

GEMZINE 4/31

is published
for NAPA 10
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APOSTROPHE TO: THE OUTCAST

If they have driven you out of the temple ---
Do not cease worship for he who worships alone,
Has all of this world for his altar
And GOD as his very own.
And they who make accusation . . .
Shall find themselves the accused,
When seeking for entrance to Heaven
Shall hear the dread sentence, "Refused".

Better to bear a few scars of the battle;
It proves to the world you can fight.
It is not always the winners who win,
But rather the one who is RIGHT.

by
GEORGE JAY CRAWFORD

2 Poems
LOVEHOOD

Love prompts me to protect my fellow man;
Not to destroy him body and soul
But to assist him in impending danger
Nor to levy excessive toll
For my service in such affair.
In this world of responsibility
Where no man can do without
The compatibility of humanity.
Hie thee and take thy brother's hand:
Hasten to the rendezvous,
For the hour is late and the end of all
Mankind is in view.
Therefore love is more important than ever;
For death strikes with mysterious flints --
Deadly, strange and new.

SEACON Post-Mortem

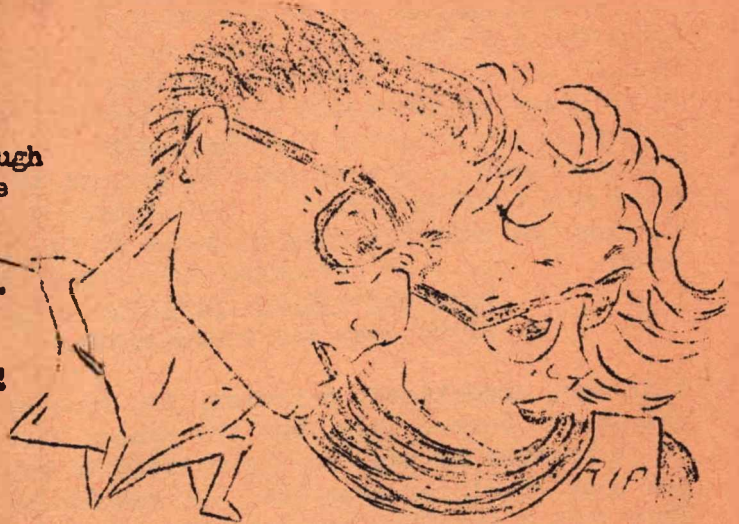
I suppose by rights this page -- traditionally the last page written, altho the first to be read -- should be a full-fledged Conrep. I was so busy bustling between the N3F Room, Project Art Show & Sparkle-Janie's room that I still haven't simmered down enough to sort out details so I can write up a report. It all still seems a beautiful blur -- a montage of bright blue swimming pool, bubbling coffee pots, bemused wandering from picture to picture wanting to buy them all and trying to settle for a few. There's a composite of smiling faces; old friends' cordial greetings and gasps of astonishment from new acquaintances as their pre-concieved 'fannish Image' of GMC silently shattered....

How can I list all the old and new friends I met? Heinlein, Maryjane, Pelz, Fred Patten, Joni Cornell; Walter Breen & Sandy Cantrell -- with beards that rest on their bosoms like Longfellow's forest primeval -- George Petterson, whom I recall with gratitude for finding my lost cups (in spite of the way I exploded all over him when I discovered someone had apparently been running up toll charges on the N3F phone. A later check with the office turned out that this was an erroneous report, but George just happened to be the next one to use the 'phone.. Sorry, George.) The Judges at the Art Show, including A.J. Budrys, Sidney Coleman, Harlan Ellison and Dick Eney (as well as me!).

How can I sort out even a few separate pleasures to relate, when all the whole weekend was so thrilling? But surely I must mention the Project Art Show Judging; Sparkle-Janie's birthday party with the folk-singing and the pink lemonade and the candles on the cake and kissing Janie; The breath-taking suspense while I sweated out the auction of the Bergeron Artwork, and the bliss when I got the pictures I'd been faunching for all along! The sheer enjoyment of listening to Jerry Pournelle vociferate the Conservative viewpoint even more intransigently than anything GMC could do; and of tottering blearily from my bed in the wee hours to fetch a glass of milk from the N3F room -- only to find it blazing with life and argument as fans were still at their debate -- on coffee and cookies provided by the N3F! The all-night Interplanetary Game that somebody finally won (to the grotchings of the would-be sleepers next door); the home-made movies from the LassFass bunch; the Costume Ball -- but here words fail me. I shall have to copy the Chinese adage that '1 picture equals 1000 words' and let the illo on the inside bacover speak for itself. In case you do not recognize us, that's GMC and the N'APA OE. No kiddin'...

