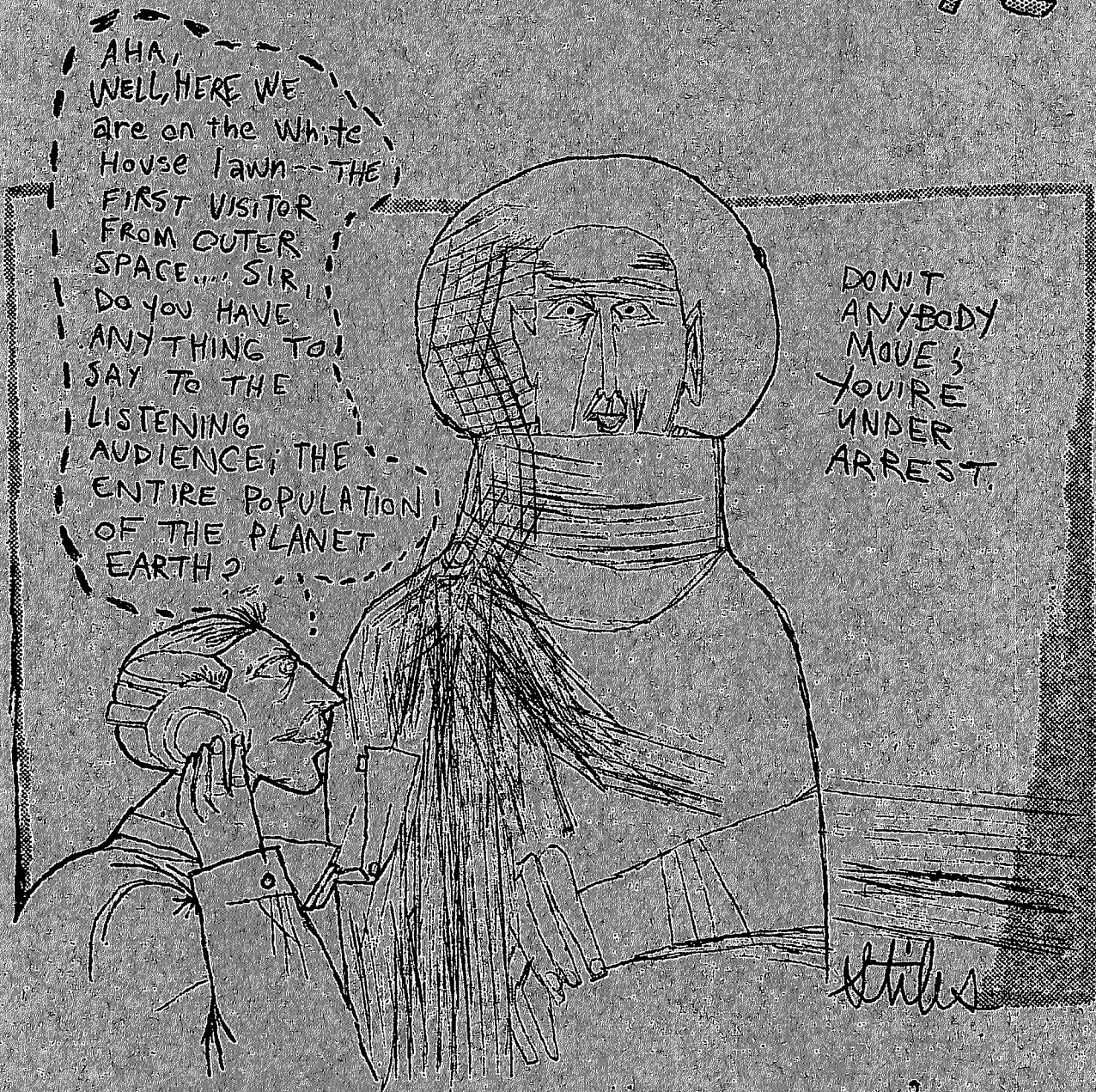


NULL-F 42



Here we are with another issue of NULL-F ("The Annual Fanzine"), typed on Postscript cheapie stencils (ghod knows how many o's will drop) by Ted White, 339, 49th St., Brooklyn, N.Y., 11220, and mimeod on the same old QWERTYUIOPress...if I can remember how to run it...

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It may cheer someone among you to know that I have slipped this stencil into my typer on the evening of November 30, 1966, only half my 117th mailing yet read. In other words, I am at least beginning this FAPazine a good bit before the Last Moment. Furthermore, since the FA credits me with four pages due (I wonder where that other four came from; is my memory slipping? Did I already do four pages this year? When? Where? *Sigh*), and I have four pages in the new SFFY, this issue of NULL-F is not required minac. No. It springs instead from a newly reawakened urge to write Something for FAPA.

This was not the first Urge I've experienced, of course, but it was the first born of enthusiasm rather'n anger or irritation. I was bugged when someone in a Speerzine (Roy Tackett?) made some snide comment about me and the fake KIPPLE I helped publish in 1961 (it wasn't my brainchild, although I wish it had been; it was Pete Graham's baby, and he and Terry Carr did most of the work on it, with others like Andy Main, Les Gerber, and Walter Breen contributing, and I still regard it as a fine parody, hoax, or whatever you might call it -- but not "forgery"...), but it hardly seemed worth publishing a NULL-F about...

Maybe it's the new SFFY in this mailing that has set me off. It's a superb zine, and I'm glad that I had an opportunity to participate in it. LeeH passed out contributors' copies at a recent Fanoclast meeting, and after everyone had left, and Robin was in bed asleep, I sat amidst the old cigarette smoke and empty bheer cans, and read the whole zine straight through, cover to cover. It was a gas, and it totally time-bound me.

