

SHANGRI - L'AFFAIRES

Number 60

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Jan. - Feb. 1962

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Deadline for next issue... oh, never mind; we'll never make it either.

ghost editorial

---uss john trimble

Joe Gibson's "Thieves, Frauds, Cheats, Whores and Moochers" sure kicked things off,
didn't it? Somewhat the way we intended it to, when we talked Joe into submitting
it to SHAGGY.

Joe, in the original article and in various items printed since (as in thish), cites
generalities -- abnormal moral standards, etc. -- which he insists infect fandom
to an increasingly explosive degree. He calls on others to make such inexcusable
behavior public...to Name Names, like.

And others, feeling that Joe is somehow cheating, call upon him to Name Names. And
Joe.... "Round and 'round we go, and where we stop...

I'm inclined to agree; if you're gonna shout "fire" in print, you ought to cite chap-
ter and verse in print. I think Joe, as long as he steers clear of hinting at spe-
cific instances, has a valid basis in claiming to sound the clarion call of warning.
Unless he gets personal in his vagueness (as he seems to have done in the initial
article), he's entitled to stick to these generalities, and to refuse to Name Names.

I do object, however, to people naming names, and then letting the deed remain a vague, hinted-at thing. Specifically, I object to the current vendetta (or whatever) against one George Willick.

Willick is an unpopular cuss. He seems to have made himself such by taking offense when criticised, instead of replying to the criticism. He appears to bridle immediately if he suspects he's been snubbed, instead of investigating to see if someone who didn't pay immediate attention to him was too busy elsewhere to at once reply. And he's been a little roughshod in pushing his idea of the Fan Awards.

However, over and above all that, there has been a great deal of hinting going on about what a nasty character George Willick is. Hints that he's tried to pressure people behind the scenes, and tried some kind of "blackmail", etc. Hints in CRY, AXE, etc...real public, like. If all this is true, then George most definitely deserves to be condemned.

On the other hand, if this is part of an attempt to black-ball the Fan Awards and smear Willick, then it is one of the most underhanded, unfair campaigns that good ol' fandom has ever witnessed.

Understand, this last may not be true; I'm only pointing out that fandom, in general, has no basis upon which to judge in this matter. We had the facts in the case of a fan who skipped out with some funds entrusted to his care...there was enough publicity given so that everyone could beware of him as he and his family travelled. And with all the facts to hand, I don't see or hear anyone claiming foul in the Hal Shapiro case. But in this Willick matter, we only know that his reputation is not the best; he's pushy and takes insult and injury much too easily. But, hell, people have been hanged on such circumstantial evidence.

And from what has been made public, it looks very much as if George Willick is about to be tried and convicted on such a basis, and then be consigned to the ranks of the Wetzels and Deglers.

I claim foul, and ask that all the evidence be made public. I think fandom is fully qualified to judge its members, if it has all the evidence in the case. C'mon, Buz, Larry, Howard, I vote for more discussion; is Willick actually the double-dyed villain you hint he is? Or have a few asides been let go unexplained?

I object to being "protected"; I want all the facts before me so that I can make a sound decision. Hell, that's only common courtesy; to Willick, and to fandom.

----ussjt----

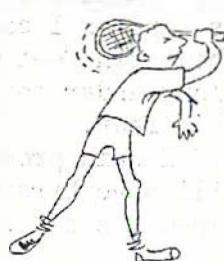
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A real short Shaggy Chaos this time, mostly to tell you that the special Doc Smith Appreciation Issue planned for next time has been postponed. We'll have it for the issue after next we hope.

Things have been busy around here lately. We're busy preparing for the Westerncon Art Show and Fashion Show; we're planning movies and movie parties; Ron's getting ready for his TAFF trip, etc. SHAGGY has been sort of taking a back seat lately, but we plan to get back on schedule Real Soon Now. See you in something less than 3 months, I hope.



--- fred patten



LOVE ALL



As the Willis Fund is in vogue at the moment, I am spending many pages writing about this Wonderful Fan, and spreading the Gospel amongst current fanzines. I have written about his wonderful driving technique in WRR, and I took up a few pages of wonder fan Jeff Vanshel's fanzine in describing his undoubted prowess at golf.

In this eminent fanzine, I have decided to let the fannish world know about how he plays tennis.....

I called round at 170 Upper Newtownards Road recently, and Willis was watching the Wimbledon Ladies Singles match on TV.

"I didn't know you liked tennis, Walt," I said, and he immediately challenged me to a game at the local courts the following afternoon.

The following afternoon was sunny, and Willis looked quite nice in his white shorts, the famous Willis knees rubbing each other affectionately. He was limbering up with the club pro when he espied me. I don't quite know what he had told the pro, but that worthy reached for his hip flask with lightening speed when he saw me, & was introduced. He backed away, and, so Willis tells me, he sent in his resignation next day.

"A tennis player doesn't wear red corduroy trousers," observed Willis.

"Snucks, Walt," I said, "although I've never played tennis in my life, I sure aint going to wear my best navy blue suit. I don't mind if these trousers get torn, I only use them for cleaning my bike."

"The red and green striped polo-necked jersey isn't quite the garb either," he observed irritably.

I kicked a tennis ball away with my right hobnail boot, to show my non-chalance.

"My theory is, Walt," I told him frankly, "that it isn't what you wear -- it's the way you play."

Swearing to himself, but seeing my point of view, he walked across the court.

He served what he called an 'Ace'.

"That isn't fair, Walt," I said. "I can't see where that blasted ball is going with that flippin' net in the way. Take it down this minute."

He beat the ground with his racket.

"It's supposed to be there," he said, "so that you can serve properly. If it hits the net, you know it's a bad serve."

"But if the net wasn't there, you wouldn't hit it," I said logically, "and therefore it couldn't be a bad serve."

This shook Willis, as was evinced by the way he picked up an innocent tennis ball and hit it as hard as he could over the roof of the club house. His racket prescribed the same arc.

"Control yourself, Walt," I said "Good job I brought a spare racket with me."

I gave it to him.

"Wh---what's this supposed to be?"

"Heck, it's only a friendly game, isn't it? No need to get so hot and bothered. I couldn't afford to get these rackets re-strung, so I reckon the plywood is a good alternative. Makes a smashin' noise."



To demonstrate, I picked up a tennis ball, & hit it as hard as I could. The ball travelled about ten feet and hit the ground and ran along under the net and finished up at Willis's feet.

"Fifteen-love," I said proudly.

I never saw Willis go berserk before. After he'd jumped the net seven times, he gathered himself. Muttering under his breath, he walked into the club house, and an animated conversation ensued. Willis came out ten minutes later, rather red in the face, with two proper rackets.

Somehow, he seemed different, like as though he was wearing diver's boots, or as though he'd just reached the salt mines. Not exactly a stagger, more like a hypnotic stupor, which made him walk bent forward at an angle of 45 degrees.

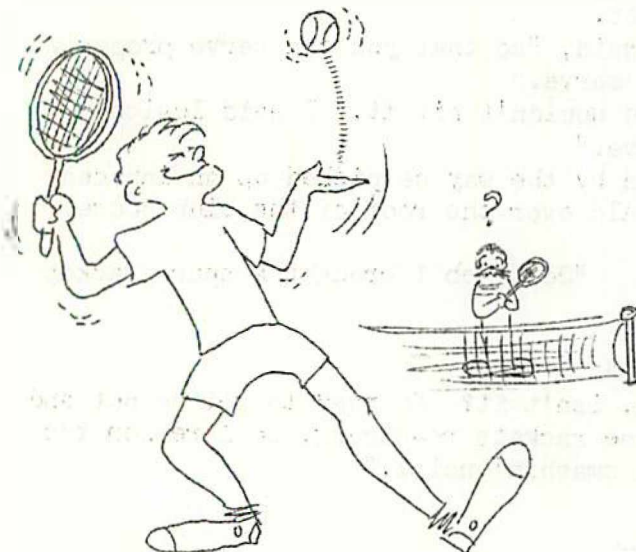
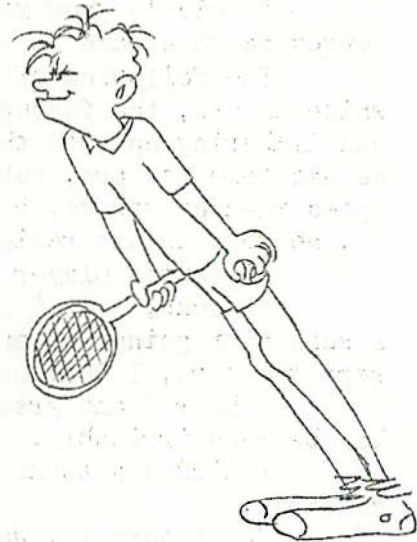
"My serve," he said. His pupils looked like burning coals.

