



PROSPECTUS 29

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PROSPECTUS is the irregularly published newsletter of the Fantasy and Science Fiction Society of Columbia University. It is available to dues-paying members of the Society (dues are 50¢ for the spring semester). Carelessly edited by Arlene Lo. The Society meets every Thursday at 8:30 at 417 W. 118th St., Apt. 63, New York, N.Y. 10027. For information about the Society and its activities, contact Eli Cohen at the above address or telephone 666-3345.

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Grand Marshal: Eli Cohen

Petit Marshal: Arlene Lo

Acting Seneschal: Maggie Flinn

FLIED FLEANS AND OTHER INEDIBLES

THE BARNYARD -- Feb. 1. The autumn semester is finally over and although I should be trying to get a head start on the spring semester's work, this takes precedence; I absolutely could not take another "Arlene! So when's the next Prospectus coming out?", as if anybody really cared...but that's what I get for volunteering. However, I need help. In order to put out the newsletter I've got to have something to put in. Hopefully my Other Worlds course classmates will contribute work; in the meantime I will consider any submissions related to f and sf, even an improbable history by Dennis Casey (which shows you how desperate the situation is).

My own head is on the chopping block again for having the unmitigated gall to print on these pages what I facetiously call my artwork. We have a saying in Russian, the literal sense of which is appropriate here: *дымага бѣдѣ мегнум* (boomaga vsyaw tyerpit), that is to say, paper will endure anything...and that's also a nice lead-in to this → →

PHILCON REPORT

by David Emerson

Quarter after midnight in the Philadelphia airport, I called the Sheraton to find out Eli's room number. Whoever answered the phone didn't know, so they put me on HOLD while they tried to find out; meanwhile, there I stood in fear and trembling lest my dime run out, leaving me with no change whatever. Fortunately, the desk supplied the information in the nick of time. Now I could go directly to Eli's room when I got to the hotel instead of having to ask for it, standing there wearing a full backpack and carrying an autoharp, and trying to look like I had no intention of crashing there.

It was 2 A.M. before I got there, however. Eli was not in, nor was there a note telling me where he was. I had no trouble finding the Con suite which Eli had left shortly before, and no one knew where he had gone. I resigned myself to Fate, set down my pack, and tried to find something to drink while Elliot Shorter strummed my autoharp. Soon I ran into Barry Smotroff and Moshe Feder, who were also looking for Eli, so we went off together in search of our quarry. Since I'd asked everybody I saw if they knew where my esteemed roommate was, the hotel was by that time filled with people saying, David Is Looking For Eli. They found him. A considerable time later he found me. "Didn't you see my note?" he asked. "It was such a great idea: I wrote it on the outside of an envelope, licked the flap, and stuck it to the door. Are you sure you didn't see a note??" No, Eli, I didn't see any note.

Saturday morning we were up bright and early at the crack of noon, which, for conventions, is early. We had a traditional Saturday breakfast in the hotel coffee shop, with its traditional high prices and bad service. The waitress was wearing a nametag which said SUSAN WAITRESS; we had visions of the entire Waitress family, Ma and Pa Waitress and all the youngsters; generation upon generation of Waitresses.

The scheduled program went rather well, except for being a little late sometimes. The Saturday afternoon lineup of panels and speeches was enlivened by a Persian slave-auction, with Elliot Shorter as the auctioneer, Fred Phillips and Scratch Bachrach as rival slave-masters, and Eileen Becker as the beautiful slave girl, who also did some very fine belly dancing. The audience got into the act, bidding "Five shekels!" "Three cows!" "Fifty Galactic Credits!" "Half of Harlan Ellison!" And, over the PA system, a disembodied voice: "This is GOD speaking. I bid two plagues and a flood!"

During a break in the program, Eli and I met his cousin Henry, who lives in a suburb of Philadelphia; the three of us were talking in Eli's room when the door opened and a whole troop of Pittsburgh fen poured into the tiny room, laden with suitcases, bags, satchels, and paraphernalia. Some of them were going to crash with us that night but they didn't know who or how many, because all their other plans were as yet unformed. I could just see that small single carpeted with wall-to-wall Sleeping Bodies. I groaned. Eli groaned. The floor groaned.

