has left the life of the student to become one of the Employed. Darroll, Rosemary, and I, along with a number of young fans whose names I'm afraid I've forgotten, set off to find some lunch but we found a Wimpy bar instead. A Wimpy would make me feel right at home--if I were in the habit of eating over-

cooked McDonalds burgers. And calculating food prices brought me up against one problem that would plague me all weekend. From one trip to England two years before, I had just about mastered the British currency system. Now they've changed it--and while in theory a decimal system should be easier for an American, in fact it was more confusing than ever, trying to keep in mind that one New Penny is worth 2 2/5 American cents (and 2 2/5 old pence). Since the system had just been converted, most of the English were hardly more adept at it than I, and they kept converting back to old shillings and pence, which only confused me more.

British cons don't seem to be markedly different from American ones. Because of the very modern hotel and the record-breaking attendance, this one felt much like an American world-con. I suspect I could play the old con game as well there as in the States: guess which ones are the fans. In the Giffard it was made easy, because everyone was a fan except the hotel employees, but even on the street outside it required little effort to spot the "fannish types". Pete Weston told me that when he and Eileen were outside she pointed at a group of people and cried out, "There are some fans!" Pete looked and said that they weren't. "Oh, no," said Eileen, "they're just people with very sensitive faces."

There were a few things about the con that reminded you that you were in England, not in Ohio or California or New York. I found that I had much less trouble understanding British accents than I had had two years before, but by the end of the weekend I had picked up equal parts of English sentence structure and a Northern Irish lilt. There seemed a more unanimous emphasis on alcohol there than at the typical American convention, where a great number of the fans are heads, yet Sadie Shaw remarked that there was much more emphasis in America on hard liquor, as opposed to the plethora of British beers. (Of course her experience with American cons was Southgate in '58, which was well before the current wide acceptance of drugs.) At any rate, I spent most of the weekend drinking Guinness, with a couple of pints of bitter as embellishment. "Picking up bad habits, are you?" said Bob Shaw, who had introduced me to Guinness two years before.

I traveled in diverse circles at the convention, and they didn't always overlap. James White and Bob and Sadie Shaw were there, and I talked quite a bit with Sadie, but on the whole I was surprised how little time I spent with them. For that reason I hope to visit Northern Ireland again before I leave Europe. I met Ella Parker and Ethel Lindsay manning the registration desk (and as a result left Bob Shaw standing in the hall.) "Wee Ethel" seemed to me about the way she ought to be: small, Scottish, and possessed of a very keen mind. Ella is short, stocky, short-haired, and forceful, a personality to be reckoned with in British fandom; I spent a fair amount of time at a party later that night barricaded in a corner talking to her, dissecting fandom old and new. Ella and Ethel are old hands at conventions and come prepared, as I found out when they offered me a cup of tea and some sausage rolls at around five in the morning.

But most of the con I spent in the company of young British fandom, in one form or another. I renewed acquaintance with Graham Boak, who is now becoming a Fanzine Editor again. I met Peter Roberts, slight, long-haired, usually wearing bright yellow overalls, and encouraging me constantly in my appreciation of Guinness. Pete is starting up CHECKPOINT as a newszine for British fandom, to fill the gap that has existed since SKYRACK disappeared.

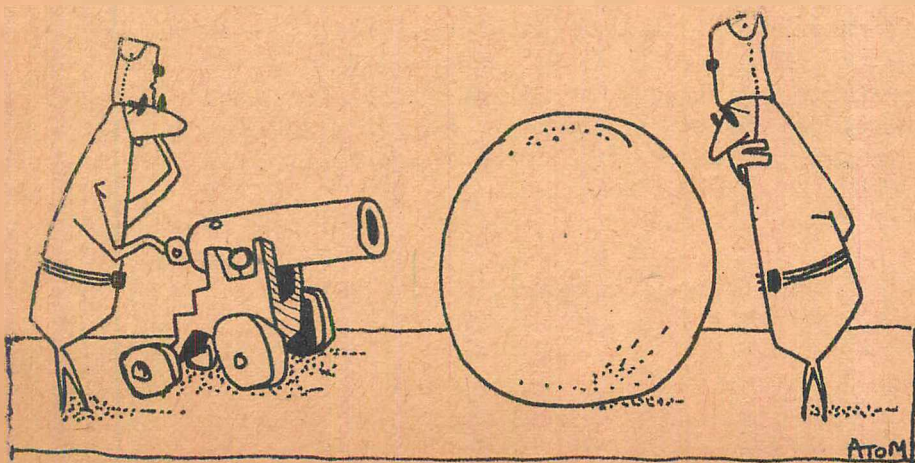
Then there was the FOULER crowd. This is the two editors of FOULER, and perhaps John Hall, who seemed to belong. (I believe John publishes his own fanzine or is planning to, as it seems every young British fan does. One issue, two issues, a bit of talk at several conventions, and you're inscribed in the annals of British fandom.) FOULER is a phenomenon that has stirred up British fandom in recent months, with no knowledge of it sloshing over into American fandom. The fanzine has seen four issues, all of which were given to me, auto-

graphed by the editors, at the convention. The tone is brash and rude, and by attacking current fandom in his editorial in the first issue, Greg Pickersgill drew a lot of fire by return mail. The attack was contradictory and never entirely serious. Greg used the same tone in person: young and with a fuzzy beard, he stood at the bar with a rum Coke in his hand and pontificated, always needling and always changing his targets or tossing off remarks about how unserious he was. He's quite a contradictory fellow. The effect of all this in print is to make a sloppy, angry, whimsical fanzine that has drawn more response from its 50-person mlg list than almost any other fanzine. FOULER is the closest thing to a focal point that British fandom has, yet it's an adolescent focal point, filled with excesses for the sake of excess. Curiously, Greg and his coeditor Roy Kettle seem to want a return to "fannishness", and yet they've become involved in a paper feud with Darroll Pardoe, the very man who for years has taken the brunt of young fans' attacks for being a prehistoric fossil, crying out for a return to old-time fannishness.

Saturday night there was a huge open party hosted by the Knights of St. Fantony (who had just inducted Bob Shaw and James White into their order) and cosponsored by the Heicon committee, and there was a brief party of young fans in room 407 that was dreamed up by Gray Boak and Peter Roberts. In 407 were Greg Pickersgill, holding forth on occasion, and John Hall with him, getting progressively drunk. I overheard a classicly beautiful argument in which Keith Bridges explained why he saw no reason to join the BSFA and a number of other fans tried to convince him how sinful it was to criticize the organization instead of pitching in to make it better. With very little editing it could have been an argument over the N3F.

The St. Fantony party was reminiscent of all crowded open parties, with the addition that the German fans had brought their proverbial virguzz. Mario Bosniak was carrying around a deadly-green bottle of the stuff and offering little glasses to anyone who would take one. Virguzz is a very powerful peppermint liqueur, and I found it very tasty. There's inevitably a bit of disappointment when you taste a drink that's supposed to "knock you right off your feet"; unless you are unusually susceptible to alcohol, no liquor will knock you out with a single shot. I drained my first glass with no ill effects but a warm glow, and Bob Shaw and I drank up all we could get. The virguzz and other potables induced Mario Bosniak and Anne MacCaffrey to carry on an operatic duel in the corner, at which both of them proved adept. (I traveled 6000 miles to meet Anne MacCaffrey and Dave Kyle, both of whom I had seen but never met at American conventions.)

The wee hours when the party had thinned out saw James White and Tom Schluck dancing (at first with each other), followed by tea and coffee for sobering and waking up. Still later, James and I and Ella and Ethel retired to the ladies' room for winding-down and small-scale fannish talk. James told us a bit about air-planes, since he works for an aircraft manufacturer. "At my job at Short's I've come to understand much more about air planes," he said. "It's not very reassuring."



