

# PROSPECTUS 30

PROSPECTUS is the irregularly published newsletter of the Fantasy and Science Fiction Society of Columbia University (FSFSCU), and is sent to all dues-paying members. For information about the Society and its activities, contact: Eli Cohen, 417 West 118th Street, #63, New York City 10027 (#212.666.3345)

-----

## FSFSCU OFFICERS (SPRING 1973):

Grand Marshal	Eli Cohen
Petit Marshal	Elizabeth Rosenblum
Acting Seneschal	Fred Lerner
Mascot Emeritus	Carl Frederick

-----

THE NEXT MEETING OF FSFSCU will be April 5th (5.30 pm) in <sup>204</sup>Fayerweather Lounge. Details of the program are unavailable at this time. There will also be a meeting on April 19th, same time and place.

LUNACON, one of the largest science fiction conventions in the country, will be held the weekend of April 20-22 at the Statler Hilton Hotel, across the street from Penn Station and Madison Square Garden, here in New York. It's definitely worth attending; Harlan Ellison will be the Guest of Honor, and he will be introduced by Isaac Asimov. For more information, come to the next two FSFSCU meetings, or contact Eli Cohen

-----

## THE ANTI-FAN:

MAD GEORGE ROBINSON,  
THE ALCHEMIST OF ST ANDREW'S

An exposé by  
Fred Phillips

If Eli Cohen and David Emerson had not visited me a month ago and trotted up to George Robinson's pastoral apartment in the Fordham area of the Cold Bronx, I wouldn't try to palm him off to you as the eighth wonder of the fannish world.

George Robinson flavors his speech with occultistic triggering keys. He lifts a piece of solidly-frozen bacon out of his freezer during election night 1972, and a little piece of ice comes off on his finger, and he goes, "The prophecy of Hoberger is accomplished! The gods of Ice are attacking me..." Anyone who's read the Avon edition of The Morning of the Magicians by Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier would recognise the reference. George Robinson is his own man, as a reader-collector and as an intellect. He refuses to succumb to what he believes to be "the mass pop-cult of Tolkien", only because he regards it as herd behavior, and his right to be different is exercised for the same reason any fan exercises this right. He is a deviant away from the rest of us deviants. This will probably start arguments among fans who visualise fannish behavior as the macro- rather than the microcosm it really is. Just the same, George has not reverted to "mundane world" values, simply because he eschews faddism in Fandom. He regards Fandom,



not as a bona-fide social, philosophical, literary, and subcultural phenomenon with justifiable reasons both to exist and to perpetuate itself, but as a fad, as a passing phase in the lives of people who read and/or collect the various strains of fantasy literature. It's true that Fandom has an enormous turnover. If American SF Fandom were a company, its personnel department would have the Nervous Breakdown to end all nervous breakdowns. It has a tiny hard core of stalwart practitioners who stay in year after year because they

- a) really dig SF and/or fantasy
- b) their friends really dig SF and/or fantasy
- c) they're making some bread off of it.

Naturally every fan has his own reasons for exposing himself to the permeating radiation of Fandom -- this fatal bug whose bite is like the touch of the Fairy Godmother's wand: this mixture of radio nostalgia, comic fandom, bad taste in posters, an affliction for any crap that was ignored by the majority of literate Americans during the '30's and '40's, and the permanent adolescence of happy-ending formula science fiction and fantasy written on various styles of "highs" that its authors have inveigled their publishers into trying to pass off as literature.

George always says, "No book is ever really without any value, even if only to indicate that it has no value at all. It still has a didactic effect:... it teaches you not to throw away money on crap." George is not afraid of fans and Fandom. He is a keen student of human nature. He knows what fans are; he knows what Fandom represents. How can anyone condemn him for refusing to lend himself to the fannish frame of reference? It would be different if Robinson had never known actifans. He knows Owings; he knows Dennis Casey; he's met Cohen and Emerson; he met a roomful of fans including Mike McQuown and the Burleys at a Christmas party I had two years ago. He stood there while the fannish attitude washed over him in its nauseating waves. He never let himself get burned the first time. He has simply steadfastly stayed away from this competitive, self-defeating, egotistical, self-contradictory, time-wasting subculture based on a suspension of disbelief in its social reality.