He tapped the ball gently over the net. The ball moved so slowly towards me, and suddenly, a strange in-born fury gripped me. The ball was at my mercy, and I'd seen Lew Hoad do the 'smash' dozens of times on TV -- I felt that if I never hit a tennis ball again I wouldn't care as long as I hit this one.

I had time to spit on the palms of my hands. I gripped the handle of the racket, and as the ball seemed to hang motionless, I hit it with all my 140 lbs. behind the stroke.

"Never seen that before," muttered Willis, in an academic way, ignoring my scream of "Thirty-love."

He was looking at the ball. Right enough, it was rather uncanny. It had left my catgut like a bullet, had gone right through Walt's racket, and had impinged itself onto the half-inch wire mesh of the high surrounding fence. One half had forced itself through the mesh and had expanded again. The ball had turned itself into a shape reminiscent of a minute pair of water-wings.



Willis walked back to the club house, entered, and more shouting ensued.

Willis came out, turned, shouted "And the same to you." at the pro in the club-house, and meandered back to the court with another racket.

Now he was studious....even crafty. His eyes narrowed, and a smile flitted across his handsome but still somewhat puzzled face.

He threw the ball up, and as he hit it, he seemed to turn the face of the racket at an angle of $27 \frac{2}{3}$ degrees. It was wonderful to behold. The ball itself was not quite sure which way it was supposed to go. Finally, like a gyroscope, it settled

on an even keel, and lazily spun over the net and away from me. I flung myself to my left, but it was no use. I was beaten by a swerve shot of immaculate length and pace.

Then the miracle happened. It landed on my parcel of cheese and walnut sandwiches, popped up, and as it flew past me, I gave it a crafty deflection over the net. The stroke was even more miraculous when you consider that the handle of my racket was stuffed up my trouser leg, and I was lying on my back at the time.

Willis was not to be outdone.

With superb self-control, he waited for the ball to re-bounce off the club door, and with a triumphant scowl, he did what I think is, in technical jargon, termed a 'lob'. This was devilishly cunning, because at that time I was draped over the net trying to get my moustache disentangled out of my bootlaces.

Thing about a lob, it takes time to soar into the air and come down again, and because of the height it has dropped from, it rebounds up in the air again almost as high as originally.

I mean, I sized up the situation in a flash.

Three things became abundantly clear to me:--

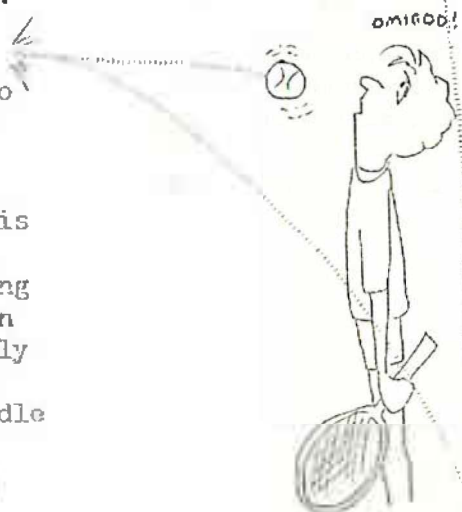
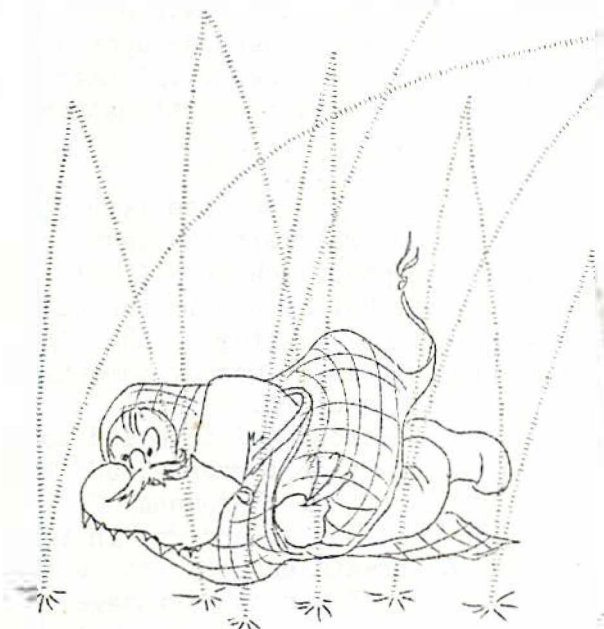
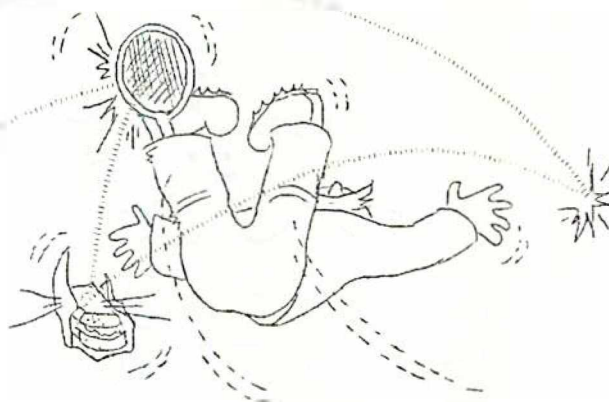
- 1) I couldn't get my moustache disentangled in the limited time at my disposal.
- 2) I had no intention of jerking my head loose and loosing my valuable facial hairs.
- 3) The net was loosely fixed to the two posts.

I gripped the net, pulled, wrapped it round me, hobbled like a ruptured hermit crab to the line, waited for the ball to come down, & with another delicate flick, knocked the ball towards Willis again.

I wouldn't exactly exert the unbiased opinion that Willis was hypnotised by my demeanour, but his mouth was hanging wide open in unadulterated bewilderment... and like a homing pigeon the ball landed firmly between his upper and lower teeth.

"Forty-love," I screamed.

In less than one minute, Willis had made the score 'deuce'. It wasn't so much that his serves were unplayable, it was just that I was curled up in a ball trying to sort myself out of the net. Finally I did it. I wouldn't blame Willis for bad sportsmanship, because he just wasn't himself. He'd succeeded in getting the ball out of his mouth, and the action of serving to my prostrate form was purely mechanical. In his state then, he would have served had he been alone in the middle





of the Sahara; or alone on an icecap drifting towards a warmer climate.

But the effect of my leaping towards him, racket upraised, sobered him.

I reminded him the score was 'deuce', and he said quietly -- too quietly -- "Oh, is it?".

And he served again.

It was a good serve; Pancho Gonzales might have served better half a dozen times in his life.

The ball hummed like a hornet, and if the net had been there it would have burned its way through it before it got there with the crushed wall of compressed red-hot air in front of it.

Now some people say I have a big nose.

Of course, it all depends upon how you proportion my face & head....I mean, if I have a big head, then, proportionately, my nose isn't big.

But it is now.....

The tennis ball cushioned vertically upwards off it, and was lost to sight in a low cloud. It dropped back in Willis's side of the court, but he was in the club house having a glass of water at the time.

There was no need for me to have to try and persuade him that it was my advantage, there was a star-like crack in the sun-baked surface of the court.

But then, in some undefineable way, Willis lost interest. I appealed to the hundred or so spectators, who looked quite thrilled with our performance, and they started a steady chant of "We want Willis," and then, one final phenomena, Willis appeared rather hurriedly out of the front door of the club-house, and was in turn hotly pursued by the club pro. As Willis, sweating and breathless, passed me for the third time, I requested a finish to the game, at which I was at advantage, but he ducked as a racket whipped over his head like a boomerang, and told me he'd see me next week.

Several keen tennis enthusiasts asked me to join the club. They explained their bedroom windows overlooked the court, and TV was getting such a bore, but I explained to them that Mr. Willis was the best player in the club, and as I'd beaten him fair and square, what was the use?

.....

You may not know it but Bob Shaw won an award as the 'Most Advanced Archer in Northern Ireland in 1960'.

I've challenged him to a contest, & Willis has volunteered his services as judge.

You'll be hearing about it.

--- John Berry. 1961

The MENACE of the LASFS

The meeting was started purposely late by Bob Lichtman, the new Director, thereby getting immediately into hot water? "What's going on here?" thundered Ellik, "I'm supposed to start the meeting!" Those who could distinguish between the ex-Director-Elect and ex-Director-Ellik pointed out that the new Director was supposed to start the meeting. Lichtman looked relieved and rang the bell and whanged the gavel to restore order. "Having trouble keeping things under control?" asked the enchanting, nutcracking squirrel, to cause further havoc.