"That's not very reassuring either," said Ethel.

Sunday I truly felt like a visiting dignitary, when John Spencer, a young fan I didn't even know, bought me a drink. I'm afraid I left him in the lurch a bit later when I went off to find some aspirin to combat the cold I was rapidly developing, although when I returned John and the Pardoes were just where I left them. A con is a great place to pick up a cold. I've heard the theory that it's like army boot camps, where people from all over the country bring their regional germs together and give them to each other.

The official program yielded up a bit of interest on Sunday. Anne MacCaffrey surprised many of the British fans by being so completely open and freewheeling; when she was young I'll bet she was brash. Since I've never read any of her books, I was a bit lost when she or the audience talked about Dragon Rider or her other work, but I still appreciated her statement that "Dragons are really a rather nice animal; they've just had bad press." After Anne's talk was a panel discussion; I forget the original topic, but it became concerned with the limits of science fiction. David Gerrold likes definitions and wanted to limit the size of his pond by defining sf; the others on the panel seemed to prefer open limits and no worry over fixing borders. From the audience, Jack Curran (and I hope that's how his name is spelled) expressed it best: "In most important things we deal not with edges but with centers."

Easily the most popular program item was the showing of CHARLY, which impressed everybody. The people who made it obviously knew what they were dealing with.

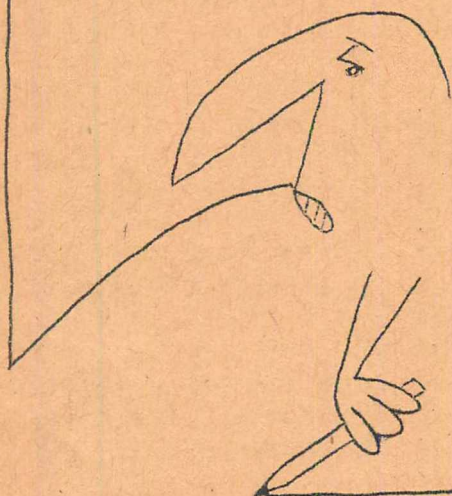
Sunday night everything wound down. The party was simply in the lounge, and after only a day and a half in Worcester I felt the way you do on the fourth night of a worldcon. For the first time in British con history there was something planned for Monday morning: a boat-ride on the river, modeled after the ride at Heidelberg. I was amazed to see that for some of its length the river was literally lined with wood, a wooden planking holding in the water on either bank. Such a ride strikes me as an excellent way to finish off a con. Fans have a tendency to stay indoors and never to mingle with the rest of the world, but getting a whole convention--the most unreal manifestation of fandom--out into a boat on a river with the sun shining and the wind blowing ties the microcosm back into the macrocosm.

I saw an amusing incident on my trip back to France. I flew on a small commercial airline from Ashford to Beauvais, and, as in most international travel in Europe, the flight offered you a chance to buy duty-free goods. There was an American businessman on the plane, and he had bought tickets at Ashford to exchange for liquor when we were in the air. But he wanted cognac, and by the time the stewardess got to him she had run out; he had to settle for something else. He got mad and started yelling about the inefficiency of the system. He was mad but he knew it wasn't the stewardess's fault, so he railed to her about the airline. "How can they be so inefficient?" he wanted to know. She was English and very sympathetic, but she would apologize for the company and so got in the way of his anger. He just couldn't contain himself. When we landed at Beauvais, he was still fuming, so when we lined up to disembark the stewardess said to him, "Can I give you a kiss?"

Suddenly everything was fine.

-- John D. Berry

the infinite beanie



terry carr

Did I ever tell you about the month I served on jury duty? It was a while back, but the psychic scars haven't completely healed yet. My hair wasn't as long then as it is now, which was no doubt why I was accepted for the grand jury, but my attitudes were about the same as now. So for a month I sat on the grand jury of the County of Kings, State of New York, and in the process of mingling with fellow-jurors I got a pretty good look at the "silent majority." It struck me that with a majority like that it's something of a tribute to this country that we have any minorities at all.

On the first day I foregathered with a whole courtroomful of people who'd been summoned for that month's jury duty; one by one, as our names were called, we filed up to the county recorder and presented our summonses and said whether we wanted to be excused from duty or not. Those of us who did want to be excused were to sit in the center aisle. Then we went one by one before the bastardly judge who was in charge that day and presented our reasons for wishing to be excused, to which he listened impatiently and said a peremptory yea or nay. There were few yeas, many nays. The one that bugged me was when a black guy said he wanted off because he ran his own small store and had no one to take it over for him; the judge said absolutely not, and proceeded to make an example of him before the roomful of jurors. "You people cry and complain that you aren't treated fairly before the law, that we discriminate against you. Then when we do call you to serve, you want to get out of it. Well, mister,

you're going to be on a jury this month." After which I counted the people in the room -- over 400 -- and the number of blacks who'd been invited to serve -- six. I guess the judge was right; they do get treated fairly before the law, don't they?

So before long the specified number of good men and true (presumably) assembled in Grand Jury Room 4 to do business for the State of New York, County of Kings, and we were there every day during the week for nearly the full month. We heard 109 cases in 17 days, indicted 107, which gives you some idea of what a rubber-stamp function the grand jury is in New York. Even the two "no true bill" decisions came at the urging of the Assistant D.A.s who presented the cases; they knew they didn't have enough evidence to get a conviction in court, and told us so.

Basically what happens is that the Assistant D.A. -- any of about half a dozen Bright Young Law Grads -- brings in a witness who says, "I left my house in Brooklyn the County of Kings on this date and locked all the doors and windows carefully. When I returned I found the back window had been jimmied -- " "Strike that from the record as a conclusion," interrupts the Assistant D.A. "Please go on." "Yes. Well, the window was open and my TV was gone, three rings and a watch, my golf clubs, my typewriter and, uh, my record player, they were all gone." Asst. D.A.: "Did you later see these items in the custody of Sergeant Kschnutz, and did you observe the man whose identity you later learned to be Joseph Verrazanno, the defendant, also in the custody of Sergeant Kschnutz?" "Yes, I did." "What was the approximate value of all the items stolen from your premises?" "\$521.27, I think."

The Assistant D.A. thanks him and calls in the arresting officer. "Officer, did you arrest Joseph Verrazanno?" "Yes." "Would you please tell the jury the circumstances leading up to that arrest." "Yes. We had a phone call from a lady who said -- " "Please don't repeat what was told to you; that's hearsay evidence. As a result of that conversation, what did you do?" "As a result of that conversation, I proceeded to the premises at 179 14th St., in Brooklyn, the County of Kings, where I observed the defendant loading into the back of a panel truck a TV set, three rings and a watch, a set of golf clubs, a typewriter and, uh, a record player. I asked him if he -- " " -- And as a result of a conversation you had with a man whose name you later learned to be Joseph Verrazanno, what did you do?" "I arrested him."

Assistant D.A. thanks him, dismisses him, picks up book of New York law and says to the jury, "If you find from the evidence in this case that the defendant Joseph Verrazanno did have in his possession stolen property valued at more than \$250 but less than \$1500, you may properly find a charge of grand larceny in the second degree." Asst. D.A. and recorder leave the room, and our jury foreman says boredly, "Any points for discussion?" "As charged," mutters someone. "All those in favor of the charge as presented, raise your right hands." Everyone raises right hands except me; I raise my left, since I'm leaning my chin on my right hand.

A few of the cases were amusing. One of them was a burglary of a candy store; the police got a call telling them the burglary was going on,

a patrol car sped swiftly to the scene and found the store's door open. The cop went in and shined his flashlight around, discovered a guy crouched on hands and knees ducked down behind the counter. "What're you doing?" the cop asked. The guy on the floor put his finger to his lips and said, "Shhh. There's a burglar in here and I'm trying to find him. Hand me your flashlight."