If one person was the greatest single influence on my early fan career, it was Lee Hoffman, and, specifically, the very first SFFY. I did not see the zine when it came out, and, indeed, not for many years, but I did read Mari Wolfe's review of it in IMAGINATION, wherein she raved about the purty color mimeoing, and how wondrous and difficult and all it was. The very first thing I set out to do in publishing my first fanzine was to feature color mimeoing extensively. There was very little content to those early ZIPs, but mighod did they have color! It meant something to me when I met LeeH in Cleveland in 1955, and she complimented me on the color in ZIP #7 -- my first contribution to FAPA.

That was in the May, 1955 mailing. Twelve years ago that was... I remember admiring Gregg Galkins when he mentioned turning eighteen in OOPSLA!, and I thought it was a proud age to be...I was only fourteen or fifteen then. I was seventeen myself when I joined FAPA, and it seems strange to realize that I've spent almost half my life in FAPA, a group only a year or so older than I am... Well, that's time-binding for you. No doubt there are a number of others among you who could make better claims than I in this respect. Why, HORIZONS has appeared without fail for twenty-three years in FAPA!

A lot of things have happened to me since last I wrote anything for FAPA -- among them my second marriage. I met Robin in the spring of 1965

at the Eastercon, but didn't make much effort to get to know her until that summer, when I decided that knowing her was a very worthwhile thing. We were engaged late in August, only a few days before I flew to England -- the trip I began reporting last issue.

The only stumbling block to our marriage was the fact that I was still legally married to Sylvia, although we had separated in 1962. In late February, 1966, I drove to Mexico, where I spent four distasteful hours going through a divorce mill, and then promptly left, setting a new course for Florida. We made the trip in my trusty Weiss Rak V, the Chevy Greenbrier I'd bought in Berkeley in 1964. In the two years I've owned it, I've put over 50,000 miles on it, around 40,000 of them with a 1964 Corvair engine dropped in to replace the original engine which had burned out. Naturally, with hard driving of this sort, I've had my troubles, the primary one being that I can't seem to get a muffler to last through any trip of length without either burning out or falling off. ...But I digress.

We stayed with Robin's brother in Ft. Lauderdale and were married there on February 26th. It was a pleasant place for a honeymoon, and driving north again was like driving from summer into winter. Since then Robin's brother has moved to Toronto, but we have been thinking seriously of wintering in Florida either this year or, more definitely, in coming years.

The summer saw our Second Annual Fanoclast Trek, which LeeH reported last mailing. These treks to the Westercon were ostensibly campaign boosts for the NyCon (and actually did some good along those lines, I think), but actually so enjoyable that most of us are thinking in terms of continuing the tradition, for ghod knows how long.

Then there was the Ozarkon, the first conference at which I've ever been Guest of Honor. As it turned out, the Ozarkon I was combined with the Gatewaycon of the local comics fans, and I tried to put something in my banquet speech for both types of fans. Since I was among the first to publish a comics fanzine (POTRZEBIE, with Stark and Stewart, in the early fifties), and more recently I've been vaguely associated with comics types like Stan Lee, Wally Wood, Gil Kane, and like that, it wasn't hard. The Ozarkon had a number of fine people I'd not known before in attendance, but the special hit of the con was meeting and talking with Ray Fisher, who, years ago, published ODD under the name of Duggie Fisher. I still treasure my meagre file of ODDs, with their ornate Ray Nelson covers and frontispieces, and it was additional good news to hear that Ray was planning to revive the zine -- a task he accomplished this fall.

The Tricon was a strange con for me. It was a good con, and an enjoyable con, but one which I could not enjoy for the first couple of days. I had an attack of nerves, as our bid for the NyCon approached its climax, and I worried over every little detail. We brought five hundred shopping bags emblazoned with "N.Y. in '67", and a thousand copies of NYCON COMICS #1, and I was counting on these, along with our four pages of ads in the program booklet to help swing our bid. But I had to keep checking with the registration desk to ensure that NYCON COMICS were handed out, and the bags were available but not grabbed in wholesale lots, and all that. Then the Free Beer party made for additional headaches, and I spent something over fifty bucks out of my own pocket shopping for extra beer

and booze. That's one headache the NyCon won't be saddling bidders with. But then, after that damned party, I relaxed and enjoyed things. I didn't get half the chance to talk to all the people who were there that I wanted to see, but those I did get to relax with I enjoyed fine. Outstanding in my memories was when Dave Van Arnam, Cindy, Andy Porter, Robin and I repaired to Harlan's room to check out our platform speeches for the next day, and we la about and chatted for the next three hours, Harlan and I catching up on each other's lives since when he'd lived next door to me in 1960. I wish more of those who decry Harlan could know him when he's in a relaxed, reflective mood, and perhaps get a glimpse of the guy his close friends know and like so well.

This has been my best year, professionally. I have written seven books to date, three of them in 1966. And I expect that before the end of 1966, and certainly before you read this, that total will be eight or nine.

As I have been fond of reitterating at odd moments, I always wanted to be an editor: it was my boyhood ambition, as soon as I got over wanting to be an artist... I've been Ass't Editor at F&SF for going on four years now (gad, how time flies!), and this year I also did editorial work at Lancer Books. But for some reason it has been becoming more and more clear to me that I am destined to be a writer, not an editor.

At present I am a science fiction writer. You will find me in the magazines seldom (Terry and I had a piece in the second STARTLING MYSTERY; we wrote it in 1962; four years seems an excessive wait...), but my name will be turning up on the newsstands increasingly often.