EPISTLES & EGOBOO

EPISTLES & EGOBOO will have to be a mere gesture this... Seventy-five days have elapsed since I broke my arm — two months, two weeks and a day — and although I am progressing nicely (according to the doctor) the use of alternating typers in my customary dialogue format of "let's you and me fight" is out of the question. In fact, at the moment of writing (July 30) I don't know how I'll get this run off — or even if it will be done at all! But, just in case, here goes:



First of all, thanks for the "Get Well" cards and expressions of concern. They were much appreciated.

May 3, 1961: Billy Joe Plott sent a lettersubstitute apologizing for fafia.. I hope it is only temporary.

June 1, 1961: Art Hayes, Bird's Creek, Ont. Canada, has an excellent argument re respect for the law wherein he says, "Where there is..disrespect for the Law, you will find that recognition of the rights of others will not matter beyond the fear of personal revenge. The Law is intended as a system wherein the personal revenge factor is..unnecessary." Very well put, Art.

June 14, 1961: Redd Boggs, 2209 Highland Place NE, Minneapolis, Minn, calls my attention to a comment by James Blish on page 13 of DISCORD #12, but I didn't get the drift of it until I saw page 19 of Bergeron's WAKHOON #12, wherein Richard bracketed my comments about Ike's Inaugural in '53 and Redd's comments on Kennedy's Inaugural in '61. Evidently Redd experienced much the same emotions as I did, and expressed his feelings in strikingly similar terms. Whether it was it was an intentional satire, or an example of the phenomenon known as "unconscious plaigerism", Redd didn't say. But I am glad to see that we both evidently share the same hope for a cultural emphasis on decency and self-respect — even though we base our hopes on differing political philosophies!

June (14?), 1961: Dick Schultz, 19159 Helen, Detroit 34, Mich., didn't care much for Judy Glad's cover on GZ 4/29, but liked the Baitbox heading I had snitched (all unauthorized and not even given credit) from an issue of OUR SUNDAY VISITOR (a Catholic paper). Among other things, Dick had a very good comment on church-supported schools pointing out that Protestants, also, have quite an investment in private education. (Thanks for the illos, RIP, hope to be able to use at least some of them thish.)

June 20, 1961: Ron Bennett, 7 Southways, Arthurs Av., Harrogate, Yorkshire, England, sent a nice little note offering to pick up some mundane titles I'd been trying to locate via George Locke, if I'd send him the list. Which, with many thanks, I immediately did.

June 25, 1961: Bob Lichtman, 6137 S. Croft Av., Los Angeles 56, Cal., sent comment to the tune of six pages, single-spaced, elite type — which, had I the strength to do so in my customary manner, would undoubtedly have run to about 18 pages of comment-and-rebuttal. Fascinating letter, and frustrating not to be able to answer it, Bob.

June 26, 1961: Greg Benford, 204 Foreman Ave, Norman, Okla., protests that I made him look worse than need be by leaving out parts of his letter, including, as he says, "... (so help me) an entire sentence (in which I explained that I was referring to Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, a fact which would have cleared up your confusion nicely, I think)". This is a serious accusation, amounting, as it does, practically to a charge of dishonest - or at least unethical - tampering with his letter, so I hunted up his original and checked it word for word against the published version. Not just once -- I went over it several times, just to make certain. I found one inadvertent copying error: I had skipped a line in one sentence and did not notice it because the sentence made no sense to me either way. But the sentence should have read: ".....We can argue over basic statements upon which to base our ethics (probably to no avail), but we cannot argue over the conclusions to be drawn from these beliefs."