But very little of it was fun and games. For one thing, there were the people. Grand juries are chosen carefully from people in at least middle-income brackets who've indicated willingness to serve on grand juries; this means 75% of the people are retired businessmen. Retired businessmen tend to be conservative, to know extremely little about what's going on in the world, and to believe they know a lot. In particular this applies to dope cases, which about a fourth of our cases were. The first case we dismissed was one involving a streetcorner grass dealer -- nothing but grass, and absolutely no solid evidence that would stand up in court. The Assistant D.A. told us we'd have to dismiss the case, and we did, but afterwards everyone moaned and creebed and one guy actually said, "I don't know how I'll be able to sleep tonight, knowing we let that monster loose in society."

I had a feeling of encountering another world entirely when I sat among the people on that grand jury. Those were people to whom the American flag really meant something (one guy pointed out that the flag in the jury room had only 48 stars on it; I'd never have thought to count), to whom cleanliness isn't so much next to godliness as a prerequisite for being human, to whom democracy is synonymous with capitalism, and who have all those attitudes about Mom and apple pie. It was godawfully appalling.

One of my fellow jurors, for instance, was Fine, an insurance salesman who smoked dreadful cigars, wore bow ties and told "cute" jokes between cases to the entire room. "Hey, I got one for you, and it doesn't have any dirty words in it, so the ladies can listen." (There were four women, all middle-aged. They spent their time reading the newspaper horoscopes and commenting to each other on what nice diction those young Assistant D.A.s had, and how nicely they combed their hair.) Two or three of us groan at Fine, most of the rest are all ears. Fine then tells a titterful joke about infidelity, or homosexuality, or defecation, or something equally uproarious. I.Q. 100 jokes. I hate them, and I hate him.

Meanwhile, what kind of a juror is he? A woman comes in and testifies that she had friends over to her apartment one night and her estranged husband (they were legally separated for nearly two years) phoned and asked who was there. She told him, and said she didn't want to see him. "Is so-and-so your boyfriend?" he demanded. "None of your business," she said, and they hung up after he'd made a vague threat. Later that night he climbed the fire escape, smashed through her bedroom window, pulled a knife and stabbed her boyfriend three times, killing him. He also stabbed the boyfriend's brother, who was trying to fight him off. After the evidence has been presented, Fine says, "There's something fishy about this case. I'll bet she was having an affair with that guy. I'll bet that's why her husband lost his head and got into a fight with him." He's getting all set to remind us of the Unwritten Law when he is, thank god, shouted

down. I got the impression he wouldn't have objected to the case if it had been presented as a dirty joke.

Personally, after three-weeks-plus on that grand jury, I had the feeling that the jury itself was a dirty joke.

A couple of issues ago I said a few things about this year's Hugo nominees, including those for best fan writer, and a friend of mine told me I'd blown my cool. "You don't win Hugos by conceding right away that someone else is going to beat you," he said.

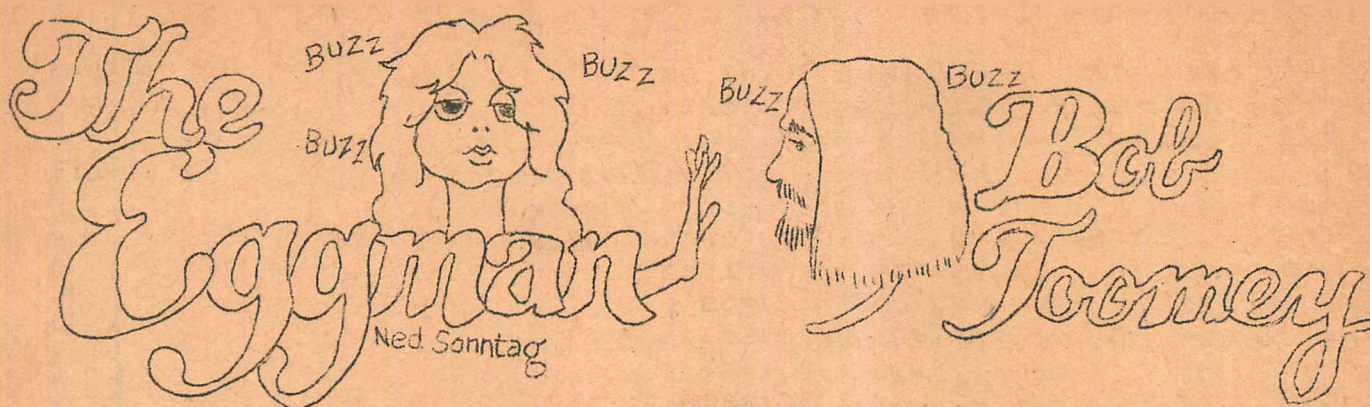
I blew my cool? How nice; I've been trying to shed my image of distinguished cool ever since somebody told me I had one. Besides, I wasn't trying to win a Hugo when I wrote that column; I really do think Ted Pauls has the fan writer Hugo wrapped up and I didn't see anything wrong with saying so. What I do regret about that column was that I let my opinion of Pauls' writing enter the picture. I didn't realize it at the time, but there seems to be a major ideological war shaping up in fandom between the proponents of fannish fandom and those of what might be called "review fandom," and Pauls himself seems to be spearheading the attack of the latter group. This is a battle that I could get caught right in the middle of, being both a fan and a professional, and I'd like to decline the focal pointness, if I may. I did my fan feuding years ago: I won a couple, lost a couple, and have fond memories of none of them.

Anyway, why should I want to feud with Ted Pauls? He consistently gives good reviews to the SF Specials, and I think it was he who once set aside a section of a review column in BEABOHEMA to praise the SF Specials as a whole. Bite the hand that feeds me egoboo?

But mainly, it would just be gross and unseemly for the two of us to start a shouting-match when we're both nominated for the same award. I know I'm being anachronistic in feeling that awards should imply standards for both the work being voted on and the people who stand to pick up those awards, but at least I have a little company in Bob Silverberg, who told me yesterday that he's amazed at all the self-promotion going on now in fandom. It's not just Dick Geis or Charlie Brown, either: even Mike Glicksohn seems to have caught the disease, judging from a few remarks he's made in ENERGUMEN editorials. Thank god he has some tact with which to temper them.

Anyway, if people are choosing up sides for a fannish-vs.-sercon feud, please leave me out. (If anybody wants to organize a fannish peace march to replace the costume ball at the Noreascon, though, I'll join that. I even have some neat ideas for signs and slogans. How about EGOS ARE NOT GOOD FOR CHILDREN AND OTHER LIVING THINGS. Or maybe simply FUCK FEUDS.)

-- Terry Carr
20 May 1971



I live in a very exciting neighborhood on the slightly tattered fringe of New York City's Lower East Side, about a stoned throw from the soon to be discontinued but never to be forgotten Fillmore East. This neighborhood is a sort of a mecca for colorful bands of roving hippies and junkies and winos and plain old ("I need eleven cents, mister, oh please, oh god, I just gotta have eleven cents, I'll die, I gotta, gotta, gotta, please") bums of all ages.

I mean, you see this pale skinny chick no more than fourteen years old, barefoot, wearing jeans she washed and bleached one hundred times the afternoon of the day she bought them to give them that properly faded appearance, and a tie-dyed tee shirt and a white afro hairdo, and tiny little tinker bells sewn on all over her, and eyes like two holes poked in a snowbank with a charred stick, and, fourteen years old, looking, well, used, if you know what I mean. She comes up to you and puts the palm of her hand flat against your chest, and breathes in deep in such a way as to jut out the nipples of her pommagranate breasts against the material of her tie-dyed tee-shirt, and she says, "Hey, man, can I ask you a question?"