Terry Carr and I wrote INVASION FROM 2500 for Monarch in 1963, and it was published a year later. I did ANDROID AVENGER for Ace in late 1964; and PHOENIX PRIME for Lancer a few months later in early 1965. To date, these are all that have appeared in print. However, Dave Van Arnam and I wrote a book for Pyramid in 1965 (the working title of which is WHEN IN ROME; the actual title hasn't been settled, nor the publication date: it'll probably be late spring or early summer, 1967, *sigh*...), and this year I have written SECRET OF THE MARAUDER SATELLITE, a juvenile for Westminster (spring, 1967); CAPTAIN AMERICA, a novelization of the comic book character, for Bantam Books (January, 1967); and THE SORCRESS OF QAR, a sequel to PHOENIX PRIME, for Lancer (late December, 1966).

I am moderately proud of each of these, and they are quite diverse books. The Westminster juvenile is potentially the best, and I wrote it as such. It is a Heinleinesque story of the near future (it's set in 1984) and work on a space station reclaiming orbital debris (over five hundred pieces already in orbit now). Jack Gaughan, who did the dust-jacket, is quite enthusiastic about it, and claims it's vastly better than my other work. He is constantly sneering at me for writing comic-book novelizations when I could be doing Better Stuff like that. Thing is, I enjoy writing comic-book novelizations -- or at least I enjoyed CAPTAIN AMERICA. You Doc Savage fans will dig it, since the plot construction is, shall we say, Lester Dent-inspired. I had a free hand with the book, and my agent's sole comment on it when I turned it in was "You did a better book than was necessary." (However, I think this fact will help the chances of future sales to Bantam...)

THE SORCERESS OF OAR was my baby, though. Although I read little sword and sorcery (I've never read Conan, and I shun ERB), I have a fondness for writing it, and -- fortunately -- Larry Shaw has a fondness for publishing it. PHOENIX PRIME, a book that was s&s only semi-incidentally, but which had a beautiful s&s-type Frazetta cover, has outsold every other Lancer sf title, and was responsible for reactivating the front office's interest in sf. (The first Conan book, I hear, is doing even better.) The direct result was that the sequel, which had been sitting on Larry's desk for over a year in outline form, was immediately snapped up, and scheduled. In fact, so enthusiastically was it scheduled that the covers were painted and printed in July, and the book set for October publication when I pointed out that my contract called for delivery on Oct. 15th!

hagrinned, they rescheduled it for December, and I mounted my treadmill. As soon as I got back from the Tricon, I began writing CAPTAIN AMERICA (due Sept. 15 to Bantam), and, when I finished that, I began immediately on the Lancer book. It did not go nearly as easily as I'd expected, partly because I had changed it from a simple trek-and-adventure story to a love story, in which I put a good deal of (I hope successful) characterization. When I came to the part where the lovers hit a rocky stretch, I was so depressed by it that my output was quartered. Then the flu put me in bed for a week. By now I was up against the deadline, and Lancer was sending a messenger each day to collect that day's output, while Paul Busby, who was editing it, did so despite the fact that his wife had just had a baby and he was supposed to be on vacation. It was pretty hectic for a while.

Nonetheless, I think it came out well, and I think the book is one of the most sexually honest books in the field. It may be "just sword and sorcery," but I see no reason why that should be a limiting factor.

The future looks good. I've sold the third book in the series to Lancer, and they are now thinking in terms of two a year in the series, plus one or two non-related sf books from me each year. Since Lancer is about the only major publisher of adventure fantasy in the field, I'm quite pleased. However, I'm hardly restricting myself to just fantasies for Lancer. I'm now doing a book for Belmont, just sold a straight sf novel to Avon, and have a collaboration with Phil Dick signed up for Doubleday (my most difficult assignment thus far). In addition, Pyramid wants to see a sequel by Dave and me to our first book for them, I have plans for a second juvenile for Westminster, and one on submission elsewhere, a straight novel on submission to Bantam, which asked to see one from me, contracts to collaborate on three movie scripts, and a request to write scripts for Marvel Comics (and the feeling I've overlooked something else)...

My original plans were to write six books a year. It looks like I'll be doing more than that. My only worries now are that I'll have the time and the ability to handle all this work. There is this NyConIII thing we're doing too... But it definitely looks like I've found my career, after some ten years of groping. I'm not like Ron Ellik: I could never have planned a career for myself as methodically as he has done. As I've told Ron, I envy him his ability to make his initial decisions and then implement them. One has only to listen to Ron discuss his career and his plans to get the feeling of his tremendous confidence and control. I have always felt I lacked this. I am instinctual, impulsive. I've sensed my directions and then groped towards them. I only made the decision to

be a science fiction writer, and, by extension, a novelist, a couple years ago, and then with no great confidence in my immediate success. Eventual success I was sure of -- that's the sort of ambition I possess: a surety that I will sooner or later have what I want -- but I didn't expect anything dramatic. In a month or so (a month ago, for you) I'll have two titles out simultaneously on the stands. That makes me pretty happy.

What, at this point, do I see ahead for myself? Candidly, I don't know. I expect greater financial security than I've ever known before, and even now I am supporting a wife well for the first time in my life. I expect to buy a house here in Brooklyn (the more we drive about residential Brooklyn the more we both like it), and, eventually, one upstate. As I remarked earlier, I'd like to spend the winter months in Florida. Much of Florida is low-income, almost disaster area, which suits me fine, since my income will be independant and will stretch farther. I expect to continue doing a lot of travelling, as much as possible of it by car. The Greenbrier can take a bed in the back and still have two full-width seats facing forward, and I love travelling the Interstates in it, pulling off into a rest area to sleep the night. Poul Anderson once asked, in WARHOON what we'd do if we had a guaranteed annual income and didn't have to work. My reply then was that I'd probably do what I was doing anyway, only a little more and a little better. That still pretty much applies. I envy the Elliks of this world, but I can't live their kinds of lives. Fortunately, I am learning how to live mine very well indeed.

