

SERENADE

Serenade is published occasionally for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association by Richard Bergeron at 11 East 68th Street, New York City 10021, New York. This issue, number 6, is intended for distribution with the 122nd FAPA mailing and copies are available for comment. All letters received will be considered for publication unless otherwise specified. Dated February, 1968.

As I prepare this fanzine, every once in a while I cast an incredulous glance at the file of 22 issues of Warhoon stacked here beside the typewriter. I've been using them as a sort of inspiration and to convince myself that I should be able to knock off this flimsy pamphlet in an evening or two. It has been over two years since I wrote so much as a letter and far from being an inspiration the Wrhn file (it's last issue dated August 1965) is sitting there mocking my impotence. I haven't the faintest idea who produced those fearsome, bloated, indigestible issues but it must have been some long dead superfan and not me.

WHERE'S WILLIS?

God knows for what idiotic reason there are things you read you never forget -- like Tucker's remembrance of a face reflected in a washbasin of water. I don't even recall where it appeared (no doubt Terry Carr can tell me -- though it was probably as long ago as 15 years) but I've never forgotten Walt Willis' statement that when he retired from fandom he expected "to ascend into Fapa on a pillar of fire". Now I notice in the current FANTASY AMATEUR that he seems to be just another victim claimed by our waiting list. Sigh. Was his passing commented on?

A few mailings ago Charles Hansen pointed out that a method of selecting eagerly awaited fans from the waiting list wouldn't solve anything because such eagerly awaited present members as Charles Wells and Richard Bergeron were contributing disappointing performances. I think Wells and myself are perfect illustrations of the kind of active fans Fapa will continue to recruit. The whole point of doing something about the waiting list is to get an occasional fan into Fapa while he's still breathing rather than in the final stages of embalming.

OPPORTUNITY

Did you realize that with 100 signatures of New Hampshire voters and an application you could have entered the New Hampshire primary for the presidency of the United States? With the foregone conclusion that you wouldn't win, instead of devoting your time to political posturing and baby kissing you could have used your share of the national attention (it's a lot less obscure than complaining in your Fapazine) to bring the country your own brand of political sanity. And you might have won.

LETTERS TO THE BAT-CAVE

While reading the current issue of BAT MAN in June 1963 I discovered the letter: "Dear Editor: In the issue of Detective Comics, #211, 'The Challenge of the Cat-Man,' what did Batman mean by his remark at the end -- 'a cat, you know, has nine lives.'? Did he mean there would be another adventure with Batman and Robin against the Cat-Man? James Bergeron, Newport Center, Vermont." Jim is my youngest brother and wrote this when he was about 10 years old. When I got over my surprise at finding another writer in the family (and one with a deductive bent of mind, at that) in BAT MAN (of all places) I noticed the letter was discussing DETECTIVE COMICS. But apparently it's not the same as if Serenade published a letter of comment on PSYCHOTIC. I also

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see that BATMAN ANNUAL and WORLD'S FINEST COMICS have letters in the Bat-Cave. Naturally it's a sales rather than a discussion forum. And you bet your life there "would be another adventure with Batman and Robin against the Cat-Man" or they never would have published that letter. :: Elsewhere in BAT MAN #156 I notice an "advertisement" with the headline "Great Masterpieces" in 14pt Franklin Gothic caps. On the left half of the ad is a baroque frame containing a portrait of a smiling inscrutable woman with the legend: "Mona Lisa - Leonardo DaVinci 1452 - 1519." On the right half is the same frame with two 1¢ squares of Tootsie Roll Fudge -- one light and one dark -- with the legend: "Tootsie Roll Fudge - Masterpieces of Delicious Candy - Creamy Smooth!" The connection is unescapable..