Now it happens you're familiar with this ploy, it's been worked on you before. It's like the sales technique that involves getting a foot in the door. Its purpose is to change your status from that of moving target to that of stationary target. The next phase in the technique is to embarrass the victim into cooperation. You mustn't let it reach that stage.

You furrow your brow, and say, "I'm broke, sweet Jesus. I'm bumming money. Wow, far out. I'm glad you stopped me. Please, can you help? Please, please. I don't know what to do."

Her hand goes away. The brief spark that almost ignited in her eyes goes away. She becomes transparent like smoke, and she twists and curls upward like smoke, and she dissipates into the general black miasma that hangs over NYC like the great vast tarpits out west where they're always dredging up the remains of mastadons and sabretooth tigers and so forth, and she goes away.

But what the hell, it's spring, and the odor of incense is strong in the air. Of course, so is the odor of carbon monoxide, but let's get off that subject. The point is, it isn't totally bad around here. Take for example the other day. I was walking down St. Marks place on my way to the BMT, and wishing, as I sometimes do, that I was high, when suddenly out of the rolling mass of freaks and weirdos and Andy Warhol Superstars and under cover fuzz, extends this hand. The owner of the hand is traveling in the opposite

direction as me, and in his hand, held precisely between the thumb and index finger, is a joint. He says, "Here."

"Gosh," I say.

I take it, he moves on, I look down. It is, by golly, a genuine, foursquare, non-dovetailed, but perfectly well-rolled, half-smoked joint of, ah, you-know. I toke on it. And then I freeze into my customary posture of hunched paranoia. Holy shit, I think without thinking. Here I am in the middle of a public sidewalk in broad daylight smoking an illegal joint of, ah, you-know. My merciful heavens.

I take another toke to calm my nerves, and glance about me surreptitiously. Nobody seems to be paying me undue attention. I cover the joint with my hand and cup my other hand around it and turn in a 360° circle. I fall down. Then I realize I can eat the you-know any time I want to and I'll be safe. Ha, ha. I laugh in relief. I pick myself up. Heeheeheehee. I dissolve into giggles, and take another toke, and hand the joint to the next guy who passes me.

"Out of sight," he says.

I exhale. "Out of mind."

(Heeheeheeheehee.)

I like to think that joint is still going the rounds, still giving pleasure and paranoia in equal doses to all with whom it comes in contact. At times like that, the neighborhood seems to fairly glow.

Another nice day was the day I went over to the free clinic at St. Marks Place. I wanted to know why I was waking up in the middle of the night and coughing for two to three hours before I could get back to sleep if at all. The reason, I learned, was viral bronchitis. The kindly doctor gave me some cough medicine, and told me I should stop smoking cigarettes. But he said I could go on smoking you-know as much as I liked, because you-know couldn't hurt me a bit.

"Gee, Doc," I said. "That's swell."

"I'm hip," he said.

"Heavy."

"Groovy."

"Jimi Hendrix."

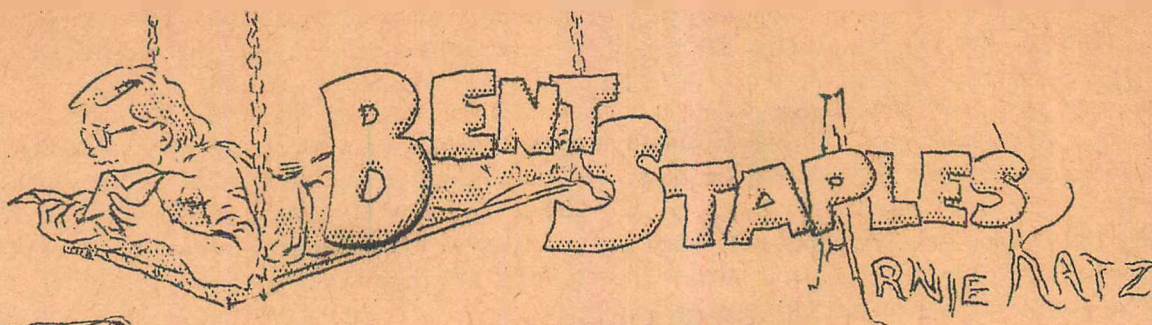
"Janis Joplin"

"Herman Hesse."

"Robert A. Heinlein"

And then we did the secret handshake, and it was really great to be so in, and it's really great to live in such an in neighborhood, if you-know what I mean.





Earl Evers, in his ZEEN #11 editorial, lavished considerable praise on FOCAL POINT. Since it's a rare fanned these days who will blow the horn for anyone but himself, it seemed only fair to devote as much time to consideration of his single grotch as I have to mulling over his kind words.

Earl thinks that FOCAL POINT is missing something: Fanzine Reviews. He errs in thinking that we've never run them, but the spirit of his objection is valid. I haven't used fanzine reviews nearly as often as I'd like, mostly because I didn't have enough space in FP for more than capsule reviews, and I didn't see much point in that.

Those who saw my column in ODD know what kind of reviewer I am. To the rest, let me say that I am a hard fan to please, but it can be done. I try to be fair in my comments, but I naturally have biases just like everyone else.

THE NEW ECLIPTIC #8, edited by Mike Glyer, 14974 Osceola St., Sylmar, Ca. 91342. No price listed, no frequency listed. mimeo and offset. 25pp.

In a letter to me sent with this issue, Mike Glyer bemoans the fact that no one on the East Coast writes letters of comment to him or reviews his fanzine. If the issues I've seen thus far are a fair sample, silence from these parts could come under the heading of unappreciated kindness.

THE NEW ECLIPTIC strikes me as the kind of fanzine which substitutes neofannish rudeness for quality, pro "names" for content, and a streak of envy a mile wide for solid effort.

Glyer tromps on SFR in his editorial, something I don't think he'd do if Geis were still publishing. It's surprising to see Glyer criticize the value standards underlying SFR, since his own standards seem to derive largely from Geis.

Glyer comes out against "professionalism" in fanzines, citing SFR as a prime offender in this regard. He describes "professionalism" thus:

"To those who pursue 'professionalism', quality of content means nothing, pro names and graphic trappings, everything. For them, emulation -- duplication -- of prozines is the order of the day. Lavish spending of money is not admired, but required. Paid printers, binderies, electrostenciling, expensive paper, these are their concern."

Except that he confuses two trends, pseudo-Campbellism and a skimping on content in favor of graphics, this is not a totally inaccurate statement about the ills of fandom.

Glyer points out a Silverberg speech outline in SFR as an example of a piece used because of its name value. Since I didn't read the Agberg article in question, I have no way of knowing if Glyer's assessment is correct.

But I have read "To Hell With the SFWA" by Perry Chapdelaine, and "Apollo 14; A Very Personal Look" by Andy Offutt in this issue of NE, and I think Mike ought to read his own editorial a few times carefully before doing the next issue.

The Chapdelaine "article" is a short announcement that he's quitting the SFWA -- and Who cares? Offutt's article takes a long time to get to the launch, because Andy must first tell us what a Great Big Man he is, how many books he's sold and to whom, and how he hobnobs with all kinds of Big Deal People. This kind of article is barely ok when done very, very occasionally, but Offutt looks like he's making a career out of this kind of self-aggrandizing article.

Recurring to the editorial again, Glyer prints a postcard from Dick Geis, which gives him the brushoff in no uncertain terms, and then gives his own attitude toward "professionalism", probably unwittingly.

"But I'm not interested in professionalism. I've neither the money, the facilities, nor the inclination to pretend to make the NE a work of art. But I am aware that fanzine buyers are more likely to pick up a copy of NE if it has something by a professional writer in it, than if it is just Mike Glyer and company gassing off. I dare Geis to tell me that his crudzine PSYCHOTIC evolved to a 1700-subscriber zine sheerly through the power of his charm."