Aside from this one, underlined, omission, the rest of the letter contained every word of the original. Sorry, Greg, but the reason your letter sounded fuzzy when I got done with it is because it was fuzzily written to begin with. Possibly you thought you really had said something sensible, but you did not manage to put it down on paper in a form that made a sensible communication to me. If you still believe that I tampered with your letter to make it look bad, I will bring the original to the SEACON with me and you can examine it with a copy of GZ and see for yourself. You will be at the SEACON, won't you? (9/7/61: I did, but he wasn't -- at least, I didn't see him there.)

July 6, 1961: Calvin "Biff" Demmon, 1002 East 66th St., Inglewood 5, Cal., says he disagrees with me on almost everything but loves me anyway because he is glad to find someone "on the other side with a whole bunch of intelligence". Thanks for the compliment, Biff, and I love you, too!

July 11, 1961: Richard Bergeron, 110 Bank St., New York City 14, sent a postcard of commiseration on my accident, followed by a copy of WARHOON -- which contained some mighty meaty reading and stimulated me to a loc even in spite of my disability.

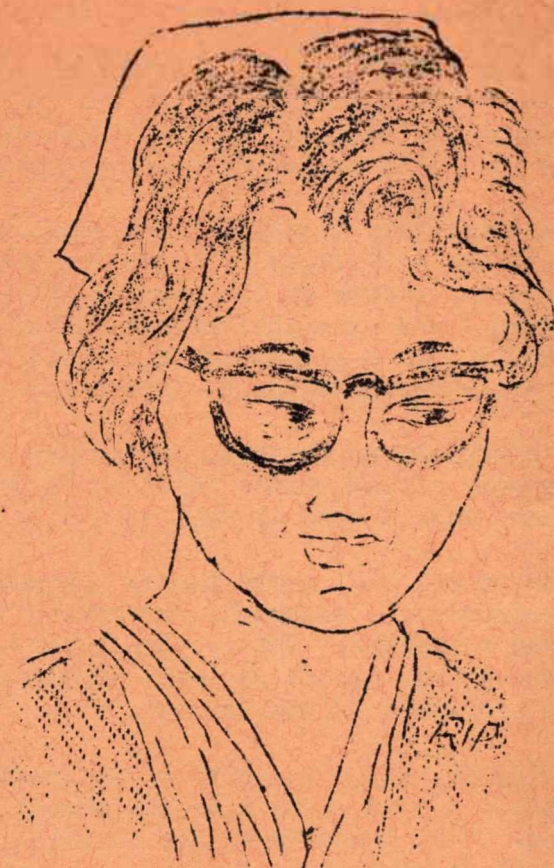
July 6, 1961: Larry McCombs, 2490 W. 8th St., Los Angeles 5, Cal., sends the prize letter of the lot, which I heartily wish I could pass on to you! There were seven pages, double spaced, of intelligent and well-reasoned political comment that I am desolated at not being physically able to reproduce. (In fact, I'll wait and see if I am healed enough by the time this is run off -- maybe I'll still be able to include it.) Thanks, Larry, it is letters like this that give me hope for the future of our nation -- and for fandom's good sense!

July 13, 1961: Les Nirenberg, 1217 Weston Rd, Toronto 15, Ont, Canada, is evidently under the impression that lettercols are published for the benefit of the writers rather than the editor's pleasure -- an idea even more weird when one considers that Les also pubs a lettercol in his fanzine. I wonder if his correspondents tell him how their letters are to be published -- and if he pays any more attention to these naive demands than I do?

July 14, 1961: George Jay Crawford, 235 Samson, Redwood City, Calif, sends a couple of poems (which I'll use this if I can) and says he misses GEMZINE and is willing to risk its shocking effects just for the titillation it provides.

July 26, 1961: James G. Chambers, Star Rt, Box 16, Lund Road, Cosmopolis, Wash, says he is a liberal and gives the dictionary definition of 'Liberal'... Alas, in this era of 1984ish "Newspeak" propaganda, the dictionary definitions are often just the opposite of the connotations these words now hold!

July 29, 1961: PFC William Leslie Sample, RA 14737569, Med.Det.(3416) Valley Forge Gen. Hosp., Phoenixville, Penna, disagrees with my opinions on censorship and capital punishment, but hopes my arm heals all right. I hope so too, but there was a lot of damage -- about 1/3 of the elbow joint was removed, and the wrist was badly shattered.