The Library (Ed Baker) asked if LASFS had any other notions of what to do with "LEVEL SEVEN" besides sending it to world leaders. Virginia Mill explained that the inspiration to send the book, which she had just checked out of the LASFS library, to President Kennedy had been a spur-of-the-moment impulse and besides, there weren't any bookstores open on Xmas Eve. The U.S.S.J.T. said that mailing our library books to other people ought not to be condoned and that she should make further restitution than just replacing the book. Someone else asked what must the President think, receiving stolen property through the U.S. mails? Virginia resolved the situation after a fashion by putting a \$10 bill on the Director's table.

--1273rd meeting, January 4 --

* * * * *

By meeting time the delicate pine scent donated by the House Asphixiation Committee had faded and the meeting began at 8:14:32. Lichtman bellowed, "PAY YOUR DUES!" and Dian Girard sobbed, "You're beginning to sound just like Ron." Ellie Turner (~~she~~ and ~~Paul~~ are co-Treasurers and what with baby-sitting and the like will manage to both come some meetings and other times come singly) collected dues. Steve Cartier paid and asked, as he left for his seat again, "Selling kisses?" Ellie gave the following Treasurer's Report: "We paid the rent at Mathom House and, uh, let's see! Paul brought the party proceeds home ..." it boiled down to a new balance of \$153.15.

J.T. read the Gugglefuss announcement that it had started the Year of the Clam and that the members were mostly dues-delinquent; he suggested that the LASFS renew its membership at the \$1.00 dues. Dian seconded. The vote was a resounding AYE. Dian voted NAY on General Principles (just like a woman to say NO when you least expect it) and was informed that she couldn't vote NAY because she had originally seconded the motion.

Then Fred Patten announced how many books he had to review and Lichtman said it was back to announcements all of a sudden.

--1274th meeting, Jan 11 --

* * * * *

Lichtman shattered precedent by announcing that we were starting when the clock said four o'clock backwards ((the LASFS clock, donated by Famonsters Warren, reads backwards)) and appointing people to fill jobs such as treasurer. Announcements: March 27th is Lady Godiva Day; we discussed having a Lady Godiva Party, with special emphasis on authenticity of costume. Dian announced that an astrologer she knew had predicted catastrophy, including flood for Japan and the West Coast from Frisco to Diego-San, on February 4th; everyone was advised to run fast for higher ground. The astrologer herself was packing; nice to see someone take their own advice. We racked our brains for appropriate action to take and favored throwing a wild party on the evening of February 3rd, lasting through the 4th if the world lasts that long. Sin now, you may lose your chance to later. "There is still time, brother," was the sentiment. After all, how often can you have an End of the World Party? And then the Treas-pro-tem drawled that we'd broken the \$1 mark.

A newspaper release was read that some scientist feels that by 1970 an asteroid bomb would be feasible, diverting an asteroid from orbit to crash into an enemy continent of Earth. After Doc Smith, this is new? "Yes," said Patten, staunch Children Fantasy Reader, "and if the pixies invade they may turn us all into frogs but you don't see headlines about that," he concluded morosely.

The Hugo was missing. Serling had called up, piteously asking for his Hugo so he could pose for publicity with it; and possibly to complete his set of bookends. Virginia Mill announced another catastrophy: a possible rise in postal rates. We rehashed the flood forecast, including the part about Japan and California buying a farm--or whatever it is when land masses undergo subaqueation--ridding the world of smog, plastic toys, and suki-yaki. Since there were no further catastrophies to announce, the meeting adjourned at 9:03:40 so we could lick our wounds, retrench in the face of adversity, continue our private discussions, and let the disaster relief teams enter.

--1275th meeting, Jan 18--

* * * * *

Ted Johnstone presented Adrienne Martine with a belated Xmas present--a pipe. Spin-drift, local musclebound cat (we thought he had asthma, but the vet said his chest muscles constricted his lungs; ever since we've kidded "Uncle Muscles" about lifting barbells in his sleep, and like that) took down the tree ornaments. Said ornaments had been packed in a box on a chair. Cal Tech computed the subaqueation would occur, the fault being at the Continental Divide, plunging the Eastern half of the U.S. into the sea. Don't laugh--Lyn Hardy is working on it. We remembered to pay our dollar dues to the GGFS, and Billern thought we were setting a dangerous precedent. He was told we were rough and tough and could resist future payments if we didn't feel like it. Ted suggested that since it was really an honorary membership we could send an honorary dollar, and someone suggested we make it an Egobuck. Billern would have bought a copy of Waldo at a 2nd hand bookstore except that it had a school library stamp in it. "That 's okay," said B ker, "I have a stamp myself that says DONATED BY I can use on it."

The squirrel was admonished at this point for being too noisy with his sex life at the back of the room, and Ted and Pelz announced that Hollywood, tired of filming parts of the Bible, were finally going to film the entire book, with the original title. Possibly with an intermission on the 7th day. Next year, Oahspe. But a select party of fans would be around the shooting and change the script so that it came out the Lord of the Rings instead.

--1276th meeting, Jan 25--

Bjo announced that the axe had fallen and the zoning commission said we had to move the club, Mathom House being located in an R-1 zone where no dues-paying clubs can meet. The neighborhood crank who linked also protested about the Rex, despite the fact that it's noiseless. Bjo composed and circulated a mimeoed 2 pager to the neighborhood, explaining the situation, and had gotten sympathetic response. The neighbor out back has been wondering what the heck the Persian Bazaar we had constructed out back was for; it isn't everyone who nails their laundry to the roof. We discussed and eliminated several types of places, as being too costly; the Chesley Donovan Foundation, a Glendalish exfan-highbrow group, had offered space in the abandoned movie theatre they used as a club room. And John recalled his boss's string warehouse. Mighty cold, but lots of twine to look at.

Al Lewis reminded us of the vanVogt short-short incorporated into a Hoffman ad in Sci Am, that had, at the end of the ad, a note that you could send in for a decision making device, such as was illustrated in the story. The Devisiometer proved to be a brass medal saying DO IT on one side and THE HELL WITH IT on the reverse. Bill Yakey read a clipping that the estate of the producer of King Kong couldn't find the model of the giant simian and was asking who escaped with the ape. From there we discussed the related subject of the Fan Achievement Awards; most of us hated them and J.T. was waiting and seeing -- they would succeed or die on their own merits. Lichtman had a counterplan: vote a list of New York zines and articles, such as Ted White's "appology" to Christine Moskowitz, into the first places.

--1277th meeting, Feb 1--

* * * * *

"No use seducing you, Scribe," pouted Dian Girard, busily scratching the Secretary's back and warding off his hands, "you seduce too easily." Minutes were approved with the usual unimportant, infinitesimal, trifling, inconsequential, minute, and, unfortunately, inevitable corrections. The End of the World Committee, in the person of Ron Ellik, reported that the attempt to end the world last week had been called off due to bad weather. He paused to let the storm outside whistle a while and added, how did we like the tidal wave coming down at the moment.

Larry Ware was asked about the reading of the Birch Society Blue Book on KPFF; they were done without commentary by noted speakers, such as Bradbury, but were still protested by the Bitch Society, and the station was under implied threat of bombing, which added a spice to his life. J.T. opined as how last decade the left-wing extremists threw bombs and this decade the right-wing extremists threw bombs, that it might be nice if next decade the middle-of-the-wing extremists threw the bombs. Bill Yakey protested that the Right Wing hadn't had a chance to express their views and Ware said that they'd turned down many offers to have free air time on KPFF and as they said about Cuba -- if the U.S. didn't exist, it would be necessary for Castro to invent it. It was suggested that we rename LASFS the Los Angeles Science Fascist Socy.

--1278th meeting, Feb 8--

* * * * *

The Lies of the Previous Meeting were approved as read, except for the corrections, that is. Larry Ware wanted to be known as a middle-of-the-right-wing extremist, or something. J.T., on the other hand, preferred the way his speech came out to the way he had actually said it. Baker suggested that, wherever possible, footnotes give the earth names of the people referred to and the Scribe retorted that it would detract some from their eldritch charm and after all, how many people used their right names? Dian said that she'd spent five solid months unscrambling the names and references and wanted everyone else to have to do the same. It was announced that next time we meet in our new Spring Quarters at exotic, mysterious Alpine Park, playground of Los Angeles. Walter Beard from Berkeley was distinguished by wearing a carnation in his --uh--lapel, so that he could be spotted in a crowd. Baker asked what did the closing words of the minutes mean, "Respitefully submitted" and Pelz sneered, "It means we get a respite from the Scribe for another week."