We got back to the program just in time to hear Ben Bova give

a fascinating talk on current and proposed applications of lasers. Lasers are great as cutting torches, except that if you don't blow away the molten as soon as it's cut, it welds itself back together again. The development of high-powered gas lasers led to the invention and patenting of an "aerodynamic window", spelled h-o-l-e. Ben then added, "They're going to crack down on the donut manufacturers for patent infringement." When asked from the audience if lasers could be used to shoot down ICBM's, he pointedly refused to discuss the matter, saying, "I hope you understand why." He does a lot of classified work, you know.

Ginjer Buchanan, Eli and I had a very pleasant dinner out at Henry's house in Cherry Hill, but only after more trials and tribulations with the hotel room. As we were going to get our coats we found that the lock on the door seemed to have taken matters into its own hands and slipped out of place, so that the door was locked from the inside. It took Someone From Security with an extra-long key and the proper unlocking incantation to open the door. (Pedo mellon a minno.)

Saturday evening was a succession of parties, each following hard on the heels of the preceding one. The first consisted of the bulk of WPSFA piled into one single, and included the presentation to Ginjer of a large koala bear poster and a small stuffed koala named Valerie-the-Pooh. Ginjer accepted these, made a couple of speeches (by popular demand), and then returned to her task of snaffling the curtains. Another featured the Washington contingent singing the songs from 2001: A Space Opera, with their audience seated along both sides of the 8th floor corridor. Then there was the annual Trial put on by the True Faith of the Sacred Green Cat (who believe two things: first, that the Lord Mota resides on Mars in the body of the Sacred Green Cat; and second, if you'll believe that, you'll believe anything). This year Charlotte Boynton was tried "for failing to recognize cognitive illumination", and then Fred Phillips was tried "for recognizing cognitive illumination"; of course, both defendants were found quite guilty. Actually the Trial was a vehicle for the spoofing of Darko Suvin's oh-so-academic-and-literate (and unintelligible) speech at the recent Secon in Toronto. Ginny Carew and Tom Claresson acted as "expert witnesses" for the trials: they read excerpts from the Suvin speech, at which point one of the attorneys asked, "Who or what is a Darko Suvin?" I should point out that His Radiance the Janandra, Fred Lerner, acted as both the Attorney for the Defense and the Attorney for the Persecution. At least he wasn't Judge as well.

After the Trial, I took autoharp in hand and went off in search of music. I found it. At a Pittsburgh/New York party Jason (a/k/a Chuck) Rein was playing guitar, and Ted Greenstone had his mandolin out. The three of us formed a pretty good combination, and soon we were singing everything from Gilbert & Sullivan to Tom Lehrer to the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. My memories are a little clouded but I seem to remember, sometime after that, finding myself in a room with a few New York fans, a drunken Gordon Dickson and a Very Drunken Joe Haldeman telling us stories about his fourteen mistresses and a lizard in the Mysterious Orient, all the

while doing something faintly obscene with his toes and Ginger's belly-button. But, of course, that's too fantastic to be real so I must have dreamed it. Right?

Sunday a bunch of us went to breakfast at some restaurant that couldn't decide what its own name was, but still managed to serve us excellent eggs Benedict. We got there by walking through City Hall, much to my amazement; we tried to get back by walking underground, in the labyrinthine subway tunnels, and succeeded only in getting totally lost. But we did manage to emerge into the sunlight eventually and find our way back through the chilly Philly (sorry, couldn't resist that) streets back to the hotel for the tag end of Fred Phillips' rap on witchcraft. This was followed by a hilarious parody of "To Tell the Truth", in which Joe Haldeman, Fred Lerner, some weirdo hippie freak and Debbie Langsam all claimed to be the famous Gardner Dozois. Positive identification of the real Gardner hinged on his exposing his left breast for some arcane reason involving Stanton Coblenz. The climax of the Sunday afternoon program was the extemporaneous talk given by the Principal Speaker, Keith Laumer. During the question period he related how he came to create his popular character, Retief -- to the delight of the audience.