It seems odd, after all these years of typing as easily as thought, to be back at the old 'hunt and peck' system. For a bit, there, it was all one-handed -- and if you want a real experience in frustration, try typing only with your left hand (assuming, of course, that you are right-handed) for a while. It gives one a real appreciation of having two hands for typing. Now (August) I am able to use my right hand a bit. That is, I can type normally with my left hand while I 'hunt and peck' with my right. The fingers are still too swollen for use except to fumble with.. However, I certainly have no cause for complaint as these things go: I wore a cast only 3 weeks (as contrasted with one unfortunate woman I knew who had to wear the same kind of cast for 18 months!) But it looks as though my fanzine will have to be curtailed sharply. I won't be physically able to type and run off twenty or thirty page GEAZINES for a while yet.

A surprising number of fans commented on the "Ghost Town", pointing out that the reason it IS a Ghost Town is because there is no livelihood to be found there. This is a good point, but I thought I had covered it already. There is no reason the slum dwellers couldn't bring their livelihood with them -- after all, presumably there exist small industries in the slums which could operate as well in a desert. Small manufacturing like novelties, trinkets, cheap costume jewelry, etc. are not tied to any one locale. Lack of water would be a valid objection, if the water-table had fallen so hopelessly that it couldn't be reached. But the objection given that they are mostly 'company owned' and the company mightn't like it -- Tsk, tsk, how inattentive can you get? I specifically mentioned this point and suggested they get together with the company on it!!!

Another recurrent comment seems to be my lettercol layout. Let's face it, kids. It's MY lettercol, and I LIKE it that way! If anyone is bothered by the editorial interruptions, let 'em do as Meskys did -- read the letter first, then go back and read the comments. With 2 type-faces to distinguish one from the other, there's no POSSIBLE way for the reader to become confused as to which is which! (It is theoretically possible, of course, that a reader might be too stupid to figure out which is which -- but in that case, he'd be too stupid to understand what he was reading anyway, so there would be no loss.)

Also a favorite comment concerns NSF's purpose and policies. Now of course I realize that I, having been an active member of NSF for a dozen years or more, could not possibly know as much about the inner workings, attitudes, and aims of NSF as do the members who just joined. However, I shall continue in my fuggheaded way to share the viewpoint of other old-timers like Woolstan, Hayes and Holland; a viewpoint which the latter expressed very nicely in "Quoth The Walrus":

"The aim of the NTF is, as I noted above, to help its members enjoy their hobby more -- not just one segment of the membership, but every one so far as possible."

And now to the Mailing Comments on N'APA #9:

GUANO #11 - Art Hayes. Congratulations on the new appearance. I think it is much easier to read, and I like the cartoons. Re the Cuban situation: I agree, this was mishandled by our State Department in a most appalling manner! If the Administration had listened to McCarthy, instead of censuring him, this would never have come about.

PESKY'S #8 - Ed Moskys. My copy this time was completely legible, thank goodness, and I enjoyed it very much. Your explanation of the properties of light was very well put -- it made me almost think I understand the nature of the physics involved. (I say 'almost', because as soon as I put it down I was as unenlightened as before -- but that's no fault of yours. I suspect you would make a good teacher, should you be so inclined. Not everyone has the gift of clear explanations.) Entirely good.

ATSAADDESFNS #1 - Fan Hillton Mob, etc. Very entertaining chatter, but evokes no remarks from me. Except to mention that I saw some recent slides taken by Ed Wyman at the BAYCON, and enjoyed the chatter a lot more with a face as well as a name to it.

RAMBLING - Jennings. I surely hope you've used up all that hecto paper, because this mag was a lot of wasted effort as far as I'm concerned... although, for hecto, it wasn't a bad job of publishing, except it wasn't legible. Interesting cover -- too bad there wasn't more artwork and less close print. About the only advantage in Hecto and Ditto is the flexibility of color permitted in the artwork.

PARADOX #1 - Bruce Robbins. This is an excellent #1 ish -- in spite of the mixup in pages (which, I note, was no fault of the editor.) I was pleased to run across that bit about the Isles of Shoals and the checklist. What seems to be the fascination of this group of islands? Could you perhaps tell us more about them?