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NOTED: 4.7

CELEPHAIS: Evans - If I slid over the point, it was inadvertently (but remember, I wrote that piece for HABAKKUK in 1961; it's some five years old now): in any case I quite agree that a music which does not emotionally reach a person will hold little appeal to him. I don't recall every point I made, but I think it is important to distinguish between the objective phrase, "X jazz has no emotional content" and the subjective one, "X jazz has no emotional content for So&so." You refer to my liking for "the intellectual, cool, modern jazz, rather than the emotion-filled traditional jazz..." (And suddenly it's 1957! Or: haven't we had this discussion once before, Bill?) I, in turn, really don't think modern jazz is any less "emotion-filled" than traditional; it's obvious that traditional simply reaches your emotions more than it does mine, and with modern jazz vice-versa. Objectively speaking, I think that the jazzmen of every era put about the same emotional qualities into the music with which they were involved, and as little into that which they simply paid lip-service to. Today the New Thing boys are making their jazz a very direct and immediate outlet for their emotions, as a matter of fact. They aren't communicating to me, because I'm not a Black Nationalist, and I don't have much empathy for the Hate Scene. But they sure are reaching some people: the situation in jazz today is roughly analogous to that of the forties, when it was Trad vs. Bop. And how do you like me as a Moldy Fig, Bill?

HORIZONS: Warner - Harry, I thank you for the kind things you said about me on page one; I just wish you hadn't said something on page 3 that I must take exception to. It makes me appear quarrelsome, and I just don't feel that way towards you. However: LSD can produce a variety of reactions, since the LSD experience (like all psychedelic experiences) is so subjective, but they are rarely "dreary, tragic and unpleasant." I think this label might easier be placed on the alcoholic experience, and I won't quibble with your pinning it on certifiable "madness" (although I suspect that's more your reaction than that of the inmates in question), but I won't accept the connection with LSD. The problem, I'm afraid, is that among the other delusions common among "acid-heads" is one of communication. One feels an empathy both real and false, and often makes associations which are untrue. These errors are, however, errors of individual judgement, amplified but not induced by the drug. One is as capable of correct judgements under LSD as false ones. The problem is one of distraction: the simulation of some aspects of schizophrenia includes the schizophrenic thought-processes, and these can be delusive in their distractive properties. But rarely dull; hardly "dreary, tragic and unpleasant." If they tend towards unpleasantness, they become far more than dreary.

We hear so much about the nasty things we Americans have done in Viet Nam. I wonder if we could balance these things against the nasty things done by the Viet Cong, and come up with a fairer picture.

I just counted my book collection. My paperback collection can't compare with Sam's: I have only about 1,000 sf paperbacks, 1,000 mysteries, and 200 westerns, plus another 500 or so non-category titles, and a couple hundred hardcovers sf books. I didn't count my magazine collection: it comprises a couple walls of my living room (to within a foot of the nine-foot ceilings), and that's a bit much for a fast tally. However, I'll try matching my record collection against yours: I have around 1,600 lps, including Robin's 100 or so. Like you, I've simply accumulated steadily over many years. My desire is to have my own private library of all the books and records which interest me. As a rule, I keep every book I read, and space limitations dictate that these be paperbacks.

I collect old boys' books, too. Remind me to check out your local bookstores the next time I'm near Hagerstown...

Unfortunately, there are definite schools in today's sf field. They group basically not around writers, but editors. Today a separate class of sf is generated by each of the major magazine editors and one or two of the book editors or readers. Fred Pohl's tastes dominate his three magazines, Campbell's ANALOG, and, to a much lesser extent, Ed Ferman's F&SF (in this case the dominant note is tradition). Mike Moorcock's assinine adulation for J.G. Ballard sets the pace for NEW WORLDS (although that magazine appears in danger of going under; I wish I could say it was owing to Moorcock's policies, but it isn't -- the distributor folded from under them), while it is echoed at Berkley Books by Damon Knight. If you were involved in sf to any real extent, you'd also be aware of the Milford Mafia, the Judy Merrill Clique, et al, as well as the growing interest in and school of adventure/heroic fantasy. Only the latter strikes me as in any respect healthy for the field as a whole.

THE RAMBLING FAP: Calkins - ABDick has the policy of obsoleting their older machines. When these are traded in they are, as a rule, thoroughly demolished so that no usable parts will

remain. As far as I know, no other major company pursues such a ruthless policy with such thoroughness.

When retiring, look for areas of the country which are poor, where work is scarce and prices low, usually as a result of an industry which moved away, or agricultural disasters, or somesuch. In these areas an independant income will go farthest, and will usually be welcomed as "outside money". I recommend against the Carribian: low prices there are deceptive, as many items you expect to have available will be quite expensive, and the tax situations are often bad.

You're a conservative, and opposed to government intervention in your life, yet in your comments on GODOT to Deckinger, in opposing selective applications of taxes, you spell out (for friends and foes alike, as Hugh Hefner once put it...) exactly the reasons why government has grown to dominate our lives. I regard it as a necessary evil, and one preferable to exploitation by the other power groups which previously dominated our lives -- like Big Business, Big Unions, Big Religion, etc.

THE VINEGAR WORM: Leman - I enjoyed your conreport, but I wish you had not gone off on polemical tangents so often. I think you are reacting to stereotypes and making basic confusions in your comments on "bohemian living" and "beatniks."