Respitefully Submitted, Jack Harms

--1279/80, Feb 15 & 22--

LISTEN, YANKEE, C. Wright Mills, Ballantine Books, NY, 1960. 192 pp.

THE UGLY AMERICAN, William J. Lederer & Eugene Burdick, Crest Book, Greenwich, 1961. 240 pp.

THE CAUSES OF WORLD WAR THREE, C. Wright Mills, Ballantine Books, NY, 1960. 187 pp.

I have felt for some time that the Missourian and his "I've got to be shown" is a dying breed. In this culture with its huge information, advertising, political and military structures, it is becoming extremely difficult for an unusual or controversial viewpoint to be heard in any reasonable length of time. It's not that they aren't heard as before eventually - it is the immediate importance of some of these thoughts in a world increasingly dangerous to live in.

In combination with this is what I consider an almost insane aspect of civilized world culture in the last few years. I am referring to the inability on the part of individuals and societies to put their problems in order of importance. It seems at times as though we are dealing with our problems in almost a reverse order. You may yourselves tend to relegate considerations of problems relating to survival of the human race far down in your list of items to be considered in view of the position that demonstrable crackpots seem to take.

Nevertheless I myself have attempted to be free, insofar as possible, of the propaganda of both sides in this important and personal political battle. I would like "to be shown" before I accept any of the ready made solutions presented to, what if experience helps, will ultimately turn out to be problems of relative values and difficult alternatives. Both sides may be right - or neither. At any rate I am encouraged in my efforts to become a citizen and a human being, concerned about myself and the state of Man by a handful of books that have recently been published on subjects which we had, up to now, been led to believe had but one right answer.

In regard to these books: I am not suggesting that they are "right" but I am suggesting that they explore human attitudes that deserve to be considered. Before I die for a cause I am going to examine what I know of human nature, propaganda methods, the corrupting influence of power, the attitudes of those who are not in power, my own motives, the psychology of mobs, the ordinary course of revolutions and many many more.

I believe that it is essentially unsane for any thinking person to abdicate his citizenship at any time and especially during the most perilous time in human racial history and when the vistas ahead are so inviting to a science fiction fan who is accustomed to living partly in the future.

It is time all of us capable of thought lost our parochialism, our provincialism, our chauvinism and extended our thoughts once more into time and space. For myself at least - it is time I lost my faith in Mom, Apple Pie and the Great White Picket Fence and rediscovered a sceptical reliance on my own reasoning powers.

You should read these books.

--- Mitchell Harding

A WALK THROUGH

INFINITY

with THE ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT the church made a hell on earth! a novel to make you think by lester del rey. regency books #rb113. 50¢

and this is mostly true. the book is a one-joke skit about catholicism and the birth rate: "what's the total population?" asks the hero on page eleven. answer: "nobody knows for sure. probably thirty million in new city -- about a fifth of the population of long island. if you mean the total for america, the current guess is four billion, with another billion in south america. we've done rather well. as a result of adhering to the eleventh commandment, we can be pretty sure that one out of three alive today on earth is an american catholic."

the eleventh commandment, says the american eclectic catholic church, after the third world war that raised background radiation to the near lethal level, is the first given and is the most important: be fruitful and multiply.

disregarding the misleading bacover blurb, the action is as follows: in the year 2190, boyd jensen, an exchange student from mars, lands at an almost-abandoned spaceport in america. father gordini, of an entirely clerical reception committee, duly exorcises the ground as the ship leaves automatically for mars, and escorts boyd to the local cathedral. there boyd learns that his educational trip is actually permanent exile; mars, colonized by scientific teams and untouched by the nuclear holocaust that blighted the parent planet, and confident of total technological progress, is surreptitiously expatriating its undesirables...boyd was a splendid student, but not brilliant enough, and he had undesirable genetic traits to boot.

and all this, plus kornbluthian competent characterization of characters, society, and history, take up only 11 of the 153 fast-paced pages.

boyd's natural abilities and chemical/cytological training, and the instrument of his studies (his martian field-wave microscope with an ultrafreeze chamber to slow down cell movement), plus the help of the church and some others enable him to skid through the acutely extrapolated hazards of the society and theology, until his martian skills thwart two technological crises and he becomes an honored public figure.

the theocracy says breed but doesn't say your children will get enough food or medicine to reach adulthood. it won't assist a class of "bleeders" because alchemy (hormone synthesis) is forbidden; it might lead to contraception or contrafertility drugs. the clergy, which is intelligent and educated, actively fosters superstition among the masses. and the common man lives in an unmitigated hell of crowding, lack of food and entertainment, and no security of any kind.

boyd is troubled by the paradox that historically, a ruling class producing this much misery engenders its own opposition -- yet the people obey the church and there is no underground or opposition. his instincts to save the individual and keep the unfit from reproducing run counter to the dogma that the soul, not life, is important; therefore every soul possible must be produced, even if it is not possible to maintain the life that goes with it for any great length of time. and he has girl trouble. and he is trapped into performing illicit chemical experiments despite his prestige. and actually he is receiving too much help from the church despite his not belonging. and eventually everything boils over and he is caught-and-interrogated-but-he-escapes-and-the-denouement-comes. and we see why the church insists on the status quo despite the horrid interplay of the laws of malthus and gresham.

the dillon cover, a stained glass window, delightfully, gruesomely, sardonically, sarcastically depicts the birth fetish, the american crucifix, and the crowding. the style delineates perfectly and completely in minimum time. characterization and development are neatly done; interest and suspense is high -- in short, the book gives the total spellbinding that we desire in contemporary sciencefiction. but, o regency, it won't make you think; it gives you distress instead. the one-joke theme twists finally to repeal -- perhaps! -- the law of survival of the fittest and leaves you with a pleasing nausea at the conclusion as the hero goes blissfully into a further hell.

Hal Lynch

Fans have discussed recently the management of SF conventions -- particularly financial management--citing the varying success of different fan groups in dealing with expences and mounting costs. I have some questions about a related problem, and I'll throw them out for anyone to answer, who cares to.

Nearly all SF Conventions have had, by strong tradition, a Costume Ball. Many fans have appeared in marvelous costumes, many fans have taken photoes, some few fans have danced to the strains of -- music. Now, the musicians' union is extremely strong and sets strict standards about the performance of live professional musicians at public functions. Hotels are anxious to avoid difficulties with the musicians' union. Bands and orchestras playing at hotel affairs generally receive several hundred dollans an evening. But -- do fans need bands at conventions?

I recall that the Philcon Committee in '53 found: (1) the hotel insisted on live music by a union band, (2) it would cost about \$400.00, and (3) the Committee did not have this sum available for for the purpose of providing music. Result: the Philcon had a kind of costume parade without music, instead of a costume ball.

But two recent cons did not use live music. How was this arranged? What are the rules? Do they differ from city to city, hotel to hotel?

Would present or former convention committeemen care to comment on whether the expense of providing live music at a costume ball always a serious financial complication, and does music add substantially to convention costs?

I've observed that most fans do not dance at SF costume balls, preferring, perhaps, to listen. Certainly the performances of some Con bands and combos produce praise in fanzines. But I wonder whether most fans want music, want live music, and--most important--want to pay a substantial chunk of their Con membership fee so that a small minority can dance. Do most fans care who the musicians are?

Alternative arrangements might be considered by future convention committees. A convention might arrange to use recorded music in the ballroom and have live musicin some smaller room. Or dancing music might be played by talented fans. Would most fans find this desirable and/or ethical? Are still other alternatives possible?

The Pittcon tried a new variation, a "Costume Cabaret," or series of acts staged by fans in the ballroom after the costume judging. I don't believe there were any definate tie-ins of costumes and specialty acts. Question: would most fans prefer to see a further development of the "cabaret" idea? Could it somehow tie-in with the costumes?

I'm asking all these questions because I've grown curious about what fans think about this particular cost factor. Similar questions might be asked about other Con costs. The people that ought to give them calm, objective attention are those fans who are not involved in putting on a convention. It's easier to give advice when you're not on the hot griddle. Anyone care to speak up?

of Music, Money & the Masquerade

Dirce Archer

Right after Pittsburgh won the 1960 convention bid I started receiving person to person advice on music. Do have it live -- don't have it live. Be sure to have live music -- positively don't... Then letters arrived, but seemingly only from the fanatics on the subject. The majority appeared to be indifferent.

My own observations at cons past had given me the impression most attendees couldn't care less what sort of music was used at our costume affairs. A dozen or so danced listlessly while the rest, instead of listening, either sat in groups talking or wandered around looking for friends. Parties seemed to be in the air, not live or canned music.