FAUNCH, GROTTLE, AMZ. STORIES - Coslet. Gee! This is a total of 18 pages -- more than I can recall seeing from you in any single mailing since the mind of man runneth not to the contrary.... I hope you keep it up, I like those big mailing comments for a change. You present a poetic picture of an idealized N3F, Walt, but - though I applaud your dream - I agree it isn't very likely to be realized. The biggest snag for N3F is, and always has been, the simple fact that with Responsibility MUST go Authority. Although N3F has often made an effort to accept Responsibility for achieving a goal, it has never been able to make it stick. No matter what it tried to do, it was helpless against the irresponsibility of a defaulting member -- as it still is... because, by its very nature, N3F has no authority by which to demand that commitments be fulfilled. As you have seen so often in the past, many a promised 'Benefit' was genuine; some of the members worked hard and spent money on a Project -- and then some member would goof-off, and this hard work and expense was nullified by his inaction as though it had never existed. Until this snag can be corrected, N3F never will become the shining dream it started out to be.

HALF-LIFE - Stan Woolston. It's nice to hear from you again, Stan. You write such thoughtful and thought-provoking comments, why don't you regale us with them oftener? Even a single-sheet in each mailing would serve to keep you from deadwooding... Like that cover. Remember those N3F Bookmarks you made years ago? I've still got mine.

FOOFARAW #1 - Fred Patton. Welcome to N'APA, Fred. With a #1 ish as chucklesome as that movie review of ATLANTIS, you ought to turn out to be an asset to the group. If you can do MCs even half as well, we'll have something to look forward to.

RACHEE #3 - Bruce Pelz. The APAactivity Report discloses the mildly surprising info that 152 fans comprise all of APAdom.. This report (if accurate, as I presume it is) constitutes a valuable reference, containing, as it does, not only a listing of the cross-memberships of bi-apas, but also the individual rosters of each of the 7 apas.

KAYMAR - K. Martin Carlson. I've always liked DEA's artwork, even in a re-run. I've never been able to understand why her artwork isn't more highly regarded than it is. It can't be because she was so prolific for a while, because Rotsler was even more prolific, and his doodlings were highly acclaimed in spite of their ubiquitousness. I've never been able to understand the appalling bad taste of fans who could ignore the imaginative delicacy of DEA, and fawn over ~~over~~ careless scribbles of other fans.

SONOMA 35 - Norm Metcalf. My, my -- what a grotchy-sounding fan this is! Sounds as though Norm is under the impression that the way to make Mailing Comments is to make a flat contradiction to other fans' opinions, without bothering to give a reason for his own. Of course, it could be bad manners, or a slightly swelled head, that makes him take the attitude "you're wrong and I'm right and that's all there is to it"... but I suspect it is more likely that he just doesn't know any other way of meeting a differing opinion. It is sometimes quite a shock to a person to move out of the sheltered environment of like-minded fans and into an atmosphere of varying ideas, and I have noticed that often the reaction of an insular mind is to take refuge in arrogance and try to bluff his way out by the vehemence of his statements, rather than the depth of his judgment. Especially when there isn't much depth or much judgment. I wonder, could that be the reason for Norm's grotchiness?

THE RED CUBE - Ron Haydock. My goodness, this makes me realize how old I am... I saw "The Perils of Pauline" in the original version when it came out with Pearl White as the cliff-hanging heroine... I can still recall scenes that thrilled me as she clung to a rope or swung alongside a boxcar. Seems to me she used to wear a scarf around her hair and what appeared to be a divided skirt made of leather... At least, that's how I remember it after 45 years, more or less...

KTP #6 - Bob Lichtman. I chortle over your comparison of a discussion of the hunger-urge vs the sex-urge and think you have a point there, however, you have overlooked one very fundamental difference in your satire: Namely, there IS a cultural taboo against too free expression of the sex-urge, whereas there is no such cultural taboo against eating. It is odd how frequently idealists, in their desire to proclaim 'the world as it SHOULD be' manage to forget the world as it IS. Cultural taboos, no matter how fervently idealists -- those Angry Young Men we read about, not necessarily Bob -- may wish to discard them, nevertheless STILL EXIST. And they exist because something in the culture itself has made these restraints necessary. Until the culture itself changes, it is futile to try and remove the restraints -- or, if not futile, then at least dangerous to the society and/or individual. So why fuss about it? There are plenty of things to discuss that do not infringe on taboos...