Anyone who talks of having to attract fanzine buyers has really got a case of pseudo-Campbellism, and anyone who thinks PSYCHOTIC was a crudzine just has a big mouth.

The remaining major item in this issue is "RMW", the account of a visit by Glyer and friend to the home of Robert Moore Williams. Some of this is quite interesting as a glimpse into the mind of an sf hack. Williams' reflection that Palmer was one editor who knew how to "stink 'em up, just right" tells you quite a bit about the man's attitude toward his craft.

Glyer might have used a little discretion in printing Williams' remarks about the SFWA. I'm not sure even that worthy would want to be quoted as having said, "They can fuck themselves, the whole damn bunch of them," in response to a question by Glyer asking for his opinion of the group.

Glyer, for some reason, feels he should take a stand on the SFWA in THE NEW ECLIPTIC, and has many references to the group scattered through the issue. Not that I have any Mission to defend the pros' N3F, but the SFWA is a subject which ought to concern no one except professional science fiction writers (and to a lesser extent, editors and publishers). It's hardly Glyer's place to knock (or praise) the SFWA, an organization of which he has no direct knowledge. Besides, it's boring.

The rest of the issue is filled out with things like amateur science fiction, which is best left in silence.

CONTENT:3.5

APPEARANCE:3

COMMENT: A judicious application of the principles set forth in the editorial to the rest of the zine would make some improvement.

THE LOWDOWN, edited by Richard Labonte and Mike & Susan Glicksohn, 53 Rosedale Ave., Ottawa 01, Ont., Canada. Mimeo and offset. 50pp.

Every year, except the last one, a group of Canadian fans led by Richard Labonte has provided a valuable service to fandom by publishing material about the Hugo nominees. Though it doesn't make much of an attempt at objectivity, the LOWDOWN at least attempts to be fair.

This year's edition of LOWDOWN is the most ambitious one yet. It has a very sensible innovation, reprints of material by fan writers and artists nominated for Hugos. This at least gives the typical Hugo voter, largely ignorant of fandom, an idea of what's on the ballot.

My only grotch about the selections is that they really should've extended the same courtesy to Terry Carr as they did to the other nominees. That is, they should've chosen one of his 3-4 page columns and printed it intact. The exerpts, which eliminate all the more thoughtful material in "The Infinite Beanie", give a distorted picture of Terry's fanwriting.

I also find the commentary on the fan Hugo nominees by the editors has one unfortunate flaw: they're too ready to pidgeon-hole. The comments which run "if you are a ____ kind of fan, you should vote for ____" are too simplistic, and worse, inaccurate. I'm basically a fannish fan, but I assure you, Speculation is going to get a high position on my Hugo ballot.

Despite these flaws, LOWDOWN is a good job, one which deserves a lot more egoboo than it gets.

CONTENT:7

APPEARANCE:7

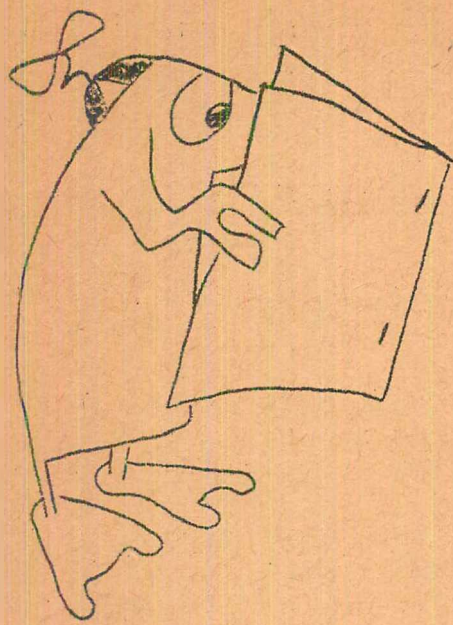
COMMENT: A good job, and one that gets better every time.

METANOIA #9, edited by Greg and Suzy Shaw, 64 Taylor Dr., Fairfax, California 94930. 50¢. Irregular. Mimeo. 32 pp.

It's hard to talk about the fannish revival without mentioning METANOIA, Greg Shaw's fine personalzine. Particularly during the past year, I think METANOIA has had a considerable influence upon active fanzine fandom, mostly for the good.

His relaxed style and generally level-headed attitudes continue to shine in this Bob Shaw Issue/Annish as they have in the eight preceeding ones. Though he sometimes rides his hobby horse - it's a rocking horse - a little hard, METANOIA remains a fanzine that makes me feel good while reading it, without resorting to the blandness which typifies most of the fanzines which soft-pedal differences of opinion.

Greg's writings are the heart of the fanzine. This issue he describes a trip to Los Angeles to canvass the record companies, tells more stories about his wacky neighbors, and comments on a newish rock apa which he formed.



It's obvious that he was tremendously excited by his tour of the record companies and the offer to subsidize a 9,000 copy edition of WHO PUT THE BOMP, but he doesn't do his usual good job in communicating what it was like to the readers. Greg is very caught up in his Hot New Commercial Trip, and, indeed, who can blame him if he is excited about the opportunity to make something he loves as much as rock music into a livelihood? Unfortunately, it doesn't seem to make for vivid writing.

This issue's Neighbor Story describes his local loud-mouthed gossip, and comes off much better. Greg's tales must sound weird to someone who has lived his entire life in a city. In the three years since I moved to Brooklyn, I've hardly known anything about the people who lived near me in either apartment. I can still remember life in suburban Long Island well enough to know that Greg doesn't have to invent the colorful characters he writes about so entertainingly.

The main features of the issue apart from Greg are an article by me and Terry Carr's Entropy Reprints, this time presenting three short pieces by Bob Shaw. Mine concerns frustration dreams and details a mythical fannish frustration dream set in Irish Fandom. The two pieces give the issue the proper Shavian flavor for a Bob Shaw Issue.

Also included are letters from Charles Upton to William Burroughs, and MET's always interesting letter column, featuring such luminaries as Greg Benford and Norm Clarke.

Because of the demands of WHO PUT THE BOMP, Greg has decided that this will probably be the last large METANOIA, but he hopes to continue with the zine, reverting to the format of the earlier issues which relied even more strongly on his own writing. I hope he does continue since MET is always a bright spot in the mailbox when it arrives.

CONTENT:8

APPEARANCE:7

COMMENT:A Must, and copies are still available for 50¢.

-- Arnie Katz

The Enchanted Duplicator by Walt Willis and Bob Shaw, with all new illustrations by Ross Chamberlain has finally been published in an edition of approximately 275 copies by me as volume one of the New Insurgent Library of Fandom. The entire proceed from the advance order of about 100 copies was donated to the Bob Shaw Fund to bring Bob to the Noreascon, subsequent revenue will go to defray the cost of the publication, and money collected beyond that will be given to the fans responsible for the book.

RED, which describes the travels of Jophan in his search for the enchanted duplicator, is considered by many the single greatest piece of fanwriting ever. It's a publication which belongs in every fan's collection. And even those who already have earlier editions will want this one for the spectacular Ross Chamberlain drawings.

Send your dollar to the editor. Yes.

fanzine

"Michael, my sweet," my wife said to me with an air of studied indifference which didn't fool me for an instant, "what have you got there?"

I'd sensed her curiosity growing for the last three days. It had been initially aroused when we'd returned from Lunacon and I'd wrapped her in a plastic bag and stored her in a carton in the corner of the room, going to bed with a pile of musty fanzines. Naturally she refrained from saying anything in case it was some arcane fannish ritual of which she daredn't appear ignorant. But when I actually put off reading the latest Spiderman, she seemed to realize that something momentous was afoot.