TO LATE TO SUBSCRIBE TO WARHOON

I've decided to make it tough to get future issues of Warhoon. Subscriptions will no longer be accepted. It will only be obtainable by letter of comment, contribution or through membership in an apa it may be circulated through. Furthermore I intend to cancel presently standing accounts and refund all cash on hand. Postage (or a money order if you live in another country) in the amount of your balance is enclosed with this issue of Serenade. According to my records the following amounts are due:

Len Moffatt 80¢	Ben Keifer 40¢	Don Thompson 40¢	John Koning 60¢
Kent McDaniel 20¢	Betty Kujawa 20¢	Mike Irwin 20¢	Ben Solon 60¢
John Stopa 20¢	Ben Orlove 20¢	Bill Sarill 20¢	Ivor Latto 40¢
Jean Willtrout 20¢	Larry Pinsker 40¢	Phyllis Economou \$1.20	Art Hayes 60¢
John Isaac 20¢	Bob Briney 60¢	Bruce Robbins 40¢	Charlie Brown 60¢
Clay Kirball 20¢	Rosemary Hickey 20¢	J A McCallum 20¢	Vic Ryan 80¢
Charles E Smith \$4	VJ Vignes \$1	Ruth Berman 40¢	C Villers \$1.20
Leland Sapiro 20¢	Angela Howard 40¢	John Boston 40¢	Carl Brandon \$1
James Ashe 20¢	Dale Walker 20¢	Tom Dilley 60¢	Ben Jason 60¢
Tom Gilbert 20¢	Mary Trahey 80¢	James Wright 60¢	Carol Clarke 40¢

RATATOUILLE

What fanzine was subtitled "The fanzine of slogans and facetiousness"? Does even its editor remember? :: Wanted to buy: a complete set of HYPHEN, QUANDRY 1-12, early "Terry and the Pirates" strips or comic reprints, all issues of AUSTRALIAN SF REVIEW, SF HORIZONS, and Cogswell's PITFCS. Also issues of SPACESHIP and MINAC. Name your price. :: STOP PRESS: The 10 page article "Is Fandom Dead?" has been canceled from this issue due to the arrival of PSYCHOTIC #22 from Richard Geis, 5 Westminster Ave. Venice, Calif. 90291. A fanzine that can evoke the shades of Grennell, Bloch, Hoffman, and Sneary in its letter column and articles from Tucker, White and Ellison refutes my pessimistic appraisal of the current fan scene and provides a hell of a lot of entertainment. Ominous, and potentially disasterous is Geis' "I'm dreaming of a 500 page annish". That way lies total oblivion. If Dick can keep this under 30 pages and bi-monthly we should be able to enjoy it for a couple years. The time is right for a frequent excellent fanzine of modest size. In fact, it's desperately needed. Get it. 25¢ 40pgs. :: Tom Perry? :: James Blish is producing a fanzine. Its name is KALKI and it is the official organ of the Fellowship of the Silver Stallion ("the non-profit, authorized society for the study, preservation and promulgation of the works of James Branch Cabell"). Quarterly, until proven otherwise, and available from Paul Spencer, 665 Lotus Ave., Oradell N.J. 07649 for 75¢ or \$2 for a year. The current issue is #5 and apparently the first by editor Blish. It contains contributions from James N Hall, Jerry Page, Edward M James and James Blish. Recommended to fans of Cabell and Blish. Shades of VAPA! ::

"But what was Freud really like?"

DISSONANT DISCOURSE

I didn't read the mailing with the intention of doing mailing comments and as a result these comments should be pretty fragmentary. The last time I wrote comments for Fapa was in August 1965 so you have no way of knowing that I still enjoy the mailings though the people I find most admirable as people and most enjoyable as writers seem to be appearing less and less and a couple who I find morally repulsive seem to be appearing more and more. However, I usually have the whole bundle read on the third day after its arrival and even people who appear in every mailing can't make that claim. To Fapa's 121st, then:

BETE NOIRE - Boggs: I sometimes wonder if you don't ever get tired of writing tours de force. Even some of the interlineations overshadow entire issues of other fanzines: "At last we can call fuggheads fuckheads." :: If you find "The Man From UNCLE" "depraved propaganda" you should try watching "Mission Impossible". "The Man From UNCLE" is at least too preposterously giddy to be taken seriously (though the reasons for its popularity should be), but "Mission Impossible" quite seriously demonstrates that the end justifies the means. The favorite ploy of the M.I. team is to trick an enemy into killing one of his key men. The assumption is that because the M.I. agents avoid pulling the trigger they are not guilty of murder. One episode involved the murder of a neo-Nazi activist by a naive but honorable supporter after they tricked him into believing that the activist had murdered his wife (this was accomplished by drugging the man and enacting the fake murder of his wife before his dazed gaze). If this is entertainment, what is Vietnam? :: I guess we all take Bjo's wonderful BETE NOIRE logo for granted.