H-HPP.007 & 1/2 FANTHOL - Don Fitch. Welcome to N'APA. These are both exceedingly neat for #1 ish's. I note your present preference for genzines over apozines, and venture the suspicion that, until now, you most likely have not belonged to an apa yourself. Therefore the apazines you have read have been somewhat like reading someone else's mail. Other people's letters, no matter how intrinsically interesting, are not nearly as much fun as reading one's own mail. However, I must point out one aspect in connection with the really popular genzines. The so-called "focal points" are, in effect, unofficial apas in themselves by virtue of the reader feedback in the lettercols, etc. The active subscribers, the letterhacks, the exchanges, etc, constitute the active membership of this unofficial apa, whereas the subscribers who contribute only money are its 'deadwood'. I doubt it would be possible to find a really successful genzine in which this reader-feedback element is NOT present, and I suspect further that the reason many otherwise excellent fanzines fail to become popular is because they never succeeded in developing this 'apa-like' in-group feeling among the readers.

CRY OF THE WILD MOOSE - Don Anderson. "You must have very little confidence in the moral strength of our Nation if you feel that it can be toppled by propaganda alone." Yup. You hit the nail right smack on the thumb, as the saying has it. I cast an unhappy eye over the pages of history and note that when a nation displays the symptoms of moral decay that are blazoned all across our daily newspapers, it is doggone close to the brink... And propaganda, ie, the prevailing emphasis or educational pressure, is the strongest factor in molding public mores. For at least 40 years the emphasis has been concentrated against the factors which to go to make up that 'moral strength' you are evidently relying on; religion, the sanctity of the home, patriotism, personal rectitude, honor, decency, etc. Look at fandom, for instance: how many fans are there who even believe in God, much less are proud of their religion? Look at the casual divorces and wife-swapping that goes on as a matter of course. Look at the sneers when anyone speaks up in behalf of his Country -- why, "Nationalism" is a dirty word to most of them. As for ideals of personal rectitude, honor, and moral decency -- Well, just read a few Con Reports for the past 10 years! And fandom is only one small segment of this country -- it hasn't even been close to the headlines I mentioned above. It is my unhappy opinion that unless we start back-paddling like crazy in the direction of stricter personal and public morality, I don't think our nation has got any more chance of holding out against foreign aggression than the Romans had against the Goths and Vandals. And for the same reason -- we'll be too soft and rotten to stand up and fight! The Romans fell in hand-to-hand combat -- but our Nation is in danger of falling in a word to word battle conducted by Propaganda!

VAUX HALL FANATIC - You are 100% correct in your comments about the carping of the "apa snobs" at the N3F bumpiousness. You have diagnosed the reason for this continual carping at N3F, too. The "trufan" intolerance for any type of fanatic other than that conducted in his own little sphere. This "trufan" type attempts to stereotype fan activities along certain broad lines, ie, ampubbing, Con-hopping, "in-group" chatter, etc, and insists that fanning consists only of these things. (Incidentally, a case in point is the Preamble of the proposed new 'Constitution' we just voted on, wherein an attempt is made to limit N'APA's interests to fantasy, in imitation of FAPA's Constitution.) N3F tries to give its members what they are interested in -- whether it is discussing the ^Prophetical Aspects of the Great Pyramids, or swapping stamps, and doesn't try to tell them what they are supposed to be interested in. To the fanatic-snobish "trufan", this tolerance of each other's hobbies is an intolerable insult to their own hobby -- consequently they gripe at N3F.

QUOTE THE WALKUS - Ralph Holland. Speaking of the new Constitution we just voted on (as I did just now), it's a pity you didn't get your version before the group first. Naturally, I don't know how the vote went, but even if it was passed, I doubt this 1-page version could be adopted. It violates the only restriction the Directorate put on N'APA, in that it arbitrarily changes the Preamble which they said should not be changed -- and for no good reason, either. If it did pass, I am anxious to see what the N3F Directors do about it. This could constitute a "test case" to put some teeth into the provision that N'APA is a subsidiary group and under the jurisdiction of the N3F Directors. I think Jack's ill-advised attempt to transform N'APA into an imitation FAPA may have stirred up a hornet's nest... and if...