Having prepared the groundwork, I was ready to reveal my surprise. Pulling myself up to my full 5 foot 7, and allowing a gleam of reverence to suffuse my sensitive fannish face, I intoned in majestic capital letters, "Among other things, my dear, THESE ARE... HYPHEN!" and I waited for the gasp of awe, and the automatic frenzied clutching of the fingers.

"Oh...you mean like those strange people we saw in New York smoking those funny little cigarettes?"

"No, NO, NO!! Not high fen, Hyphen, HYPHEN! The classic immortal fabulous fannish fanzine of classic immortal fabulous fannish Walt Willis. And that's not all! There's an Innuendo, a Foolscap, two Lighthouse, and I also have a whole bunch of Quips. What do you think of that?" I could feel my mental horizons broadening at the mere thought of such gems.

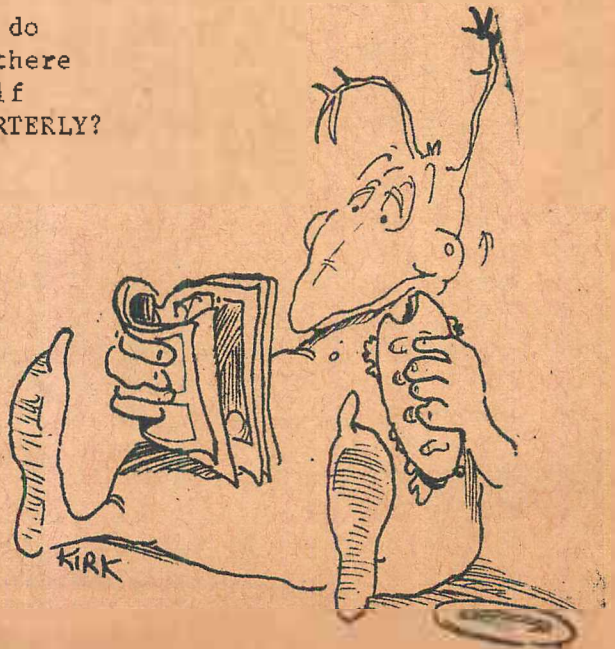
"Perhaps if you went to the doctor and had a shot of penicillan, dear...?"

"You...you...you fakefan you!! Those aren't symptoms, they're all old fanzines; the cream of the cream, so to speak. Arnie Katz gave them to me when we were in New York." The latter was added with a slight condescending smirk as I awaited the inevitable question.

"He gave them to you? Why on Earth would he do that? And where are we going to put them? Over there with your boxed set of OSFAN? Or here on the shelf with your Morocco-bound volumes of RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY? Or..."

MIKE

GLICKSOHN



"ARGGH! Woman leave my house...er..your house! And don't come back until you can tell me the top ten fanzines from the 1959 FANAC Poll. Complete with editors! These are fannish fanzines, of the very first quality. Why, many fans list them among the best fanzines ever published. And Arnie gave them to me to Show Me The Light and to Lead Me Down The Proper Path. He's unabashedly trying to shape my fannish development in the hopes that I'll eventually come to realize that There Is No True Ghod But Fannishness -- he told me so himself. And these fanzines are the first step along that path. I'm going to seal them in an inert gas atmosphere and store them in a vault along with my copy of Fantastic Four #1, the wrapper from my first bag of Mallo-Mars and my piece of lint from Bob Tucker's navel."

"But why would a fan like Arnie bother with you? Surely he can't be that desperate to sell subscriptions to FOCAL POINT?"

"No, no, no. Nothing so mercenary. It's much more basic than that. Right down to the fundamentals. You see..." I paused for the dramatic effect, "Arnie thinks I have POTENTIAL."

"NO!!"

"Yes! Yes, he does. He said so. He thinks I have potential, and he wants to ensure that I achieve it. He sensed from ENERGUMEN that I was drifting towards fannish fandom and came along to guide the way, to help me see things in the proper perspective. Potential has to be cultivated, you know."

"Yeah? Like mushrooms? Aren't you satisfied being the Boy Wonder?"

"Not any more! What's a mere Boy Wondership to a fellow with potential. I won't be happy until I've taken my place in the fannish pantheon, until my name is spoken in the same breath as Burbee and Willis and Shaw. In fact, I won't stop until I'm publically acclaimed as the greatest Canadian humorist since Leland Sapiro!!"

"But, dear, if you've suddenly acquired this difference in potential, shouldn't your fannish writing be more current? Are letters to PHUCET going to be enough?"

"Of course not. I'm glad to see you understand. Why I practically devote my entire days now to searching for fabulous fannish incidents to chronicle; and pondering possible topics for fearless, trenchant and outspoken articles. Whenever something happens, the first thing I ask myself is whether it's sufficient to plunge all fandom into war. And as soon as something comes to me, I'm going to write it all down, in a devastatingly brilliant style of course, and send it off to Arnie."

"What for? We already trade for FOCAL POINT. You don't have to try and extend our subscription, do you?"

"No, no, of course not. Didn't I tell you? As well as thinking I have potential, Arnie also admired my developing writing skill. He asked me to do something for FOCAL POINT...he thinks I'm a blossoming fannish writer."

"Oh...Oh dear...Oh."

"Susan, what's the matter?"

"I was just wondering, dear...do you suppose he's wrong about all those other things as well?"

-- Mike Glicksohn

I REMEMBER HACKETTSTOWN

The raw neofan is the best fan in the world. Sage, critic, comedian, poet, artist, fan-editor; all talents are equally native to him. Ah, how like a Ghod is the raw neofan! Just ask him, he'll be glad to tell you.

Assuming the raw neofan has something to recommend him, he eventually passes from his fannish infancy into his fan childhood. He comes to see himself as the puling pup he is in relation to the more mature and experienced fans. He does the wrong things, he says the wrong things, he even thinks the wrong things. Worse for him, he knows it himself.

Then if he stays with it, the neofan learns the ropes, sharpens his taste, and becomes a full-fledged fan.

After about a year of fanac, the fan reaches his fannish adolescence. A curious thing happens; he thinks he knows all there is to know about fandom after his year of socialization. He has definite opinions on every subject, particularly on the fact that he's no longer a neofan. He's very insistant about that.

When he's progressed a few years more, he looks back at himself as he was during the adolescent period and realizes how much he's learned since then.

This is fannish adulthood.

But in fandom as in Mundane, no one is ever wholly mature, completely adult, and realistic. No, we all have our conceits and fantasies, which we drag behind us like a cherished rag doll as we stride purposefully toward adulthood.

If we could only remain ignorant of our shortcomings! If the moment of truth never had to come, how much less complicated would be the lives of fen!

The world, unfortunately, does not run that way. We stroll along, serene in our confidence that we have Made It, that we are one of the Grown Ups, until we come face to face with the reality that gives the lie to one of our childish dreams. And in the destruction of that dream, we undergo an experience which marks us and shapes our lives.

ARNIE KATZ

Recently, I had such an experience.

I was home after a hard day at the frozen food game, when the phone rang.

"Hello," I said.

"Hello, Arnie," said a voice at the other end. It sounded like a Greek chorus composed of quintuplets.

"Who is this?" I asked, not without a tinge of trepidation.

"This is Brian Burley," the voices said to me. Knowing that it was only one person, it didn't sound like a Greek chorus to me anymore. It sounded like Ghod Himself, speaking at me through Ma Bell.

"It's time for the labels," he intoned.

"You sound, uh, funny, Brian."

"How so?" he asked.

"Well, you sound like you have your head in a reverberation chamber, or something." There was something at the back of my mind, trying to get out.

"Well, it's time to do your labels again." He paused ominously. "You do want labels, don't you?" It sounded like he was talking in a cavern or something.