SIMULACRA - Lupoff: Is the Hugo actually plastic now?

INSCIENT - Fitch: The comment to Ellick reminds me of an article about an invention that can be timed to tape any television program on your set and be played back when you are around to see it. There have been things on television I would love to have copies of (the first Kennedy-Nixon debate, for instance, though it seems so long ago it might look like something from "Bonnie and Clyde"). Television might actually bearable if one didn't have to make an appointment with it. :: If you can do 2 pages per week you can produce a 16 page fanzine every two months, even without being a "T. Carr or Harry Warner or two Lupoffs." System is the secret. Not many fanzines have 16 pages of the editor's writing in them, so you could be lazy and do only 8 pages (which would still be a lot compared to other fanzines, then all you would have to do is stencil 15-20 pages of letters and contributions and you would have a top fan publication. How many pages of letters do you write in a two month period?

DIFFERENT - Moskowitz: Following my article on Blish as Atheling in 1960, I asked Jim a number of questions about this use of the pen-name: "thinking of some future Moskowitz' dismay at not finding these sidelights recorded in the fan press" as I put it then. Our future Moskowitz turns out to be none other than our former one but to call it dismay would be putting it mildly. Interesting that an article that has twice been found useful in criticisms of Blish (and the first long article I ever wrote) should have been the start of an enduring friendship and should have resulted in Jim becoming Wrhn's most important writer -- beginning with his review of "Stranger In A Strange Land", which you cite as the best piece in the Atheling book. I know you're not saying my article was a condemnation of Blish, but both your and Breen's use of part of it is a particularly loaded barb in context. As I wrote to Walter in Wrhn 8, July 1960, "Odd how punishing a remark can sound when ripped out of context and used as the punch line for a critical essay like 'The Case of James Blish's Conscience'." As originally used, of course, my line 'how can you trust a man like that?' shouldn't

be read as an indictment of Blish anymore than its companion statement 'How can you criticize a man like that?', should be read as a defense or that its follow-up line, 'How can you resist a man like that?' means that I find Blish irresistible." By the way, since you raise many points on which both you and Fapa may be interested in Jim's reactions, I'll quote the following from a recent letter: "I have felt for some time that SaM's general level of performance as a historian left much to be desired, as in fact I said at some length in SF HORIZONS #2 back in 1965, and the new piece prompted me to do a l-o-n-g analysis of just how he had used (or failed to use) the documents in this case. It seemed to me to be an ideal opportunity, since in fact I had all the pertinent documents, a circumstance not likely to arise when SaM is bollixing up some other subject. The result, which runs well over 7,000 words, went off yesterday to AUSTRALIAN SF REVIEW."

HORIB:- Lupoffs: I wonder how many fans will realize the cover is a savage spoof of a photograph of Mama Cass? :: Naturally I like the device of doubling the cover run and using it as a front and back cover. The magazine is instantly recognizable even if it gets placed face down, it solves the problem of finishing off the issue, and it creates a nice unity. There's a sort of stereo-optic shock if you happen to put the magazine spread face down and see both covers at once. If you ever have the file out try it with Wrhn 19, 20, and 22 -- providing you still have them. I was under the impression I'd used the same front and back covers on all the Wrhns which had covers but apparently I stumbled onto it with issue 19. I just checked the master file -- where I keep five copies of everything I publish (inevitably I have only one copy of each of the first 6 issues of Wrhn) and saw to my horror that all 5 copies of Wrhn 19 have different colored covers. The colors are buff, violet, blue, orange, and yellow. I must have used up some ends of reams on the print run and now I have no idea what the bulk of the run was. Doubtless I am the only person with all the colors. What do you suppose this would be worth to Pelz? :: Is that a typo in "Slayer of the Tousand Vampires" or an especially annoying sect of vampires? :: As usual, one of the better Fapazines, Pat and Dick.