WHY NOT #3 - California Al Lewis. I ache your chagrin at being expected to promote students who flunked their tests, but Cheer up! I suspect we are about to have a policy reversal in the Nation's educational attitude. After a look at reports coming out of Russia on the scholastic demands on Soviet students, I wager our bureaucrats will swing over so hard in the opposite direction that even the IQ 80 students will have to manage 100% perfect -- or else!

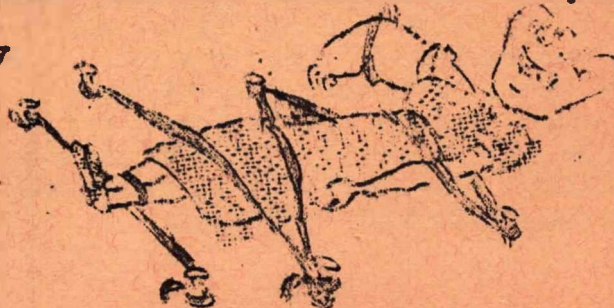
NO PLACE - Ed Busby. Perhaps it is needless of me to mention it, but the "prominent Seattle Man" who went to the hoosegow for unpaid traffic tickets was NOT Jack Speer. (Just in case anyone wondered.)

BAIT BOX

Re: THE JOHN BIRCH SOCIETY. The suddenness with which the JBS has sprung into prominence in fannish lettercols is about the most remarkable phenomenon I've seen in fandom for many a day... Six months ago no one had ever even heard of John Birch or Robert Welch, but now the ultra-Conservative society that was founded in JB's name has become such a by-word in fandom that the ultimate insult is no longer "Fugghead" but "John Bircher." This is particularly interesting since the Society itself is practically a political nonentity. So far as I can see, the only thing it has actually ever been accused of having done, is merely to come into existence at all. Of course, it is easy to see that this, in itself, is offense enough for the Left Wing press to swing into action with the full-scale Anti-McCarthy treatment toward both Robert Welch and the John Birch Society... In fact, they have even taken a few pokes at the martyred missionary whose name is being used. After so many years of unopposed control of both political parties -- with the Conservatives milling around confusedly as the minority groups in each camp -- no doubt the Liberals are in deadly fear that the John Birch Society may prove to be the "focal point" around which the Right Wing may gather. A coherent, directed, Right-Wing political organization might well prove to be the nemesis of the Anti-anti-Communists and Fellow Travellers who seem to have such a stranglehold on the Left Wing policies. However, the point I find interesting is not so much the violent name-calling of the Left Wing press -- their motives are very plain. But what intrigues me is why Fandom should go all out in like manner? Could it be that our fannish "brains" -- who obviously have been priding themselves on being able to "think for themselves" -- are, in reality, no more than a herd of sheep-like Conformists following the Liberal bell-wether? What price the "individualism" fans are supposed to have? So far as I have seen, no one has come out and questioned what this JBS is all about... Most of all, what has happened to all our fannish quoters of Voltaire, who have so often insisted that they, like he, may "...disagree with what you say, but will defend to the death your right to say it!" In all this fannish be-laboring of Robert Welch for his remarks about Eisenhower, I haven't seen anybody speak up even timidly -- much less "to the death" -- in defense of his right to hold and express his own opinion. Wha'hoppen? Change your mind?

Re SUCKER LISTS: It is generally known and accepted that advertising agencies sell lists of subscribers to one another, and that there is little selectivity in their use. A person who replies to an advertisement may expect to find himself bombarded with propositions anywhere from an opportunity to peddle Christmas Cards "before any other kid in your town gets them" to the purchase of a set of reprinted Classics at \$2.98 per volume. (Incidentally, one set still being offered is the same that I bought 20 or 30 years ago when the price was 98¢ each. It was a bargain I've never regretted and the books are now well-worn from the many re-readings.) But occasionally the filth merchants come along with a flood of salacious material, and that's when I resent having my name and address sold indiscriminately. Recently one outfit, the "Dorian Book Service" has been sending their catalog, which seems to pander to perverts. It offers glowing blurbs for literature glorifying the homosexuals -- and is apparently slanted toward the young reader of highschool and college level. Most of this flood of advertising I toss in the wastebasket with no more than a slight regret at this waste of our Postal facilities, but that "Dorian" catalog went back to the Postmaster with the suggestion that it be looked into. In my opinion, any outfit that sends this kind of solicitation to a "sucker list" presumably made up of children and adolescents, is definitely a menace to public morality.