You mentioned me, along with Terry Carr and Sprague de Camp, as having a neat, and un"raffish beatnik" beard, for which I thank you. But I think you should know that I consider myself a bohemian, in the tradition of the bohemians of the twenties, and that, for the past six or seven years, I have lived a rather bohemian life. This satisfies me, and I am not awfully concerned with whether or not it satisfies anyone else: you have your own life to live, and its satisfaction for you is your business. However, "bohemian" does not imply a negation of all those Basic American Values I'm sure you hold dear -- and most particularly, "bohemian" does not mean unwashed. Unlike you, I would not be unduly upset if my daughter showed signs of yearning for a bohemian existence. Were I you, in fact, I should take comfort in the fact that most teenagers covet the "bohemian life" as a freedom from the life of their parents, and rarely stick with it greatly past the years of adolescent rebellion.

Many bohemians have been poor, and this has been a result of their chosen careers, and has in turn resulted in some of their characteristic modes of living. I speak with authority here: I have put in my time as a Starving Writer. As a rule, poverty is not a goal, but an incidental result. And the lofts and apartments in delapidated neighborhoods are usually a matter of going where the rents are cheapest. This by no means rules out Living Comfortably. Lee Hoffman has a tiny basement apartment in the Village for which she pays a low rent, and it is one of the most comfortable apartments I've ever been in -- albeit a bit too small for me to consider for myself (with all my clutter of possessions). I've seen many loft apartments which were very attractive, although all the furniture was handmade or scavanged castoffs. (In fact, that's true of all my furniture, and I'm not ashamed of its quality.)

My family traditions are New England Yankee. We believed in Making Do, and in repairing that which breaks, rather'n replacing it. I find that totally compatible with a bohemian existence. Many of the bohemians I've known have been fantastically capable people, quite used to fending for themselves as carpenters, plumbers, you-name-it. I'm a good carpenter, myself.

Your daughter could do a lot worse.

HORIB: Lupoff - Frankly, I can't see continuing the Other Fandoms panel. We've discussed the point, and two factors are uppermost. First, we are not using panels at the NyCon3; we'll be trying out several new types of program items. Second, the panel as constituted was unwieldy, and would never have gotten off the ground had Vernon Coriell^{nm} made a fool of himself. He's stated that he has no desire to repeat that performance, and I can see his point. I might add that I was somewhat annoyed to see Bruce Pelz printing in RATATOSK that the panel would be carried over before the NyCon Committee had even considered it.

Your comments on two-party government prompted me to wonder why the opposition party over here hasn't tried the British method of constructing a Shadow Government. Unfortunately, I suspect that the usual results would be all too familiar: the opposition party devotes itself to sabotaging the in-power party's worthwhile endeavors, in order that no one make hay over anything worthwhile. *Sigh*

If you want to trade your Sunbeam in on another used car, try the Volvo P544; even as a used car, it would undoubtedly be more satisfactory.

I'm delighted to see Dave Kaler get as much bad press as possible, but don't you think FAPA is the wrong place for exposing him? Few FAPAns could care less. I wrote Bob Schoenfeld a long letter about the two comics conventions, but he felt that he could not print it in his ON THE DRAWING BOARD as long as it is more or less dominated by Kaler, who might take reprisals of some sort. I hope he'll print it later...

Are you sure it was Ed Herron who wrote the first two dozen Batman stories? I'd heard from fairly definitive sources that Bill Finger wrote the first, and thereafter alternated somewhat with Gardner Fox. Why not try to establish how many, if any of those early Batman stories Bob Kane even drew? Jerry Robinson took over within a year or two, but I suspect Dick or Bob Wood and Jack Cole also had a hand. Bob Kane is certainly one of the biggest frauds in the comics field, in any case...

DIFFERENT: Moskowitz -. It was a pleasure to see these copies of the unpublished SATELLITES; one can only envy you for possessing the originals. I'd very much like to see you do the complete story of the magazine's history, and the reasons for it folding, especially with a complete issue this far along in the printing. I might add that I'd love to see more fascimiles, but that almost goes without saying.

SATELLITE was never my favorite magazine in content -- the material was too uneven, too many of the stories by Names were castoff -- but it was certainly the most attractive magazine in terms of typography and packaging. The large-size issues are quite handsome. The interiors were too often by Morey (who I notice is still often in the pages of Margulies' magazines), but the contents page you reproduced is an excellent example of the kind of attractive layout and typography no one is doing today.

SERCON'S BANE: FMBusby - Your remarks to Ed Cox remind me of some of the cloddish drivers I've encountered in the last several years. Since I've been averaging around 20,000 miles of driving a year for the last couple of years, throughout the country, I've had all-too-frequent opportunities to observe the Stupid Driver in action. In fact, I've twice witnessed high-speed accidents occur, just ahead of me. (The first time it was a multi-car pileup on the Pensy Turnpike, and mine was the only car to squeek through. The second was freakish, and although a car went into a spin at 70mph, no one was hurt, and the

car ended up undamaged. But sheesh!)

The most common failure of the Stupid Driver is alertness. He is not alert to road conditions ahead of or behind him. He rarely pays any attention to the state of traffic behind him. In the west, the high speed roads are single-lanes each way, but each lane is quite wide, and often the shoulder is paved, the only difference being that the paving is a different color. As a rule, a slower driver will move over onto this shoulder to allow faster cars to pass. But a surprising number of Stupid Drivers refuse to do so, despite honked horns, flashed lights, and shouted curses (largely unheard). They hug the center line of the road and are deeply offended if you wish to pass. I've seen them pile up traffic for half a mile or more.

