

# GAFIA 3

NEWSHEET

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THE DISCLAVE is over now, and quite a shindig it was, too. No program, just one sustaining party which ran for two days, and most of which was held in the open suite rented by WSFA for the occasion. About fifty people turned out, of which I knew, or could identify, at least forty. General comments indicated that the Disclave ranks second only to the Midwestcon, and if more people show up next year, it might be second to none. The motel (the Arva) was excellent--it was probably the most genuinely luxurious place I've ever been to a con at, and the prices were quite reasonable. Our relations with the motel staff were quite good, though the sight of several fans literally staggering through the main hall and lobby may have been a trifle upsetting. Plans are now underway for next year's Disclave, which, we hope, will be even better.

IT HAS BEEN pointed out to me by various local fans that a sentence in GAFIA 2 was rather misleading, if not downright slanderous by implication. I am referring to "...we were drinking coffee with Marian...and her husband Lew, while Joanne played with Marian's two small kids." "Why," Joanne said to me in indignation, "it makes me look retarded or something." Other comments included "Are you implying that this is Joanne's speed?" and "Wassamatta, ain't she old enough to play with grown-ups? And her going with that evil John Magnus!" My mailbox was packed.

Therefore, I'd like to make it clear that Joanne is not a case of arrested mental development, she is over twenty-one, and, as she put it, "I just love to chew on little kids' feet--when they're washed, that is." I hope this clears the entire matter up.

PANIC IS BACK, but not from EC. Fred von Bernewitz, down from NYC for the Disclave, brought along a copy of a Mad-imitation mag titled PANIC, and featuring layouts almost 100% like those in MAD. The publisher is Robert Farrell, who, as I remember, was a fly-by-night comics publisher before the days of censorship. The new PANIC uses the same exact style of layouts, order of presentation, contents page, etc., and even uses MAD's side-liners. I didn't read the mag in detail, but I will say this for it: Of all the Mad-imitations, only PANIC uses art of a quality comparable with MAD's (and HUMBUG's). The editor is old-time comic-artist and magazine illustrator Bob Powell, whose style is rather similar to Cartier's in spots. Fred said he would check with EC to see what action would be taken, since the zine is obviously actionable.

A REMINDER: Carl Brandon's THE BNF OF IZ is under publication. This book will run about 25 pages, and is probably the finest fan-satire-allegory since Willis' ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR. A shorter version was published in the Cult, but the complete version features two more chapters, and has been polished up to make it a must for every trufan. Publication and price will be announced shortly.

NO, HARRY WARNER, I didn't gafiate in order to provide a title for this thing, at least not consciously. But it appears to have worked out about the same anyway. I haven't gone completely gafia since I entered fandom in 1952, but I've shifted my interests several times, from general fanac to apan fanac, and from one point or the other it may have looked like gafia.



VANCE PACKARD'S 'THE HIDDEN PERSUADERS' is now out in pocket-book form from Cardinal Books at 35¢ a copy.

I can't stress too strongly the necessity that everyone read this book. Back around '51 or '52 in the original OTHER WORLDS Ray Palmer stated that Thought Control was becoming an accomplished fact. This ties in quite closely with the fact that depth probes and motivational research first came into prominence in advertising circles in the early fifties, and that the Republican Party used MR to "sell" Eisenhower and Nixon in the '52 campaign. (Considerable attention is paid to this fact in Packard's book, which names quite a few names and instances.) Thought Control in the field of merchandizing (by selling unneeded items, and pushing for the unstable 'expanding economy' which inevitably collapses into a recession not unlike the current one) is reprehensible, but Thought Control in the field of politics is far worse, since here the destiny of an entire nation is being manipulated to serve the needs of a few privileged individuals, and the needs of the individual are discarded. The book makes more than passing references to Orwell and his projected 1984. Among other horrors just over the horizon is Biocontrol, which will not be unfamiliar to stf readers (Bulmer recently used it in his Ace book); electrical control is asserted over the brain with grafted electrodes.

Packard presents the picture objectively, and in doing so is probably more successful in alerting us than if he appeared to be only grinding an axe. The bland statements he presents by leaders in the fields--"The child's sensory perceptions and muscular activity could be either modified or completely controlled by bioelectric signals radiating from state-controlled transmitters." He added the reassuring thought that the electrodes 'cause no discomfort'.--do more to point out the dangers than his own protests might. But clearly this is a book worth understanding and thinking about. It presents a serious problem to the thinking individual--can he remain alive in the culture our hidden persuaders are shaping for us?

My personal reaction is one of disgust and shock that men should attempt so directly and for such base reasons to exert control over their fellow man. Such men are fully as dangerous as our more obvious communist foes. They, at least, we recognize. The Persuaders we hug to our breasts--perhaps because we have been persuaded to.

BACK to happier subjects, perhaps more fitting to a publication as composed of froth as this. A card of comment (the first, in fact) on GAFIA from the Falascas reads in part: "Thanks for a real fine Disclave. We all had a good time, in fact so good that we are thinking of forming a Regional-of-the-Moth Club. May can be reserved for Washington; that only leaves us 11 months to fill. Regards and watch that cornering, 2N." The idea of a Regional-of-the-Month seems born simultaneously. We have discussed the idea around here a bit. Of course the Midwestcon has June, the Oklacon (or whatever they're calling it now) has August, there is talk of something in Wisconsin in July, and there's the Phillyconference in November. I also remember hearing of a Metrocon falling around Septetmber or Octomber. This leaves less than 11 months; only five or six, in fact. Now if some enterprising fanclub will just step forward...

FOR THE MOMENT, that seems to clear the desk. I had a few notes on other subjects, but they can wait until GAFIA 4. And yes, Virginia, there will be a #4--if John Magnus is still publishing RUMBLE that is...

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