PITTCON felt a good rule for any convention committee to follow was that only the wish of the majority justified a large expenditure, and only then if it could be afforded. It did not seem right to spend money perhaps needlessly on a major expenditure which could easily clobber a con financially, so we tried to find out if live music was considered a necessity. Indifference prevailed. Of course there were the fanatics and T*R*A*D*I*T*I*O*N, but ConComs are continually colliding with these. For a group shooting for the stars, at least in its reading material, we are certainly hidebound!

While trying to think of something new and different for the costume affair, I thought of Costume Cabaret. Others thought this a good idea, so we no longer had a problem. We could not have Costume Cabaret and a band. A hi-fi was provided for those who wanted to dance after the cabaret, but people seemed satisfied with the costume parade and cabaret and drifted off to parties.

Naturally I had to get permission from the musician's union, and managed to do so with the understanding:

1. We would not have a live band.
2. We did not charge admission.
3. All performers were convention members and unpaid.

In other words it had to be done by a closed group by those within the group, or the hotel personnel might go out on strike. The hotel was shaken to its very foundation at the idea of non-union talent until I obtained this permission, for nothing gives a hotel the jitters as much as the thought something might disturb a union, and the hotel's union contracts.

A ConCom can run into trouble in at least two ways if it plans to have live music. These are expense and timing. A good band has to be engaged a considerable time in advance, particularly for a holiday weekend, and no ConCom in its right mind should or would contract for a large lump sum it might not have in September during the previous December or January. Our largely self-financing conventions have no way on earth of knowing until summer if live music is a possibility, and by then a good band is not obtainable at any cost, unless by a fluke.

According to information received, union rates vary from city to city, but are based on the same scale, while union contracts vary from hotel to hotel in the same city. Some hotels in Pittsburgh could not permit use of canned music even for a costume parade. Three hours is the minimum time that must be paid for after 9:00 pm, and each size and type of room has a minimum amount of players required. Besides the basic charge for each man, there is a charge for Saturday night, a transportation charge, an entertainment charge, and a charge for the leader who also gets so much per man. PITTCON would have had to have 10 side men and a leader, and although the Pittsburgh scale for musicians is considered low compared to other parts of the country, the basic rate for a band here in the ballroom we used is \$296. And remember this is the basic rate, which does not mean the figure for a decent band but a figure to start with. I understand some bands caught without a date lower their fee, but they'd better keep their fingers crossed while doing so! (To any fannish A.F.M. toes stepped upon, excuse please.)

To Have or Have Not

If this country has a hotel larger than a tourist home without union contracts it must be some secret hideaway, for as any ConCom knows, it is continually bumping into union regulations of some sort. There are the musicians (even if you don't use them), the waiters, the bartenders, and on and on. Our costume affairs are for our own group, a closed group, so in spite of their size they would be considered private parties, not public functions. These balls, parades, cabarets, or what you will, must have union bands if live music is used, and a private room party would just mean a smaller room with less union musicians required as far as the hotel is concerned. Talented fans -- unless union members -- are out. At least I can't imagine any group or individual that would care to be responsible for a hotel walkout during a con.

No one that has not actively participated in running a convention can possibly imagine the unexpected costs that arise, or what a burden a major expenditure can be when it is impossible to know in advance if the con will end in the red or the black. Something such as Costume Cabaret means considerably more work, but less financial worry, so live or canned is a difficult decision to make, even when it is felt live music means spending a largish part of each membership fee for something very few members will use. (Does live music really add anything to a convention except a certain air of affluence, a modicum of prestige?) We were lucky. We wanted something new to tie in with our costume affair, another PITCON first. We wanted Costume Cabaret and couldn't have live music.

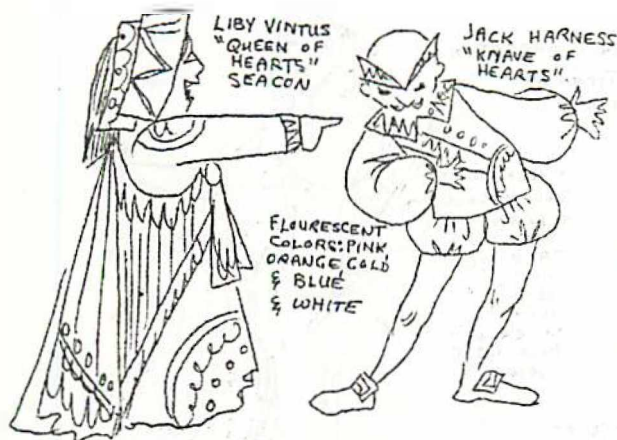
"It is better to give than to receive" does not apply to those with much idiotic advice, for such should learn to be selfish.'

--- Egg Foo Yung, 998 A.D.



While we urge you to support Eddie Jones as your candidate in the TAFF election, the important thing is that you do vote. Elections for this year's TransAtlantic Fan Fund, to bring a British fan to the Chicon III, close May 31, so you don't have too much time left. All votes must be accompanied by at least 50¢ to finance the trip over (but \$1 bill folds into an envelope more easily). Send your votes to Ron Ellik, 127 Bennett Ave., Long Beach 3, Calif., to be officially counted.

TAFF has consistently proved to be one of fandom's most successful projects. Its purpose - alternately to bring a British fan to an American convention, and to send an American fan to a British convention - helps bring the universal amity of Fandom to realization. It also enables you to meet some darn swell people. So whether you vote for Eddie Jones or Ethel Lindsay - do vote!



Judge not, Lest.....

In fandom, supposedly the last stronghold of imagination, preconceived notions and personal prejudices destroy the effectiveness of a good masquerade. For thinking fans become critical of the masquerade because they do not fit into a special niche or conform to the "proper" way of attending a masquerade.

The true spirit of the masquerade is to "assume a disguise as to manners and actions so as to appear other than what one really is", according to Webster and most Beaux Arts balls. The image of unreality is the prime target for the evening, and no one has the right to gainsay another the harmless fun of dressing and acting the part of a new personality for the occasion. Yet, according to Ted White, in Void #20:

"After everyone else had showed up, Ron Ellik rushed up to the bandstand, and requested the band to play a fanfare. This it did, and as everyone paused, expecting an official announcement, Karen Anderson swept in. She was outfitted in a beautiful white gown, regally made up, and she acted the part to the hilt, moving slowly and majestically through an open lane to the band-stand, where she paused, and posed expectantly for the photographers.

"It was so phoney, from the word go; so much an egotistical bid for prominence, so stagey--up-stagey--and posed that a number of people were repelled. A member of the costume judges later confided to me, "We were determined not to give her a prize, after a show like that. It was insolent; it demanded attention, rather than getting by on the intrinsic merits of the costume--and she could have bought one like that anywhere as a gown--and she was so poised and artificial that it repelled us." I have seen in several con reports since, several questions asked about the way the committee ignored Karen; perhaps this will explain it a bit. Personally, I--and I count myself a friend of Karen's--found the spectacle distasteful. I preferred her as at the Solacon: simply one of a number of girls relying on original costumes and approach to costumes to win prizes. Significantly, Karen won the prize at Southgate, too.... I've since heard that her costume was not simply "store-bought"; that she worked on it a good deal. That this was misunderstood can be laid to the relative lack of imagination of the Detention costume over the Vampire costume of the previous year." (full quote from Void 20)

The costume in question, "Titania, Queen of the Fairies", in my opinion, demanded an attitude of regal insolence and majesty; yet the judges refused her the award because she carried the act well, according to this information. In that case, then do plan to wear that Peter Pan costume, but walk around like an ordinary person, for



to crow for joy will lose the prize; disguise yourself as Gully Foyle, but don't stalk like a hero in tiger stripes...stand in a corner and be a mouse! Anglofen with their armor and mock battles on the ballroom floor would find us a dull lot, and likely leave in boredom long before a judge disqualified them for acting like "knights" instead of just one of the girls in costumes of intrinsic merit!