I've nursed a grudge against Stupid Drivers of the subclass Stupid Parkers ever since my motorscootering days. In downtown areas, we were always required to occupy a full parking space, and to put our money in the meter, just as if our scooters were cars. However, the Stupid Parker is not about to let us hog our paid-for spaces, and has just the answer. He drives his car into, against, or over (or all three) the defenseless scooter (or cycle). If he is considerate, he moves the scooter first -- sometimes into an unpaid space, sometimes up against the back of the next car, sometimes onto the sidewalk, rarely into the street itself. Most of these result in tickets -- for the scooter or cycle. I'm not sure whether it bugged me more to find a ticket dangling from the handlebar of my standing scooter, or to find it on its side, leaking oil and gas, the headlamp smashed, and a new dent in the fender. In any case, I have preserved the general grotch.

I consider myself a good driver: fast, but observant. I haven't had an accident in ten years, and that one was a fluke (a car was stopped dead in the fast lane just beyond the crest of a hill). But I've had some near misses, most of them not my fault. I'm reminded of my minister in the last church I ever attended, who remarked that we drivers operate on faith: the faith that the driver of the car coming the other way won't suddenly charge into our lane and meet us head on. The other evening Robin and I were returning from a party up in the Bronx at Charlie Brown's when a man nearly sideswiped me on an up-ramp to the Beltway. In New York we have what is called the Alternate Merge, whereby when two lanes must merge into one, they alternate, a car from the first lane, and then one from the second. It's one hell of a lot better than the "let's see how many can get through from our lane before they jump the gap and stall us" methods of such areas as Washington, D.C. So I was in a situation where two lanes were merging for an upramp -- a spot I've driven through an average of two or three times a week for the last four years -- and this jerk in a 1961 Chrysler decided he wasn't going to wait his turn. I jammed on my brakes, twisted the wheel hard, honked my horn feebly (there was too much else going on to get angry at that point) and missed a concrete divider. I went up the ramp following the jerk.

A year or two ago, I would probably have cursed and let it go. This time I was considerably bugged, so I switched my headlights to high beam and rode the bastard's tail for two miles, changing lanes as he did, hovering just close enough that no one cared to slide in between us, while still not tailgating, a practice I abhor. The Greenbrier's lights are higher than most car's, and will commonly cut right across the low trunks of modern cars and directly in their back windows. With high beams, it is a true annoyance, and something I'd not wish on anyone but this smug, squat, fiftyish cigar-chewing SOB with his huge tailfins. (Maybe it was earlier than 61 -- it had those monstrous Chrysler tailfins.) After three miles he couldn't take it. He moved into the right lane, and slowed to

a complete stop. This on an elevated expressway with no emergency parking lanes on the outside! Well, I coasted to a stop behind him and sat there with my high beams on. I rolled down my window, but -- mindful of the time a nut with a knife ran me off the Jersey Turnpike and threatened to kill me (I told the story in APA L and Andy Porter's ALGOL) -- locked the door and kept my hand on the window crank.

Jerk climbed out finally and waddled self-importantly back to complain about my lights. I enlightened him about the Alternate Merge, expressed my concern for the finish of his car which he had nearly deposited upon mine, and suggested we call a cop. He hurriedly waddled back to his car, and took off. I followed, lights still high beam, for another quarter of a mile, then took my turnoff and dimmed the lights. It was a very satisfying experience, and one I've not often enjoyed.

SALUD: EBusby - The first Avengers show I tuned in was the one in which Mrs. Peel is trapped in an automated house by a dead man, and it remains in my memory as one of the finest. I love The Avengers second only to I Spy, and in both cases quite often the bits of business and the lovely characterizations sometimes outweigh the plots. But like you I'm glad the show is returning, although I understand it is to replace 12 O'Clock High at 10:00 pm Friday nights -- which means I'll tune it in right in the middle of the Fanoclast meeting, and probably the first half of FISTFA on alternate Fridays (no overwhelming loss) unless Mike McInerney gets a tv set.

What do you think of The Monkees?

I met Rolf Gindorf in London, and enjoyed talking with him quite a bit. He'd been a VOID reader and correspondant back in the early '60s, and I had faunched to meet him as the "German Terry Carr." He's not, however. He's largely lost interest in fandom, being primarily active in politics these days. At the time of the Loncon he was worried about resurgent Naziism and Franz Joseph Straus; I imagine the current shakeup in Germany has him even more worried. He's short, thin, darkhaired, and very intense -- almost fanatical, one might say. But I expect that you would enjoy meeting him as much as I did.

I'm amazed anyone could be so unobservant as to not notice the difference in the length of days in winter and summer until he was thirteen, and I'd hardly expect it to be solely a matter of whether or not his parents talked about it. But then, Speer grew up several lattitudes further south, I guess, where it would not be quite so noticeable. As a kid I was quick to notice that in the summertime I could play in the remaining light outside hours after supper, but that in the wintertime it was dark by suppertime. Daylight Saving Time helped, of course, but I knew about that anyway. (My parents blaobed.)

ALIQUOT: Hevelin - Your "What is an American anyway?" trails off from "he" to "we" on the second page, but of the first fifteen, I find ten are not applicable to my attitudes or interests. These are mostly contradictory-type statements of the sort which small-town newspapers delight in publishing. Like the remainder, they are gross generalizations, and I would take no pride in alligning myself with many of them. I would like to think that, as a human being, I am not that prone to foolish conceit and naively paradoxical behavior -- although, for all I know, I may be anyway. But I wouldn't brag up the point.

DAMBALLA: Hansen - It's one thing to be partisan and back another bidding city against New York -- you were hardly alone -- but

it's quite another thing entirely to slant your reporting in such a way that three nearly identical parties are reported to make two of them sound like swell blasts and one a dismal disaster.

By me, all three were disasters. The room was too small, the facilities were inadequate, and the beer too insufficient. But this can be laid largely to the feet of the Tricon Committee -- and this was pretty much a matter of underestimation on the part of those people.