Yet George reads the same books fans read. He has the same cynicism fans have, the same political sophistication, the same respect for genuine intellect, the same burning thirst for an exchange of ideas with his peers that many fans have. He is a constant challenge to fans... Robinson is into secret societies, ceremonial magic, alchemy, both modern and mediaeval history, the history of Western religion, contemporary politics, folklore, and various areas of the occult. He owns an actual copy of the 1948 Arkham House edition of Clark Ashton Smith's Genus Loci plus a choice, if small, selection of Lovecraftiana. He can discuss fantasy litcrit with Fred Lerner, Mark Owings, Jack Chalker, and John Boardman, as well as with any fan whose readings have taken him into a deeper appreciation of the literary nuances of modern as well as traditional fantasy. George Robinson has the soul of a madman, the brain of a genius, the wit of a demon, the patience of an angel, the tenacity of a member of the Garde Imperiale at the Battle of Waterloo, the reserve of an upper-class Englishman, the appreciation for quality womanflesh of an Al Schuster /sic/, and the detachment of an anchorite, where Fandom is concerned. To those who know him well, he is an emotional jamming factor; he "rattles cages"; he doesn't let anyone go to sleep intellectually; his conversation forces you to think and to react. His enthusiasm for both his likes and dislikes is infectious.



Noone who has known George well for the past ten years has ever been apathetic about anything. George has not only the air, but also the "qualities" of a superior intellect; there are those who will go to lengths to gain his approval. He brings you "in" on the Tarot racket; he takes the "behind-the-scenes" sociological structural-functional look at institutions and other human phenomena; he makes you feel like an "insider". If asked politely, George will tell you the fourteen different versions of what scholars believe Jesus was doing for the eighteen years the New Testament couldn't (or was too embarrassed to) account for his whereabouts. Wouldn't it be surprising if Jesus had made it-around the mid-East and got a record? What a come-down for Mother Church. "Okay, preaching sedition, inciting slaves to disobedience, disrespect for the sacerdotal status of the Emperor...book 'im! Thoity shekels or thoity days...and we're impounding yer camel!"

George has a lot to offer. Imagine an amphibious procupine the size of a grizzly bear with an IQ of 400 and friends in the Illuminati. One begins to understand the meaning of the word "potential". Fandom had better pray that noone ever induces George Robinson to become active in it -- he'd own it in a week, get bored, and take the whole kit and kaboodle of it to the nearest pawnshop, and skin the owner out of his rear teeth. Go get 'em, O Great Blond Adeptus Epissimus God of the Aryan North, Lord of the Invisible Empire, King of Darkness, Prince of Hell. Never say "Gak!"

-- Fred Phillips  
Election Day 1972

---

#### LIBRARY NOTES

If you go up to room 833 in Butler Library -- the Manuscripts Reading Room -- and ask about the Davidson Collection, you may receive something of a surprise. Leon Davidson '48, an avid student of the flying saucer phenomenon, has deposited his extensive collection of books, periodicals, and clippings at Columbia: the eight-page inventory of the collection discloses its breadth. Since many science fiction personalities have been involved in UFOlogy, there is probably some material relevant to the study of SF in the Davidson material; and the student of popular forms of pseudoscientific nuttiness will have a field day. The Manuscripts Reading Room is open weekdays only; its collections do not circulate.

On display on the third floor of Butler are items from the collection of M Lincoln Schuster, the publisher. A time-capsule, intended for opening 1000 years after its placement in 1936, has been prematurely exhumed: its contents, which are on exhibit, include letters from Einstein, Mencken, and other notables to their descendants.

Now that microfilm publication of the backfiles of Fantasy and Science Fiction and Analog has been announced, it is probably time to start pestering the Powers-That-Be to add them to Columbia's serials collections. The aid of sympathetic faculty members should be enlisted in this effort. The suggestion-box in the Butler reference room is the place to begin this campaign.

-- Fred Lerner