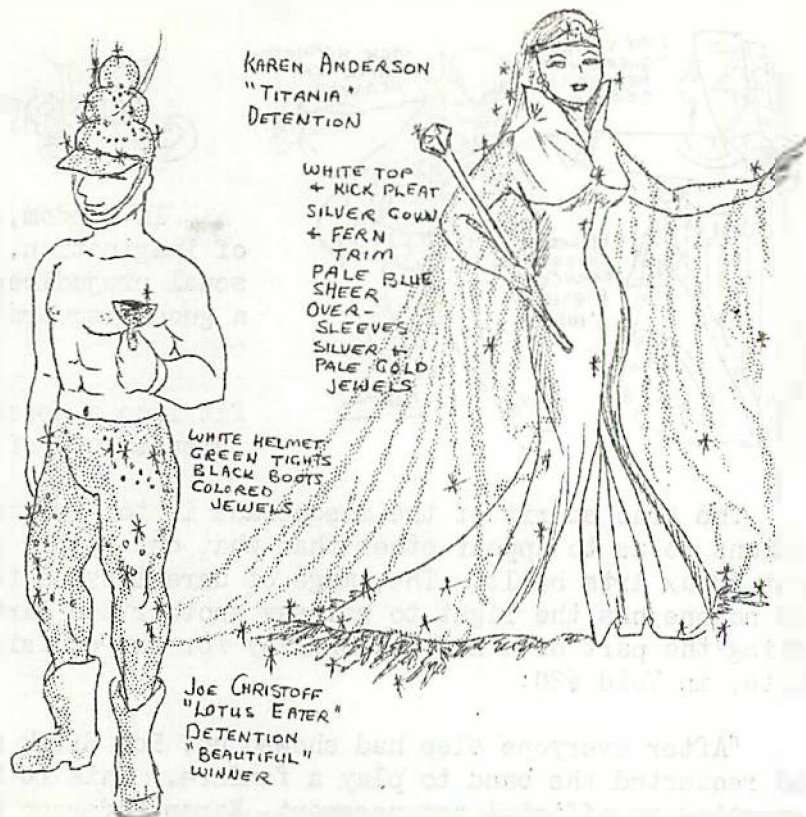
This problem of judging is not always the judge's fault, for they can only work with the rules the con committee allows, which are either too restrictive and confusing, or simply make the poor judges muddle thru. But the judges are always trusted to set aside all personal feelings concerning any of the people inside the costumes; something which is not easy for ordinary mortals to do, yet which we always hope for among fans.

Unfortunately, fandom is not in the position of larger costume affairs, where the local art schools, fashion leaders, and designers can be called upon to render a more learned (and impersonal) judgement of the masquerade. Walt Disney and Edith Head have judged the Chouinard's Art Institute Beaux Arts Ball in recent years. At SF conventions, the committee has to settle for fans and pros who usually have only an average interest in costume and little or no real knowledge of points to look for in awarding the prizes.

Getting everyone to agree might take a little longer, but five judges would give more satisfaction than three. In this way, one strong will would have a harder time imposing on four others, instead of two. It might also be worth considering the introduction of a popular vote on the grand prize, which would give the entire audience--costumed or not--a voice in the matter; this is also usually done at large Beaux Arts affairs. It is true that most rules of regular activities cannot apply to the smaller specialized field of science fiction in most cases, but some of the points can be adjusted to our particular needs.

Conventions which have to take account of local conditions cannot always run the entire show to suit everyone; nor can the whole convention procedure be "standardized" effectively for this same reason. Yet costume balls remain fairly similar in every convention, and this is one thing which could have a set of pointers--not restrictions--to assist both judges and costume designers. These rules could be worked out and publicized thru-out fandom. Then we would not need professional judges to assure a fair and reasonable awarding of prizes.

These points should definitely include the factor that there will be at least one good costume at every convention which will not fit into the categories on hand. Until now, the judges have had to ignore the costume unless the con committee had the foresight to arrange for a couple of "open-category" prizes. This should by now have become the accepted procedure in costume balls. On the problem of personality clashes between judge and contestant, there is little we





can do except trust the person who is asked to judge to state that there is a prejudice, and withdraw. Otherwise, there seems no way of assuring fair play; the committee cannot be expected to know of everyone's private fights. Since the person's withdrawal would be known only to the committee, there is little disgrace in being that honest.

Not everyone can win prizes, of course, but it is a much better feeling to be assured that your costume was defeated by a truly better costume, instead of prejudice or obstinate thinking.

Pointers to help the untrained judge decide between costumes should include notes on things to look for in the effect the costume was trying for, and how successful it was in the attempt; attention on the part of the contestant to costume detail; and the attending make-up which should complete a good costume. Other points should be (or would be, in any other costume ball) the overall effect of the masquerade itself; how well the "show" and the costume merged to create the personality or character which is depicted and the originality of design, effect and construction. So far, there has been little said about a rented costume: yet the situation has come up at other costume affairs, where the costume is afforded as much attention as a hand-made job. There does seem to be a tacit agreement in fandom against renting an entire outfit: the swords, etc., are fair.

Home-made costumes should not get a prize just for that alone, however, for a careless job is as bad as renting a good costume. Here the fine points start appearing; the costumes themselves on the Detention "Oz" group were terrific, especially Sam's wonderful bright green suit. But he looked like Sam, in a bright green suit, when only a touch of make-up would have made him look like the wonderful Wizard of Oz! There is still argument that Trina should have won sexiest prize at the Solacon, instead of Ellie Turner; tho the judges were not trying to pick the most sexy girl present, but the most sexy costume on a sexy girl. As Jirel of Joiry at Seacon, Sylvia White deserved more attention from the judges, as her costume was well-designed and a fine interpretation of the character. But at Pittcon, while her outfit left little to the imagination (and no complaints from the males), it did not show much ingenuity as a costume; the addition of antennae or an Emsh-like bracelet would have turned it into a real science fiction costume without covering any more vital area than it did. Margii Ellers claims that the essence of a good costume is as much bare skin as possible; she has often worn less than Sylvia wore to Pittcon, and won prizes for really good costumes. So even a very tiny costume can be outstanding if it really is a costume; an ordinary bikini bathing suit is "normal" dress.

Has there ever been any reason why a whole group could not become prizewinners for any of the categories in which the costumes were appropriate? Lack of individual prizes could be the answer, but there has never been a group to my knowledge that did not pick out a representative (just in case) to accept the prize. Groups must think it worth sacrificing the egoboo of individual prizes to carry out the costume idea, or they would not go thru with it. But in spite of this, conventions continue to give a "special" group award just for a number of people being in costume. This rather obviates getting a prize at all unless they





KAREN
ANDERSON
"VAMPIRE BAT"
SOLA CON
"CLASSIC
FANTASY"
WINNER

specifically want to go out for "largest crowd", "noisiest gang", "smallest club", or "MOST group". Why can't a group of costumes be "most beautiful", "comical", or fit any of the categories for good costumes? For that matter, in the case of individual prizes, this often leaves good pairs of costumes out. Two people cannot be called a "group" (tho legally, three people can constitute a riot) and good costumes on couples are often ignored in the category confusion.

At Seacon, several groups of costumes went wanting, for lack of the usual accepted "group prize". According to Elinor Busby, if people chose to dress for a category which was not included in the list, then it was their problem that they did not win anything. That worked two ways, for no one tho't that a group could definitely not try for any category at all. The judges were given permission to split groups to award a prize to a single person, which completely destroyed the effect of appearing with a group at all; and if that effect is lost, then the individual costume loses its interest also.

Certainly the Kemps and their hoods (ghosts of SF) were eligible, except for someone's single-mindedness, for the most comical award. The Three Hearts & Three Lions characters were beautiful, very authentic, and deserved consideration in those two categories. Liby Vintus as the Queen of Hearts and Jack Harness as the Knave were most beautiful, very Teniel, and comical; but then they were only two people and so perhaps did not deserve attention as individuals or as a group. The Coventry group was colorful, but obscure in reference to all but a few, but it should have had its chance to stand as a group for a fitting category.

Since I had contracted to sketch the prize-winners for the Seacon Costume Ball, my outfit was designed more for comfort than show, tho I looked to a good choice of emotional appeal in color. I joined the Coventry group on request, because Bruce Henstell offered to escort me in the march, and for the pure fun of it. It has been a distinct embarrassment to have won a prize for a costume which was most certainly NOT more beautiful than the Three Hearts group or Liby's gown. I prefer not to have a prize conceded simply because of category confusion; it takes the flavor out of good competition.

It would take quite a stretch of imagination to remember Karen as ordinary at the Solacon; few people in my acquaintance actually have a thirteen foot wing-spread. If the judges had been giving



JON LACKY
"E.T. FANATIC"
SOLA CON
"WIERD"
WINNER

demerits for spectacular entrances at the Solacon, Jon Lackey would have been thrown out of the hall soon after he came bounding in a window with his bowl of incense. But the show did not repel us at all, and he won a well-deserved prize for his poised and artificial costume.

If a convention costume ball is nothing but "dress-ups", how do you find an original outfit which will stand the approval of the judges but which will require no real masquerade on the part of the wearer? Might as well have a Gray Flannel Suit Party and give prizes for the best polished attache case!