I've said it before and I'll say it again: There is no such thing as a "homosexual problem" per se -- this problem is merely a variation on the same old problem of human Lust.



There is nothing wrong with being attracted to persons of one's own sex -- or of forming a deep attachment for them, to the exclusion of attachments with the opposite sex -- so long as the emotion remains love, not lust. It is only when the emotion is degraded to an unnatural form of erotic sensuality, a desire for gratification for its own sake, regardless of right or reason, that it becomes evil. And this is equally true (though less generally recognized) when the object of the lust is of the opposite sex. Love -- the capacity to feel strongly drawn to another, and to enjoy being near his presence -- comes from God. So long as it God-given there is no evil in it. But such love has nothing to do with the physical gratifications of lust or the uncontrolled passions of sensuality. True, sensual passions are a big and important part of love between the sexes, and for a very good reason: it is the source and insurance of the continuation of the species. Between persons who are entitled to indulge their desires (ie, who have shown mutual willingness to accept and care for the resulting offspring) this, too, is a legitimate and wonderful part of God's gift of love. But to attempt to chisel on the responsibility; to turn this pleasure into an end in itself with no regard for the others involved, is a disgusting misuse of a great gift. Basically, it is just as disgusting whether the object of the lust is of the same or the opposite sex. It is just that it seems more disgusting in the former, because the blatant, self-centered selfishness is more apparent.

Re WGMCSO: I dare say many fans have assumed that my several-years-long inquiry into "What Makes GMC So Obnoxious" has been only another fannish ploy for egoboo. But, on the contrary, I have been genuinely concerned at the resentment my teasing seems to evoke, as contrasted with similar teasing by other fans among themselves. After all these years, I think I finally found the answer in -- of all things! -- "Gone With The Wind". I was re-reading it for the umpteenth time when suddenly the proverbial light globe burst into incandescence above my head as I recognized a picture of myself. It was the description of Rhett Butler in Chapter 12 of "Part One, where it says:

"He could no more resist pricking the conceits, the hypocrisies and the flamboyant patriotism of those about him than a small boy can resist putting a pin into a balloon. He neatly deflated the pompous and exposed the ignorant and the bigoted, and he did it in such...ways...that they never were quite certain what had happened until they stood exposed as windy, high flown, and slightly ridiculous."

Rhett Butler's offensiveness was that he exposed the truth which the others tried to hide from themselves -- and that was why his needling hurt. Those people were clinging desperately to illusions because they were unable to face reality. But the thing I suddenly realized was that, regardless of who was right and who was wrong -- it was unkind of him to hurt them. No doubt he despised them for their hypocrisy, and perhaps the strong always have a tendency to despise the futile pretensions of the weak. But this is no real excuse for the hurt he gave by his sly teasing. Fandom is also full of bombastic egos who cannot bear to have their illusions needled. It is one thing to call the bluff of a seasoned debater who knows he is bluffing and is only trying to see how far he can get away with it, but it is quite another thing to strip away the defenses of a pitifully weak ego that has nothing but empty rationalizations behind which to hide from himself. Like Rhett, it is immaterial whether I was "right" or "wrong" -- the fact is, that it was unkind. Unlike the petty fannish bickering around me, my teasing hurt -- and it hurt even more because the recipient had no way of hurting me in return. I suppose the reason it took me so long to see it, is because it was the innocent unkindness of a complete lack of intention to harm: Like a well fed cat that doesn't mean to eat the mouse he's amusing himself with for a bit... Well, now that I see where the shoe pinches, so to speak, let's see whether I shall be able to do the necessary cobbling to ease the pinch. I still like to tease, and to stick a needle of fact into a balloon of opinion just to see it explode as the skinfull of hot air it was. But perhaps I can be a little more charitable in my attitude and be a little more careful whose ego-protecting illusions I challenge.