The convention was mostly over by then, but several New York fans were left over; we all went out to eat at a place called The Pub, which was across the street from a couple of porno flicks. And on the way we passed two neighboring theaters showing 101 Acts of Love and Jesus Christ: The Greatest Story Ever Told. That, we sagely observed, is some double bill.

And on that note, we return, back to the big bad City of New York to pursue our various interests. Which in my case means looking for a job. After all, I'll need to earn money to pay for my next Con, won't I? Who says fandom ain't a way of life?

--DLE 12/14/71

...I didn't mean that, David. It was a delightful article. Here's another interesting leftover from last year: -- Ye Ed.

In Search of Lore

by Fred Phillips

There is, certain aficionados of "quality" books assert, a deal of difference between the types of Book Hunts book lovers go on, but it is hoped that this essay will prove these distinctions as artificial and stylized as they really are. I have heard qualifications posited between going to a college bookstore to pick up "required" textbooks and supplemental readings, visiting big paperback houses like Brentano's, Marboros and Bookmasters, whose stocks are touted as "predictable" (and therefore uninteresting), visiting specialty occult or sf/fantasy houses like Weiser's or (by special arrangement with ESFA) Dick Witter's, where the

subject matter is even more "predictable", and finally the Big "Bohemian", push-out-into-the-unknown "genuine" Book Shikars, when, if one is abnormally lucky, one engages the expert guidance of Big Game Hunters like the Bwana M'kubwas Fred Lerner, Mark Owings, John Boardman, Franklin Spellman, and Brian and Sherna Burley, as an ironbound guarantee that the sparkling, witty, and erudite conversation by which such rare and wondrous excursions are thus reinforced will compensate for a slender "bag" at the end of the day, if Crom so wills.

I refute these assertions categorically. I am an incurable bibliophile: whether I am paying my best friend a quarter for a dog-eared copy of "Sixth Column" which I have already re-read two dozen times, or writing out a \$50 cheque for a set of "The Cthulhuthian Eschatologies", (10 volumes, Miskatonic U. Press, 1947, 2nd Printing, leatherbound) I am always conscious of the collector's rabid feeling of gratification which the Freudians will probably tell us is "psychosexual sublimation", but which I as a collector and Fan couldn't care less about because all I am saying at the time is, "AHH-H, another little gem added to my infinitely superior collection! Who can hope to rival me now?" (as if I didn't know).

I maintain that the pursuit of a major subject in college is, or ought to be, in the words of our eminent bookloving colleague Dr. Carl Fredericks, "Great fun". In fact, I find my own major, cultural anthropology, so much fun, that buying the required textbooks and the supplemental readings has already turned into, not a "chore" of paying through the snoot for dull, dry and dusty academic peregrinative circumlocutions, but more of a hobby in which I go "ape" on two occasions: when they have what I'm looking for and also when they haven't. May the Great Cthulhu and all the Great Old Ones aid and assist the poor bastard of a college bookstore clerk who, when I walk in and ask for Victor Barnouw, has only Volume II (Ethnology) and not volume I (Physical Anthro and Archaeology). "WHAT KIND OF A KINDERGARTEN CRETIN CRECHE BOOKSTORE D'YOU CALL THIS?" I have been known to thunder. "The Origins of the Dagon Cult in Pre-Rompresian Enkidulag" -- whattaya mean you never heard of it? Lemme see your boss!"

As for the so-called "predictable" stocks of the big paperback houses, I protest most vehemently! I walked into the 86th Street and Lexington Avenue Marboro's during the last hurricane, with a booklist about 40 or 50 strong that I always carry upon my person except when showering, sleeping or fighting in the lists: I bought 3 -- and added a half-dozen more to the list that I didn't have the money for at the time. I call my wife and sister-in-law as witnesses. For every book I buy I spot at least 2 more for future reference. And I don't read everything, either: my library at home, oh, about 6,000 or a bit over strong, is only subdivided into around 30 categories. I have little or no math, physics, chem, or medicine at all.