At a non-fannish Beaux Arts ball, I saw an ingenious young lady make a very up-stagey demand for attention with an effective but simple costume. She had talked four Negro boys into carrying a platform covered with shag rugs and colorful pillows, with an extra "slave" waving a huge feather fan. The males wore loin-clothes and turbans, while the girl draped herself in a wisp of nylon and all the snakey-looking jewelry she could find. The costumes weren't much, the the entrance--the bid for prominence--was so effective that the band broke into a fanfare of Hollywood-Egyptian music and the judges gave them Sweepstakes.

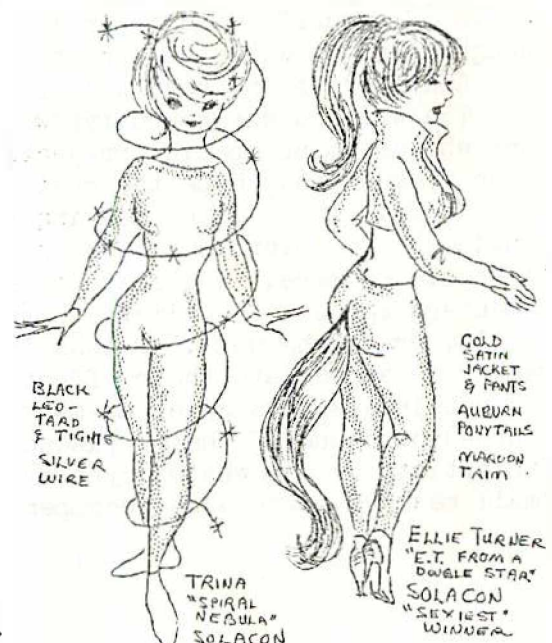
The prizes aren't all that important, either; it is the fun, the "show", the "act" and the dressing up which is important. How many of us wouldn't like to have a fanfare greet our entrance...just once? Without the act, where is the secret delight, the fun of the show of becoming--for just one evening--the most beautiful creature in the world, the biggest hero who ever buckled a swash, the slimiest villian of a dozen planets, or the funniest poke at fandom ever seen at a convention? Playing the part is an integral part of the masquerade, and those who cannot unbend enuf from false modesty, or relax from an over-rated dignity to enjoy playing games are to be pitied; they are not all that "adult" or "mature", they are simply cardboard caricatures of what they think grown-up. No mature person--whether he wishes to indulge in your particular game or not--will ridicule anyone for enjoying life in a way which does no harm to another. Living a full life, accepting responsibilities and growing has never meant that play must be put aside as childish; play is immature only when it is the single goal of a supposedly adult person.

If an Ordinary Green Unicorn can't forget freckles and an ordinary face for an evening and become a tail-swishing, glittering, impossible critter, then fandom is losing more than its poor sense of wonder.

May we act--to the hilt--the part of a story-book character come alive; may we live another life for an evening, without approbation from the very people who are supposed to be judging the "approach to costumes"? If not, then put away the leotards and sequins, and save your time and material for a mundane masque; where the true masquerade is recognized, and judged, as part of a good costume!

-----Bjo-----

BEFORE YOU WRITE THAT LETTER: there is no personality quarrel here; the point of this whole article is not to defend anyone or to tear anyone's costumes down. Examples were used to get across the message that costume balls need some sort of standards by which judges and contestants may better enjoy it all.



MARINATING

Marinate, v.t., to pickle or soak in brine for a period of time.

Generally the comments which appear under the heading of this wandering column can be said to be properly marinated--a bit on the sour side since they reflect things seen through a somewhat jaded eye. For a change I want to reverse things, to do a bit of de-marinating as it were, to try to remove some of the brine from what has become a sour subject: the Fan Achievement Awards.

I was first approached on the subject of the awards about a year ago. I liked the idea then. I still do. It is true that there have been certain aspects of the project which have caused me to rear up on my hind legs and scream like a wounded grizzly; to quit the project, in fact. Yet I find myself back in the middle of it, once again a member of the awards committee because I think the idea has enough merit to be put into effect.

Probably the greatest amount of adverse comment on the Fan Awards project was caused by the proposed award statuette. Three things, at least, can be said about that proposed design: it was impractical, unsuitable, and in very poor taste. The fans who returned the awards questionnaire emphatically rejected the many-pointed female figure. Even Dave Prosser, who drew up the design, voted against it. However, there seems to have been a breakdown in public relations and the majority of fandom still appears to be under the impression that Our Lady (?) of the Daggers is to be thrust upon some unsuspecting youngfan thereby eliciting horrified screams of parental disapproval. Not so. That particular atrocity was quickly given a well deserved toss into the ashcan. The awards committee settled on plaques as being more suitable, practical, and vastly less expensive.

"So what?" I hear you say. "Who needs fan awards anyway?"

Fandom does.

Fandom contains a number of highly talented people whose work is equal to that of any "professional". Name two? Willis and Berry. Want two more? Boggs and Warner. Two more? Bjo and ATom. Two more? Name your own choices; there are lots to choose from.

The point is that all of these people work in an extremely narrow field. The very nature of the thing they do best limits its appeal to the tiny group we call "fandom". They know this but nevertheless they continue to work, and work hard, to provide stories, articles, artwork, and other things fannish to interest, entertain, and amuse the rest of us. Why do they do it? Not for any monetary reward, that's for sure. How much time and money do you figure L. D. Broyles put into his "Who's Who in SF Fandom"? Did he do it for profit? Obviously not. Then why? Because he thought that it would be something that other fans would appreciate.

And there's the key to it all. Appreciation.

The writers who pound typewriters, the artists who wield pen and brush, the fans who dream up special projects and pour their time, energy, and money into them, do so because they hope the rest of us will appreciate their efforts.

We do. There is no denying that. We write them letters and we praise them in fanzines. We cover them with egoboo--an immaterial and fleeting thing. I believe we should do more. I believe we should give them something a bit more lasting than momentary egoboo. I believe we should give them something they can put up on the mantle, or on the wall, or toss in the closet, to remind them now and again that we really do appreciate their efforts. During the past year fan writers and artists and publishers have given me many hours of enjoyment. If I can (figuratively, of course) hand one of them a plaque that says he is the best, by ghod, fan writer, fan artist, or fan whathaveyou of the year 1961 then I feel that I will have, in a small measure, made some recompense for the time and effort he has spent on me--and

ROY TACKETT

you-- and a few hundred other fans.

As to the awards themselves, the awards committee has decided on five, basing their decision for the most part on the results of the questionnaire sent out by George Willick. (As a matter of information 117 questionnaires were returned; 93 favored the fan awards and 24 were opposed to them.) The five awards are as follows:

Best Fan Writer.

Best Fan Artist.

Best Regular Column. This one was something of a surprise. It was not one of the categories proposed on Willick's questionnaire but a large number of write-in votes convinced the committee that it should be included.

Best Single Publication. This category is meant to include a wide variety of fannish publications: one-shots, specials, or a particularly fine issue of a regular fanzine.

The Outstanding Merit Award. This award is meant to be something special and takes a bit of explaining. The committee feels that once in a while someone makes a special contribution to fandom and his contribution should be recognized as such. Such as? Such as Willis, perhaps, who changed the whole concept of fandom. Such as Moskowitz, perhaps, who chronicled the early years. Such as Sneary, perhaps, whose warmth and humor and intelligence have inspired a vast number of aspiring fans. Such as...well, the choice is up to fandom. There will be no nominations for this award--just a space for a write-in on the final ballot. If 75% of the voters write in the same name then it can be assumed they have come up with an outstanding fan. Otherwise, no award.

I hope I've managed to clear up a few points concerning the fan awards. I like the idea. Sure, fandom is just a ghoddamn hobby but there are some talented hobbyists knocking about in it. Let's give them some recognition.

--- Roy Tackett



Have You Joined The ChiCon III Yet?

To be held at the Pick-Congress hotel in Chicago, on Sept 1, 2 & 3, '62, this 20th WorldCon is going to be one of the biggest events in fannish history; the Willises coming over as a climax to TAWF...Ted Sturgeon coming out of the woodwork to be ~~Guest~~ Guest of Honor, etc. Don't miss it! Send \$2.00 NOW to George W Price, 20th World SF Convention, P O Box 4864, Chicago 80, Illinois.

There's a BritCon This Year, Too

The AngloFen have con problems, as most fans know; British hotels don't seem nearly as anxious to play host to kookey groups like fandom as do American hostelrys. Hence, British cons are poorly advertised -- its hard to let advance publicity when you don't know until the last minute which hotel you're going to have. And even at the last moment....

Send \$1.75 (which is what the Harrogate Con membership fee works out to in sensible money) to Ron Bennett, 13 Westcliffe Grove, Cold Bath Road, Harrogate, Yorkshire, ENGLAND.

Let's help the British get out of this cycle they're in with the hotel situation.