The fact is that when we were approached by the Tricon Committee, they proposed a beer party to be sponsored each night by one of the bidding groups, but for which the room and beer would be supplied by the Tricon.

In point of fact, the Tricon supplied a meagre amount of beer -- one half keg -- to each bidding group, and from there on each of us was on his own. Friday night's party was co-sponsored by Syracuse and Boston (there being only three nights available, and four bidders), so they had twice the beer supplied free that night. Nevertheless, it ran out quickly. Forewarned, we spent Saturday afternoon laying in additional cases of beer, mixers, and hard liquor. We spent well over \$100 on this. And our supplies lasted longer than Friday night's. Baltimore, having spent almost nothing on the campaign up to this point (they hosted one party at the Midwestcon this year), spent even more than we did on extra beer and hard stuff. And even then they ran out not much after we did.

Personally, I think that such parties are a bad thing. Under the guise of "free" beer, we were suckered into spending money we hadn't counted on and could ill afford. Too often a situation like this ends up giving the bid to the group that spends the most money. I didn't enjoy spending the something over \$600 that I personally put into the campaign for New York (and that's exclusive of personal expenses, travel expenses, etc., on our two coast-to-coast Treks), and I know for a fact that the other bidding groups liked it no better. We were roped into financing a half-baked circus, and then were criticised for not spending a great deal more by people like you, Chuck. Perhaps Denver should bid for a con. It's educational. (All previous con-committeemen may now chuckle indulgently...)

That bidding speech by the Boston chairman was a queer thing. It grew out of the fact that we discovered that our hotel, the New York Statler Hilton, had been informed by the parent chain that Boston had already booked the '67 Worldcon at the Boston Statler Hilton. We were somewhat annoyed about this, and mentioned it at local fanmeetings. Rich Brown picked it up and published it in FOCAL POINT, with the hotel names garbled. Boston fans got angry, and claimed they'd never misled their hotel, although it was giving them free space for their regional Boskones. They demanded a retraction. Brown and McInerney promised them one in the next FOCAL POINT, but what with the various ferment of the summer, and the Great Trek, no one had time for another FOCAL POINT for months.

In the meantime, an upstate New York fan, who shall remain nameless, published a "FOCAL POINT #23" (although #22 hadn't been published), in which he said some fairly nasty things about various NYC fans (for once, I wasn't involved!), and repeated the charge against Boston. The sheet was apparently designed to embarrass Mike and Rich and the NyCon Committee. It fooled some people, including the Boston fans who decided they'd been double-crossed.

However, Mike published a real FOCAL POINT #22 just before the Tricon, and handed it out at the convention. In it, he exposed "#23" as a hoax, and printed the retraction that Boston wanted. He handed a copy personally to the Boston Chairman, Dave Vanderwerf.

Despite this fact, Vanderwerf and the Boston committee began to get exercised, and demanded of my co-chairman, Dave Van Arnam, that we make a public apology, retraction, or whatever, from the podium during our bidding speech. Van Arnam is an easygoing guy, and he made no protest. But when he told me about it, I did. I wasn't about to retract something I'd not said, in the middle of a timed campaign speech. FOCAL POINT had made its retraction, and probably reached everyone who'd seen the original charge. It was not a matter for the Tricon membership as a whole. Likewise, I was not responsible for the published charge, and I wasn't about to be conned into any responsibility.

Someone I'd never met before came up onto the stage while we were still standing about beforehand, introduced himself unintelligibly, and asked, "What about that retraction?" in a badgering tone.

"I guess you'll have to wait and see," I said smoothly.

Then Vanderwerf came up to me, very heated, and asked the same question. "I'm sorry," I said, "but I'm not about to parrot your silly-assed retraction." (They had it all written out for us.)

"I'll have to bring it up myself," he said.

"That's your responsibility," I replied.

He did, and the rest is history. For anyone who is interested, his charges against us were not only false, but from what I can establish, deliberate lies. When he told Mike McInerney, after it was all over, "No hard feelings," Mike brushed him aside, saying, "You're a lying bastard, and you know it. I handed you that FOCAL POINT with the retraction you say we didn't make myself. I've got hard feelings."

In case anyone cares, it is a matter of record that the Boston Statler Hilton reported booking the '67 Worldcon to the parent chain. Who is responsible is anyone's guess.

After many books, I am getting tired of Nero Wolfe. Stout revealed in P.S. that he writes blind, with no notion of a plot, and I'm afraid it's showing. All too often Wolfe runs out of clues (or has none to begin with) and baits a trap into which the guilty party plunges, revealing himself (or herself). It requires very little deduction or cerebration on Wolfe's part, and is only a step above Mike Hammer's methods. I still find Archie Goodwin engaging, but the recent book in which Wolfe supposedly takes on the FBI seemed disappointing after the buildup.

VANDY: Coulsons - Juanita, my feeling about folksinging at cons and parties is that it's fine, so long as it doesn't interfere with whatever I might be doing. If there's a room where the singers can congregate, fine. But if they are confined to the same room with the rest of the party, they kill the party. It's ironic you voiced the same complaint against "that group of drunken orcs who stood around singing their marching song to the detriment of all neighboring conversations and sanity."

I just got through framing all the odds and ends of covers, sketches, paintings and whatnot I've accumulated. That included four covers from books I've done, a blownup color print of the Frazetta cover for my Lancer book (the original hangs in his doctor's office, *sigh*), the original drawing and working sketch by Jack Gaughan that appeared in WORLDS OF TOMORROW showing me baldheaded and sans glasses as an artist of the future, another sketch of me by Jack done as a study for a cover painting, a Brian Lewis cover painting from SCIENCE FANTASY (the only thing I ever won in a raffle), and a few other odds and ends. These are sitting under some large oil paintings by Andy Reiss, across the room from an oil by Frank Wilimczyk which I once admired upon visiting him. I

prefer having original paintings and drawings on my walls to reproductions of famous paintings and the like, which have always struck me as a bit cheap. Of course, in my parents' home we always had original paintings: my maternal great-grandfather was a gifted artist.