Cavern!

I continued the conversation, praying that "Brian" wouldn't be able to read the fear and excitement mingling in my voice. He talked of many things, before he dismissed me: of the cons he was putting on and would be putting on over the next year or two, of the club meetings he had attended, of the labels he had run. "I'm starting to write articles," he told me as he hung up.

I almost fainted at this, but managed to get off the line without giving myself away.

I have lived with a theory of fandom for about the last five years of my sojourn in fandom. I held that there were three stages of fandom, the neofans, the ordinary fans, and the BNFs. The destiny of fandom, as I saw it, was in the hands of those BNFs, Bloch and Tucker, White and Carr, Warner, Shaw, and Bergeron. I accepted this as an article of faith. I accepted it as readily as one accepts the laws of gravitation or the FAPA waitlist, but this comforting notion of fannish order suddenly stood stripped of its thin veneer of reality. I saw it for what it was, a wish-dream.

Perhaps fandom actually was that way, once, when things were simpler. But now we live in the Brian Burley age of fandom.

And there is no Brian Burley, as we have thought of him.

There might have actually been a Brian Burley at one time; reports differ; but now he is merely the persona of a cabal seeking to grasp the power of fandom within its hands for Ghu knows what purposes.

And where is this cabal? Why, they are headquartered in hidden caverns beneath Northeast megopolis, left over from the deros when they moved to California. How else to explain how one fan can be simultaneously a member of WSFA in Washington, the Lunarians in New Jersey, the Insurgents in Brooklyn, and a host of others too numerous to list here. The caves are filled with high-speed transport tubes, which rush Brian Burley androids from place to place up and down the coast. This not only allows maximum use of the cabal's as yet limited supply of androids (more copies are doubtless being built in some secret fastness), but allows each android to make several stops each evening. A typical "Brian Burley" evening might include dinner at the Dietz', an Insurgent meeting, and a midnight revel of the SCA.

Sector by sector, this conspiracy is getting control of the vital processes of fandom. If you want to hold an East Coast regional, whom do you call? Brian Burley. If you faunch for an invitation to the Society for Creative Anachronism, who do you ask? Brian Burley. If you want to drop in on the Lunarians one Saturday, who can arrange it? Brian Burley. Need a print-out of the Mona Lisa by computer? Ask Burley.

If Brian Burley withdrew from fandom today, the seemingly invincible facade of U.S.fandom would flake off and disappear like an old paint job. Without Burley, could the worldcon circularize its membership? No! Could LOCUS or FOCAL POINT reach out to unite a fandom reeling under the shock of the gaffiation of The Burley? No! Not without Brian Burley's labels, they couldn't.

And now he says he's starting to write articles. Soon the mighty combine that sends Burley simulcra into every nook and cranny of fandom will begin churning out fabulous fan-finish articles at a rate that will make John Berry at his most prolific seem like a fringe-fan. Within a year, Burley will be the one indispensable columnist for every major fanzine. By that time, it will also be impossible to hold a convention or even a club meeting, without Brian Burley.

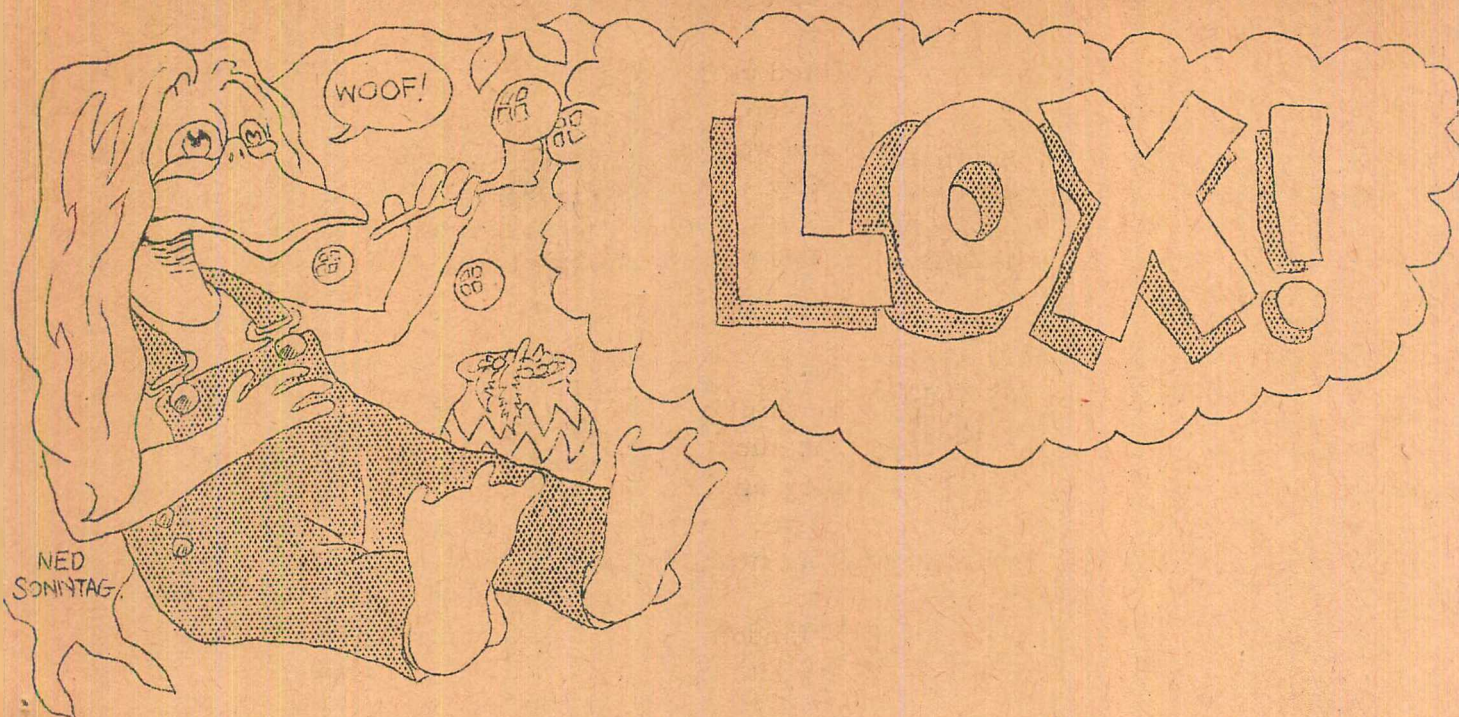
And once fandom has been clutched by the throat by the Burley Trust, they'll put the screws to us, mark my words. Down there in the caverns underneath the earth, they're plotting and scheming, developing nasty plans for thee and me.

The process is now all but irreversable, since the Burley Ring seems unshakable in its power, inexhaustable in its resources.

I advise all of you to do what I'm going to do: make a deal with the Burley Cartel now, before fandom is brought to its knees in unconditional surrender by the shadowy figures from the caves which pull the strings for "Brian Burley".

I just signed up for a lifetime supply of Burley labels. How about you?

-- Arnie Katz



DAVE HULVEY
Rt 1, Box 198
Harrisonburg, Va.
22801

I agree, the contents of FOCAL POINT are indeed comment-worthy. I've desired to write locs to the zine before, but didn't think you'd have room for me, or almost anyone else, because of the various departments. This is a welcome change, not only because it gives the contributors a chance for some feedback to their input, but because it makes it unequivocally clear -- probably even to the dumbest fugghead -- that FOCAL POINT is a bi-weekly genzine of fannish good cheer, and not a fandom-wide vehicle for financial and ego-gratification. In short, FP is a fun, hobby-type thing, not an antiseptic Newszine, for money.

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I do tend to think of FOCAL POINT as a bi-weekly genzine rather than just as a newszine, and I hope the letter column will add a dimension which has been missing until now.