PANTOPON - Berman: Enjoyed the description of your art holdings and half expected to find one of mine in your list. I sent about 20 watercolors, drawings, and paintings to the Seacon where they were auctioned for TWAF. Most were of a fantastic nature and all from art school days. I have a nostalgic fondness for them and often wonder where they are now. Walter Breen startled me when he wrote about his winning bid of \$40 for "Invasion of the Birds". Of course, they had never been titled until they were sent to the Seacon and now I haven't the faintest idea what it might be. GMCarr told me she bought a few of them but the rest are lost children. I once sent Boggs a painting and Grennell a watercolor done in a wet technique simulating pre-historic cave paintings. I wonder if they still have them? The rate to Dean's sold for \$75 in a Boston shop where it had been placed on consignment.

SERCON'S BANE - FMBusby: I'm not paying a terrible lot of attention to the Fapa presidential situation but your citing of various constitutional sections caught my eye. By 6.2 "each officer serves until succeeded" it would appear that the incumbent should retain the office. 7.4, "no one can be elected Pres more than once in 5 years" does not appear contradictory -- the incumbent not having been reelected. :: There was an assassination in Japan which took place live on television and I think this was before Oswald's achievement. Or perhaps it wasn't.

DAY- TAR - Bradley & Breen: he cover illustrates one of the editor's 8 stages of musical hell, but I can't decide if the outer rim or the center is the final horror. For me it would be "Guy Lombardo and the sweetest music this side of heaven". :: I have no objection to you maintaining separate memberships but I don't understand what the point "if one of us loses interest we won't require the other

to quit" has to do with your argument in favor of it. Both members of a joint membership don't lose their membership if one of them loses interest. One of them can meet the activity requirements. However I'm not sure you could maintain two memberships with co-authored material unless it totaled 16 pages -- though one of you could write 8 pages and the other do the work of editing and publishing it and both receive credit. :: Are "the items under "Souvenirs of a trip" souvenirs of a trip to someplace? Judging from the items, I'm not sure you don't mean a psychedelic trip. I always get a snort out of Bloomingdales' little leather bound blank page books with their embossed "My Trip" on the front. :: I'd dearly appreciate a copy of TESSERACT 3: "printed but never distributed, 1960." I can't imagine anyone publishing a fanzine and then never sending it out and Walter certainly circulated enough publications that he could have included it with. :: I don't quite know what to make of "One Touch Of Goshwow". It would have made a better poem than speech. A few puzzled comments: "Grand Old Men of Fandom should be required, periodically," to do what "to insure that they have retained that One Touch of Goshwow which makes all fandom kin"? Was it a canon of fandom that "We all thought space travel would end wars"? On the contrary, I would have thought that science fiction from (Gernsback, to E.E. Smith, to Planet Stories, to Azimov) was permeated with the optimistic belief that we would have bigger and better wars -- on a galactic and never ending scale.

NEW CAT SAND - Dermon: arrived on the 4th of February -- the worst possible time to postmail unless the editor wants to avoid comment in other Fapazines (though Calvin confesses he enjoys reading mailing comments -- "especially when they are about my own fanzine". C D, you must have noticed how few members comment on postmailings and with the mailing deadline at February 10th all serious Fapazines should already be in the mail on the way to the OE. You're lucky Serenade is not a serious Fapazine. :: Wrhn's colossal influence on fandom is still being felt. You are also using the double colon as a divider between thoughts and stuff. Back in 1960 when I revived Wrhn I was the only person using it, to the best of my knowledge, and that time the "##" was the most widely used. In the last mailing it was also used by Ted White, FMBusby. :: I once panted after the mail the way you do (even going home at lunch during peak fevers to find what had arrived) but in recent years when there's nothing but publishers handouts, subscription flyers and credit cards from the First National City Bank, my interest has lagged to the level where the Fapa mailing comes as a total surprise. My favorite mail used to be when I'd return from a two week vacation and find stacks and stacks of mail during the time Wrhn was being published. I often considered writing a long article about the post vacation mail but never did. :: The credit card mentioned above is FNCB's so called "Everything Card". They've sent and I've burned everyone in self defense. I've a fatal weakness for buying on credit and the interest charges on something like this must make Shylock look like Santa Claus. It suddenly occurred to me that I should have saved at least one and used it to subscribe to AUSTRALIAN SF REVIEW. :: Is your friend Phillip Jackson the arty chap who likes to set bits of jagged glass into picture frames so that people can cut themselves when they hang or touch the picture? :: Jonathon Prick, writer, who "seldom committed a word to paper" reminds me of the story of the artist who, since he was the only person who enjoyed his work, would sit in front of his blank canvas imagining unimaginable masterpieces on it. Was it your story? :: There are very few humor writers who actually make me laugh. You, Gina Clarke, and Bob Leman in fandom. To be able to make a person laugh with mere words on paper is quite an art and deserves not to go unmentioned. I have the highest regard for Willis, or Burbee, or Perelman, as humorists, but it's an intellectual appreciation. One part of my mind appreciates their brilliance, another part appreciates the humor and realizes that it's funny but my body doesn't laugh. With you, or Gina, or Bob, I find myself laughing and I realize I've read something extraordinarily funny. Perhaps this is so individual a reaction that it doesn't deserve setting down here, but perhaps it isn't. Even in your work I can cite instances of both reactions: The line "The book