I had the uncanny experience this year of meeting some Ted White fans. These kids had never heard of me as a fan, but knew me only by my few professionally published works -- five short stories in magazines, plus the books. They not only asked me for my autograph -- there was a lot of that this year -- but also presented me with the short list of my published stories and asked if it was complete. I was fair to croggled.

Buck, you mention just finishing John Dickson Carr's THE DEMONIACS. Earlier in the mailing Elinor Busby called it one of the worst books she'd read. What's your opinion? (Personally, I can't read Carr any more. I waded through some forty books while a teenager, but his style is so dull, and his padding so obvious that when I tried another, in 1959, I found it impossibly tiresome.)

Sammy Davis Jr. may be a pushy little bastard to you, but I enjoy him as an entertainer, and was very much caught up by his autobiography. Sometimes pushy little bastards have something worth pushing.

BOBOLINGS: Pavlat - I've driven through Albuquerque several times, and I've never failed to be impressed by the city. Last time we were through I pumped Roy Tackett for what he knew about the history of the area (to which he added a good bit in a recent DYNATRON), and made noises to Robin about how nice it'd be to live there. Unfortunately, there are entirely too many places I'd like to live -- simultaneously! But I think it would make a good choice for you, if you're serious about it. Just stay in the east long enough to be OE next year, okay?

THE LAREAN: Ellick - The thought of you becoming a professional writer is one that scares me, because I'm quite certain you'd be a good one, and I don't need the competition. But seriously, all you lack is motivation: I think you could write salable fiction right now if you wanted to. (And why not? All the other fannish fans of "our" era are doing it...)

THE PERSIAN SLIPPER: Johnstone - I've been working up a novel on motorcycles; all this stuff is interesting. But stay away from two-cycle engines. California either will be or already has banned them for being smog-producers (poorer combustion, more hydrocarbons), and most have lousy low-speed torque anyway.

Why not spend that \$800 or so on a BMW? You said yourself they're top of the heap. (I'm thinking of getting one myself, but the on-street parking problem -- see my comments to FMBusby -- has kept me from it so far. Why, even my three-speed bicycle was swiped last summer...)

SYNAPSE: Speer - To answer Creath Thorne's question, all Gestetners have handles for such things as turning the cylinders when putting on or taking off stencils. They disengage when the motor is turned on.

FAMOUS FUNNIES died in the mid-fifties. There are no more of its type left (and it was the first regularly published 10¢ 7 x 10 comic book). The Peanuts Gold Key comics are not reprint, but original. There may be a few comics left which reprint from the newspapers, but not many. The Comics Code Authority killed most of them; newspaper strips are apparently aimed over the head of the eight-year-old readers the Code Authority believes in.

I'm surprised you balked at the "pedestrian detail" in my conreport; you seem to delight in pedestrian detail in your own writings.

SUPPLEMENT (VINEGAR WORM): Leman - As a close friend of Andy Main's, albeit not of his political persuasion, I've been disappointed in the intemperate replies he drew with his own reply to Chuck Hansen. I'm pleased to see that you at least attempted honest communication in place of sarcastic rejoinders. This entire discussion concerns me, because I feel myself straddling the line that it has apparently drawn between the older conservatives and the younger liberals. The sneers Andy drew from some FAPAns, Hansen high among them, appear to show that he drew blood -- or, if not that, that they were incapable of coping with the problems he raised.

Andy's attitudes are typical of his generation, and while often naive are both sincere and honest. He is disillusioned in his elders, as he has every right to be, and has not yet found the common ground with them. Frankly, I understand this thoroughly, since I've undergone many of the same experiences. I am more cynical than Andy, and less shocked by reality, but I cannot say that I have a much higher opinion of the rampantly dishonest people who control this country today (and who always have done so) than he. I differ, I guess, in realizing that they are not restricted to this country and this time -- a reading of history is one of the most depressing things I can think of.

I part with most of the younger liberals, though, in thinking in terms of simplified personalities: the "that butcher Johnson" sort of thing now common on college campuses. (I am quite convinced that for all his defects in personality, Johnson has been a much better president than Kennedy, who was all image and no action.) Simplified thinking of that sort is naive, illusionary, and probably stupid, if it comes to that, since it is the kind of thinking that makes men Heroes or Villains, and never understands them as people. It's unfortunate that most people in this country still think in these terms, and still need the image of a villainous dictator like Hitler to drive them to Glorious War.

All of which is pretty much digression, I guess.

Ross MacDonald had an article in SHOW which I read while waiting in my Mexican lawyer's office, in which he contrasted his work with Chandler's, and said he was aiming in quite a different direction. I think Chandler's early comments on his work still rankle him (and I think Chandler was quite unfair in those comments, considering his later praise for the inferior work of Ian Fleming).

Have you read Ross's wife's work? The later Margaret Millar books (those written after their marriage, I presume) are a skillful blend of the tough, objective writing style with subjective psychological insights. It's a bit amusing to find them marketted now as "Gothic Romances."

And thus end my comments on mailing 117. Comments on LIGHTHOUSE went directly to Terry Carr as a letter of comment. If I ignored your zine, it was solely due to lack of comment hooks. And, I might add, that while I had no comments on SCIENCE-FICTION FIVE-YEARLY, I regard it as not only the Best of the Mailing, but Best of the Year as well. I just wish my own contribution had been a little better...

This is more than I've put into FAPA in years; I wonder if it's an omen...

-- Ted White