I wouldn't say a Newszine must be mercenary. FOCAL POINT, in both incarnations, has always been pretty easy-going about cutting people off. I've never cut someone off the mailing list whom I felt was really interested in the zine. Just because LOCUS is operated in an unfannish (one is tempted to say "anti-fannish" and have done with it) way doesn't mean all fanzines have to be that way.

RICK STOOKER
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I have this thing about paying for fanzines when there are so many other calls upon my limited finances. Except for YANDRO and your competitor and for the first issue of a particular fanzine you send away for, when you have no choice but to pay, I prefer to write locs for copies. Not only is it cheaper, but, as Darrell Schweitzer said

somewhere, 'fanzines are most fun if you're involved personally"

The picture of the Lunacon wasn't painted very attractively. But as a fan stuck out in Alton, I can see how, going to my first con, I'll have problems knowing who everyone is. I've never seen a fan in person, and wouldn't know one without his propellor beanie. Of course, fringe fans from New York wouldn't have this excuse.

I can hardly imagine anyone living in New York and only being a fringe fan. I've always thought of NYC as being the center of things, and if I lived there, I'd have to be in the middle of them, too.

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But Rick, you're thinking like a rising young fan, not like a fringe, fringe fan such as clog up most big conventions these days. I've nothing against a fringe fan who is knowledgeable about the microcosm, but who has decided to limit his activity. I'm an actifan, but it doesn't mean that everyone has to be (or should be) one, too. The people that I'm talking about are totally ignorant of fandom and have no interest in finding out the least bit about it, either.

The head above Rosemary's column is about as hard to read as some of the titles of my art-nouveau decorated rock albums. I'll finally have to guess that it's "Petite Point", am I right?

But no matter what the title, I was glad to see it. Some people have been saying that there's just as much good writing around but the writers are one-fanzine writers, unlike the olden days. Well, they have a point but I never understood why this should be so, since, let's face it, one medium-sized article in 3-4 months just isn't that much. But now that she's starting to extend herself maybe others like Liz Fishman (tho I hope she gives up on her brother sometime) will follow suit and the trend will be reversed.

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I'm not sure I can go along with the thesis that there are as many good writers in fandom today as there were a decade ago, though I do agree that there are less fans who have made a specialty of contributing to a large number of zines. They haven't so much become one fanzine writers as they have taken to fanzine publishing themselves, sometimes prematurely.

Incidentally, I see nothing wrong with a writer putting most of his writing into one fanzine. What'd the difference where the writing appears, just as long as it's available? I think this "one fanzine writer" business is something dreamed up by faneds who aren't able to corral topnotch contributors with any consistency and would prefer to cast the blame on fandom, instead of where it properly belongs.

There are some fanwriters who would love to be able to turn out four articles a year, you know.

DICK LUPOFF I flipped through the thing trying to figure out why you'd sent
3208 Claremont Ave., it to me, since I'm not a subscriber, and lo! , buried in Harry
Berkeley, Ca Warner's column were the following sentences:

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"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?"

Well, on the face of it, the problem is really one in angelology, or about equally real-world oriented since no one is doing such an index.

But if Harry would like an answer to his question, it's really easy to provide one. In fact, two.

1. XERO was never a comics fanzine. It was a science fiction fanzine which included some material on comics...just as SF fanzines have, for many years, included material on music, sports cars, politics, drinking, drugs, etc. In none of its issues did XERO contain as much as 50% comics-oriented material, and over the entire run of its editions, I think the comics-oriented material accounted for something on the order of 15 or 20% of the material...by page count. That's my estimate; if you want to do an actual page count, I'll be interested in the results (but not interested enough to do it myself).

2. The comics material that was included in XERO was there in the specific and explicit context of "a collateral interest of SF fans(not comics fans per se)". Aside from page count considerations, I think this matter of attitude is also critical.

Under both criteria -- page count and orientation -- XERO would be included in Harry's hypothetical SF fanzine index. Under both criteria, that equally hypothetical fanzine "published by a 13-year old for two issues about the Dynamic Duo would be excluded.

/////

I think you've stated the case exactly, Dick. There's been talk about doing a Fanzine Index around here, and I had advanced more or less the same criteria as you suggest in regard to including or excluding comics fanzines.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Gary Tesser, Cliff Stenberg, Jerry Lapidus, Leon Taylor, and John D. Berry. I intend future letter columns to be a good deal longer, if you'll all cooperate by sending meaty letters of comment. I did want to print at least a few letters this time to get things rolling and show that the new monthly FOCAL POINT has a different policy about letters than it had when it was a biweekly newszine.

C O D A

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C O D A

C O D A

A most interesting thing happened to me at the end of April, I got married. I don't know if it's that I was in a daze during the whole affair or what, but I find there's very little I can say on the matter. I suppose some comment on such an important occasion would be a good idea, though.

My main difficulty in getting married was whipping myself up to the proper pitch of High Seriousness. Try as I might, it was (and is) very difficult for me to view getting married as a solemn occasion. I can see that it is an important step, though I don't think the formality will have much bearing on whether Joyce and I stay together or not, but the gravity of the situation eludes me. Getting married to Joyce sounded like fun, and I found myself suffused with happiness and not the least bit serious about the whole affair as I approached the moment of truth.

The plan called for Jay Kinney, Bruce Telzer, and Chris Couch to meet Joyce and me at our apartment at noon. My brother Ira and his girlfriend Carol were to drive us to the Union Temple of Brooklyn for the ceremony.

The rendezvous was not accomplished without a little drama. When Jay hadn't arrived by 12:10, I got worried and called up his apartment. "Where's Jay?" I asked Ned Sonntag, his roommate.

"He's gone to Arnie Katz's wedding," Ned said.

"This is Arnie. And he's not here."

"Oh, he only left a few minutes ago."

I was stunned. Jay was supposed to arrive between 11:30 and 11:45, and he'd barely left! "Let me guess, you huys didn't know daylight savings time started today."

"It did!" he moaned.

"And Jay thinks he's leaving early, right?"

"Right."

"Oy," I said, "vey." I could imagine Jay, feeling very righteous, safely on his way to Brooklyn at what he thought was 11:00. I said good-by to Ned and explained the situation to the rest.

"What happens if he gets so confident that he decides to stop off for breakfast? Ira said. I didn't have an answer, so I looked at the clock again. We had to be at the temple by 12:30 to sign papers and so forth, and I doubted that Jay would show in only fifteen more minutes, especially since one of the trains he had to take was notoriously slow and unreliable.

Jay arrived minutes before 12:30, making the trip in the shortest time ever. My brother got us there only minutes late.

After a hassle over who could witness what precipitated by our pompous fool of a rabbi, surely the most Orthodox Reform rabbi in the country, we finally moved toward the chapel.

The rabbi began to intone the ceremony in a hodge-podge of English and Hebrew. I started musing over the whole situation and, as is my tendency, developed several humorous (to me) possibilities. I looked over at Joyce, and she seemed about to burst out laughing, which only set me off worse. I had to bite my lip to keep from making an idiot of myself.

With my mother and Carol crying, with the rabbi's mulifluous voice washing over me, I began to sober up. When he started "Do you take this woman....." it suddenly got very important to me. In fact, I began fretting about when I was supposed to contribute my "I do". This is a moment that one doesn't want to miss, and I almost interrupted him three times when he paused between phrases for too long.

In a trance, I repeated a string of Hebrew words which the rabbi fed to me one at a time. I stood there in a reverie as I heard Joyce negotiate a similar string of syllables. The next thing I knew, I had a ring on, I had broken the ceremonial glass after only two tries, I had kissed Joyce, and everyone was congratulating me.

-- Arnie

FOCAL POINT

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