falls open to the case when you lay it on the desk" I found intellectually funny as hell in context (in other words, I didn't laugh), But the mental image of you coming home to watch reruns of "Ramar of the Jungle" and My Little Margie" at 6:30 A.M. fractured me; as did the lunatic notion that cattle, because of their much larger size, must have greater personality differences than cats. I lived with cattle for some 14 years and they all appeared as identical as Chinese to me -- I did meet farmers who claimed to know the particular quirks of each member of their herds and some had even bestowed names on them such as Flossie, Clara, and Pete. :: The "Popper" definition is a gas. :: "Pornography In The Law" was disgusting, hilarious, monstrous, and fascinating. The objection is raised to appellant's citing "their little though potentially influential and powerful vaginas". Why all the poetry? :: My Dermon file is missing about 60 publications if this is actually #68. Is it too much to ask for all of them? :: The mailing comments were excellent as was the whole magical mystery issue from the cover to the "Newsbreaks".

LIGHTHOUSE 15 - Carr: Lths was postmailed to the 120th mailing but this sort of thing deserves encouragement and comment in or out of Fapa and it certainly gets precious little of the latter in Fapa: three members commented on it in the 121st mailing (FMBusby gave it a solid page of interesting comment, Dick Lupoff gave it 10 lines but then he had published most or all of it, Caughran made a few remarks but hadn't time to read the rest of it."). When a four page crud-zine will draw more comment than that, why bother to contribute something literate, and entertaining that requires some effort? Apparently Terry might just as well have thrown away 64 copies of this 97 page magazine. He would have at least saved himself the postage -- a not inconsiderable amount -- if not all that work and money. On the other hand, it's not easy to determine that this is indeed a Fapazine and I personally don't think it is. Fapa is mentioned in it only rarely. Perhaps it's not insignificant that the editorial remarks in LIGHTHOUSE 14 on the lack of comment referred to letters of comment and that if he had had more letters he would have published Lths sooner. Obviously, Terry doesn't think of this as a Fapazine and I think he's right. It's a general circulation fanzine that happens to be given to Fapamembers. What started as a Fapazine with an additional circulation has become quite the opposite and evidently Fapa is not about to let the tail start wagging the dog. I'm sure Terry knows he could get more comment in Fapa with a 10 page mailing comment magazine (and he is one of the best writers of the form) but I'm equally sure he doesn't care. What I am curious about, Terry, is why do you throw all this work away? :: Your remark that you "usually even write first drafts before stenciling editorials" reminds me to be awed by people like Harry Warner, I believe, who can compose with style and intelligence on stencil and even, as Harry does, make the final point or conclusion come out at the bottom of a given page. What happens when these people think of something near the end of a piece that may change their mind about one or more points they've made or a far better way to phrase an argument or a better construction of a sentence. Or am I overlooking the fact that the results are all around us? :: Terry, you say "as TAFF administrator I'm strictly neutral". Why? Why not sponsor a fan? :: How goes Project Boskone? :: Pat Lupoff caught my attention immediately by mentioning Parke-Bernet galleries which is practically a second home for me. But her description of the bidding doesn't match anything I've seen there, though I guess it would be possible with a light crowd. I've never known who I was bidding against and I've always been much too conscious of keeping my bid taker's attention often not necessarily the auctioneer) to be aware of the audience to the extent that Pat was: "the elders in the audience seemed to watch us with tolerant amusement." The disposition of a lot at auction is a tense situation for an interested party and hardly a leisurely transaction (a lot at \$17 should be down in less than a minute -- I've seen \$30,000 lots take less time than that). And it's froth with the possibility that your bid may be missed or that you will be outbid