Visiting specialty houses like Weiser's Occult Book Shop and specially-prearranged "raids" on Dick Witter's sf and fantasy garage-warehouse is always exciting. True, I have in both cases quite precise knowledge of their current stock because I get their

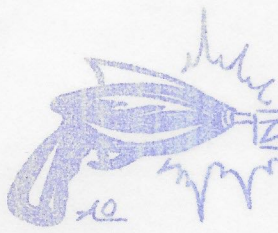
catalogues. But often Weiser doesn't realize what he's selling. I am currently undertaking a private tutorial in Ceremonial Magic and there is a certain source I've found at Weiser's that I haven't told anybody about, including my tutors, from which I have obtained some very startling information with regard to protection at a distance, and also some highly interesting results. No further comment at present.

Nevertheless, the immense satisfaction I receive at acquiring the intellectual tools of my profession, quite well compensate for the reduction of the element of surprise at finding promising titles of which I have had no previous information. The one is every bit as satisfying as the other.

But at last we come to the great, professionally-managed Book Shikar. Elliot Shorter recently signified his assent to attend such a magnificent spectacle. I only wish to Chu I could take all of you out there with us. But don't let that put a crimp in your collecting! As my most distinguished Tru Fannish colleague, Fred Lerner said to Mark Owings, when I begged them to please, not let me die before going all together on a serious, pre-itinerarized Book Hunt, Fred turned to Mark with a look of dread resignation in his eagle-eye, and declared: "Up, Owings -- THE GAME'S AFOOT!" at which my Sherlockian wife and I both applaud loudly. What more can an aficionado ask than to hunt fantasy with two of the greatest sf bibliographers of all time? I'm telling you, bretheren, I have it made. This could easily turn into a 2-day affair. My goal is to top my all-time paperback high-water mark of 45 in one day, and the famous ESFA raid on Dick Witter's, where I bagged six hard covers -- all Arkham Houses; 2 Smiths, a Lovecraft, a Howard, a Wandrer, and a Derleth anthology. Eureka!

My restraint since May of 1970 has been little short of remarkable. For 5 years and seven months, including vacations, I used to buy an average of ten books per week, hard and soft cover, at 30% discount, as an employee of Bookmasters. That estimates 2,880 books, plus the 2,600 I already owned, plus the 500 I married into, plus give or take 100 acquired since leaving Bookmasters as birthday, anniversary, Christmas and Chanukah presents, and on occasional bursts of sheer joy and madness which my lovely wife calls "mini-sprees" and without which I could live -- but sadly. Now a real Book Hunt, with the right kind of people, FANS, doesn't consist only of poring over the huckster table, because that, while often rewarding, is to the True Sportsman "cold meat on the table". Ah, no! To wander in the dark, narrow cobbled lanes and alleys of a strange and unfamiliar city, in and out of tiny, over-stuffed little hole-in-the-wall second-hand book shops, with dirty windows, warped and unswept floors, spider-webbed corners, and wizened little white-haired proprietors, dozing under single naked electric light bulbs, blinking into consciousness only at the tinkling of the little bell over the door, and seemingly oblivious to the curious, exotic, eldritch, and long-forgotten troves of ancient treasure encompassed by their shabby, paint-peeled emporia, the "quaint and curious ancient volumes of forgotten lore" -- it is for THIS the TRUE Book Hunter hungers -- THIS -- and nothing more!

~ Fred Phillips
Dec. 3, 1971



KRATOPHANY 1 has finally made its appearance and our Locus friends had this to say about it:

"General material -- all very readable but nothing outstanding. Eli furnishes the con report and serious article. Jerry Kaufman does fannish humor, John Boardman attempts a humorous story, and Judy Mitchell has a comic strip." (L 105)

After recovering from the initial shock I decided it wasn't that negative a statement. I don't intend to review it, only to say that it is generally pleasantly humorous and I find myself frequently re-reading it although I have atrillion other things to do at any given time, like issuing (bless me) this newsletter.

This issue of PROSPECTUS has been brought to you by the world's foremost authority on the theory and application of procrastination.

Afterthoughts: It occurred to me that it was a bad idea "decorating" the first page, but it's too late now. If the morals squad catches you with a copy, tell them I don't exist. Happy February!