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-- in addition she was prepared to spend \$100, twice what her husband expected her to spend. So I was amused by the image of Pat watching the amused audience while copping the Dime novels for \$17. She displays the nerves of a hardened combination bidder. I'm also amused by the citing of the retail value of the books. Everyone who buys something at auction is always surprised (and of course delighted) to discover that they could have bought it in a certain shop for five or six times more than they paid. Typical. I bought something at Parke-Bernet which a furniture dealer from Italy later told me would not sell for less than \$5000 in Rome because of its rarity there. Naturally I'm pleased to believe it's worth \$4500 more than I paid for it but it does rather ruin my enjoyment of it, for Christ's sake. It's a rug and it's unnerving to walk around on something potentially valuable enough to pay for my kid brother's college education! / They can't touch your DIME LIBRARY for antiquity but I picked up a stack of Gernsback AMAZING STORIES for pennies in Philadelphia a few years ago. Just to look at them produces an incredible Sense of Wonder but it's a sense of wonder about the time that produced them and the mental attitude that greeted them. In other words I'm wondering what the hell it was all about, which I fear is not very far removed from the Sense of Wonder described by Terry in his editorial: "A background does not produce the sense of wonder: the effect of a background does." In other words, Terry, you're wondering what the hell it's all about which somehow doesn't seem to me to be what it's all about. And don't ask me, I still think whatever it is might be better described by poetry than prose. :: In "Odd Ball", I was surprised to find Ellison and Delany on 42nd Street looking for Lancer Books and in Terry's immediate vicinity. I picked up the phone and found that Ace Books is less than a block from where I've worked for the past four years. I could just as easily pick up the phone and read Terry this whole mailing comment, come to think of it. Would you prefer that, Terry? Let's discuss it over lunch some time. :: I've had to put off reading Dick Lupoff's article but it's half as good as Stiles' illustrations for it; it's superb (they're perfect). I've already read bits and it looks like it is. :: Bloch's "Willis is perb." in the letter column inspires this: Willisuperb. :: After reading the first two items in "Stuff" (they, unhappily, struck me as very minor Terry Carr), I was appalled by the placing of the column right after the Delany monument. But then Carol more than held her own with the brilliant letter to Willis the piece about cats. Lovely. :: Here's another item for "Black Trivia": 19.) True or false: Red China will over-run Asia if the People's Free Democracy of South Vietnam is allowed to fall. Questions: How many Americans are fighting in South Vietnam? (b) How many Red Chinese? (c) Why? :: Carol's promise "next installment I will tell you all about our magazine rack, bathtub and plans to go shopping next week" underlined the preposterousness of such trivia. The trouble is (a) lots of fan writers actually do, (b) they're not Carol Carr. :: The Ellison story was fun. Unfortunately I read the last three lines first. Harlan is one of those people (like Delany) whose mind naturally functions in unexpected ways. The development was full of those unpredictable constructions which only seem to come from Harlan. Long may he wave. :: I can't let the Russ and Wilson pieces pass without appreciation. Both were excellent as was the Leiber (though the latter would have been more at home in FANTASY COMMENTATOR. Even the title reads like something from that magazine: "The Anima Archtype in Science Fantasy"!)). The Gaughan on that page is beautiful but the portrait of Knight (if it be he) is the best illustration in the issue -- closely followed by the owl on the contents page (I'm assuming these are all Jack's). Or is the Stiles on page 62 better than all of these? I give up. Let them fight it out. :: Andy Porter's remark that Jack Gaughan "gets paid \$5.00 to \$15.00 for a full page black-and-white" is staggering. Can you imagine Virgle Finley slaving over a drawing for days for \$15. I can. (The mind crumbles at the thought of what a cover might be worth.) Fan art brings better prices than that at conventions. All of which only underlines the fact that photography is where the action is -- from \$1000 to \$2000 for a color shot for national circulation. Even I have fallen into photography money.

Without even trying. Two summers ago I photographed the remarkable jewels in the Topkapi and recently sold one of them for \$150. Another time I was clearing out an accumulation that included some photographs I no longer wanted. It occurred to me that I might just as well toss them into a stock photo house as into the incinerator. One sold for \$500 to Time-Life as a cover in their series of educational publications. It's the "Time" volume and I have a credit inside. :: Delany's Odyssey was remarkable. It's a stylistic gem and seemingly, amazingly, a rough one, that is, a natural one. His mind speeds in ways wonderful to watch and one does not feel the hand of the artist. It all seems to have been thought rather than written -- with the strange exception of the ending that echoes the beginning. Here the hand of the artist reveals itself in a self-conscious way and strikes the only false note of the entire piece. Was this submitted as letters or as a manuscript? I suspect the former and that the editor made them into the latter. Does the first part take place in Mykonos? The paragraph on Istanbul is evocative, beautiful. Fantastic Istanbul. Those incredible peasants in the park down the hill from the Topkapi: sitting in the sweltering August heat in top-coats, babushkas, boots, scarves. Their eyes opaque, dense, faces carved with a thousand years of oppression. / Who is the mysterious T? First a Greek, I think, then "a Swiss painter with a heavy black beard" or "an Austrian archeologist", now "another American science fiction writer." :: I was amazed at Elinor Busby's observation that Lths is "an excellent fanzine -- but"... "not a friendly, likable fanzine". That's exactly the reaction I got from many fans when I asked if they loved Wrhn. I would have thought Lths the apotheosis of the likable, friendly fanzine. Do you suppose excellence is intimidating? Hmm, I see that Elinor cited the above as the reason Lths "doesn't receive as many letters as you think it should". I can't think of anybody who found Wrhn likable or friendly but it got avalanches of mail. :: The line keeps running through my head "If a thing is worth doing at all; it's worth doing badly." Who wrote it? :: Whether you call it a Pong or a Hugo the concept of the acceptance or rejection of an award is beginning to sound a bit odd to me. As if one could accept or reject the fact that a group of people selected one's work as the best of a group. The award is not a name or an object. It's a judgement. "Stranger In A Strange Land" would still have been the Hugo winning novel even if Heinlein had refused to accept the Hugo. I suppose a refusal might prove embarrassing to a committee, especially a committee that had been the architects of an unexpected change, but, on the other hand, there's nothing to guarantee that somebody isn't going to refuse a Hugo someday. Personally, I am perfectly happy with the name Hugo and have no intention of altering the engraving on mine. Of course it's not the name that counts but the thought. However, if I went to a convention, and if a bidding city promised to restore the name Hugo to the fanzine award, and if I voted, I would vote for that city. Yes, I like the name Hugo. It has a nice sound. Hugo. I like the name Mongo, too. Perhaps we should call it The Mongo. All of which brings up the question of why there is this temptation to tamper with polls and their functioning. Have there ever been two Fapa polls in the same form? Everybody seems to feel that they have to change something so one year we have 8 categories, another 10, numbers of places in a category change, point values are juggled, people stick in places for write-in votes as if the constitution even accepted them. Strange, when you stop to think that a poll develops richness of meaning and importance through tradition. The less tradition the less interest, I suspect. Fewer and fewer members seem to care about the Fapa poll and perhaps this is the reason why Whether one likes it or not, the Hugo has a tradition. Evidently the committee felt it didn't like that tradition. Perhaps the following committee won't like it's change. I wonder what they will change it to? Will anyone care? By the way, the above is not intended to heap fresh scorn on the NyCon Committee who, by all reports, conducted a fine convention and for whom I have a healthy respect. It is just meant as A Caution For Our Times. :: I was going to launch into an analysis of the Terry Carr style, at this point, but there just isn't space. :: All this is DNO.