BArea Bombast: number two in...?

((The discussion goes 'round and 'round. From Joe Gibson:))

By now, anyone who actually read my article in SHAGGY 58 (and there were some who didn't) can at least see why I've been arguing with some of these oldtime fugg-head fans for the past 20 years. Here's Alva Rogers, now, claiming I said this and I said that and how utterly awful of me. F'rinstance:

He claims I predicted a mighty blowup if fandom doesn't clean house and sweep out the Cheats, Frauds, et cetera. That's wrong.

He claims I said fans shouldn't tolerate or associate with ex-commies and homosexuals and that this was "obviously meant to be in the best interests of fandom" -- and that's wrong.

With that much wrong, his claim that I insisted that fandom adopt a harshly intolerant attitude toward what I might consider to be undesirable elements -- well, y'see, Alva is kind of a nut, hisself. He has trouble reading unless it's something which says exactly what he happens to think, himself. Actually, it's a very small deficiency and you'd hardly notice it unless you happened to mention that, say, there were other stf mags besides As-f published in 1940. Alva will look at you aghast; he knows perfectly well that As-f was the ONLY stf mag published in 1940!!!

So I'm not really too concerned when he claims I cited LASFS as "one of the major examples of conditions leading to the need for a housecleaning." As usual, he's way off base (and I've noticed he has some company out there) becuz if there's one thing I said and said and said in that article, it's that any such "housecleaning" is invariably dirty and if possible, by all means, fandom has to avoid it.

So I said fans shouldn't associate with ex-commies or homosexuals becuz most fans really don't have the experience or understanding to do it, or even to want to do it. The high degree of tolerance Alva expects all fandom to have requires a high degree of human understanding, based on knowledge and experience. Most fans have it to some extent, and they surely develop more of it the longer they're in fandom. But nobody's born with it.

But there was obviously a great deal in my article which was totally outside the experience of a good many fans. Almost everyone who's discussed my classification of a Lunatic Fringe -- the cheats, frauds, thieves, whores & moochers -- ended up talking only about the moochers they'd known. It was quite apparent that none of 'em had any experience with cheats, frauds, thieves or whores. In fact, young fans and those more-or-less-strictly fanzine fans frankly doubt the existence of such. They should have a go at being convention fans for a few years! Or even get active in a local fancub.

Furthermore, most fans today haven't the least idea of what a Fan War is really like, much less how it's started. They've never seen fandom totally immersed in dirty fan politics, counteracted by dirtier fan politics -- and some of it isn't so politic, either. They've never seen really decent fans who'd have nothing to do with such sordidness actually driven out of fandom for no more reason than that.

But more important, they've never seen it started. Alva says fandom always rids itself of undesirable characters. Len Moffatt wants to know if fandom has more of such than any other social group. And another old fugghead, Harry Warner, Jr., spends time commenting as when the N3F and FAPA were little more than a gleam in Jack Speer's eye, ignoring the fact that neither amounted to much until they were practically the only thing left to pull a feud-riddled fandom back together.

I've noticed a few cheats, frauds and thieves come into fandom lately, in the past few years, and pull their cute stuff. And they're still here. Doing quite well, too. I've been watching a normal difference of opinion in fandom gradually being built into two rival factions -- the avant garde beatniks and young fans, on one side, and the more conservative, sercon-minded fans on the other -- and I've heard the note of viciousness that's creeping into what each faction's muttering

about the other. Finally, I know what the real villains of this comic opera, the nogoodniks, can achieve in a situation like this. It's happened before. They just have themselves a ball with this kind of deal.

And you can't sweep out all the nogoodniks. You can't crusade against 'em and drive 'em out. Be nice if we could do it in such a cheap, easy way as that. We'd just have to get ourselves one Big, Brave Champion to buckle on his guns and go take care of that little matter, and the rest of us wouldn't have to bother with it at all. How convenient!

Basically, I've had three reactions to my article. First, I've been called some kind of Messiah of Fandom by those who at least understood what I was trying to say: Be not led into temptation, Brothers! Second, I've been called a weak, ineffective simpleton by those who wanted me to "name names" and trigger the name-calling contest and fan feuds and dirty politics that will set off the Fan War. And third, I've been called a dirty blackguard trying to pose as a Knight Errant and lead the crusade to drive out anybody I don't happen to like. Frankly, I think the third reaction was best!

I think that perhaps I just might've made it awful damned difficult for any nogoodnik to set off any Fan War, now. I've got y'all just a bit too wary, now!

Well, what's to be done about it? Some good suggestions have been made. Certainly, we need to be tolerant. Right now, I have difficulty in discussing beatnik fans because I've noticed a recurrent viciousness in their fan writings, seemingly for the mere, sick enjoyment of being vicious, and I have an unwanted inclination to give them back their own medicine. Worse yet, I've found that at least some other fans agree with me. Now, this is no damned good; viciousness only breeds more viciousness.

But again, we should have some clearly defined limit to tolerance so it doesn't become mere sufferance. I'm afraid it will be very hard to define. A couple of young fans can put up with a helluva lot from each other, or anybody else. An older fan may not find it that easy.

Suppose you're some old fugghead developing a middle-age spread in some job where you have sticky relations with a lot of mundane professional types. Suppose all it takes is some nogoodnik getting an address and mailing a fanzine -- so what happens in fandom just may not stay in fandom -- and your means of livelihood could get jeopardized. What do you do, quit fandom? (It's happened before.)

This is definitely where lawsuits have to be considered. They're nothing new in fandom -- ask Don Wollheim, for chrissake! And threats of lawsuit, even moreso. Nor am I talking about JWCampbell threatening to sue some young fan who claimed in his fanzine that As-f had a disastrous drop in circulation. I'm talking about times like when Laney said A. Langley Searles wasn't fit to associate with; Searles threatened to sue him, and Laney published an apology in ACOLYTE. Want more examples? Go look. They're there.

Still, lawsuits are no bugaboo. Somebody pulls a dirty deal on you, then you can certainly report what they did; all you need is proof and/or witnesses. Even to young fans, it needn't be worth more than second thought. But again, suppose you're that old fugghead fan and some guy publicly calls your wife a Lesbian? What do you do, quit fandom?

But even among such eternally young fans like me and Alva Rogers, there are limits. There is just so much I can put up with from that goddam redhead in Castro Valley, like accusing me of stuff which I never said simply becuz the fool can't read. Now, he can draw tolerably well when he's about half-crocked and his inhibitions drop off. Then he wants to express hisself. And nothing could be a clearer indication that if you ever want to express something to Alva, and have him understand it, you'd better do it with pictures!

((And a postscript:))

Naturally, I can see several fans from right here who're going to demand that I quote chapter & verse on some of these wild statements. Well, I won't do it. They can dig their own holes -- and I will not be "used" by anyone who wants to start that Fan War and doesn't know what the hell he's doing.

((Whew! Well, as we want to be fair and tolerant and all like that about this, we sent Alva a copy of Joe's letter so that we could give you both sides of the discussion at once. Alva's reply:))

Joe's clarion call to fandom to man the ramparts and beat back the invading wave of cheats, frauds, thieves, whores and moochers that threatens to overwhelm us, now seems to be something less than a ringing manifesto calling for positive action. And unlike the authors of an earlier manifesto of some international fame, Joe fails to buttress his dire warnings with any sort of a program to meet the situation that would be acceptable to all of us, and instead, equivocates somewhat on the position he took in his article.

Joe delicately suggests that I might have misread his article, and that I claim he said things he insists he didn't. To wit:

He says I'm wrong in claiming he predicted a mighty blowup in fandom if fandom doesn't clean house and sweep out the cheats, frauds, etc. If I'm wrong, then I'm in good company, because a lot of people who's opinions I respect got substantially the same impression from his article.

In my article, I placed heaviest emphasis on his injunction to fans to avoid any association with ex-commies and homosexuals and speculated that he did so with the best interests of fandom in mind. Now I admit I was second guessing him on his motives here, but the only alternative was to assume that it was not meant in the best interests of fandom -- and where does that leave us? However, inasmuch as he saw fit to ring in this subject at the beginning of his article, couched in semantically emotional terms, it was only natural to believe that this was a subject of more than casual interest to him. In his letter Joe qualifies his warning by stating that the average fan hasn't the knowledge of human nature or the experience to exercise the high degree of tolerance he says I insist all fans should have, and that most fans don't even want to associate with ex-commies or homosexuals. In the first place, I don't expect all fandom to have the same high degree of tolerance that Joe and I have -- merely that it should have a degree of tolerance a few points higher than the moronic level evidenced by an appreciable segment of mundane society today. And secondly, I don't think that one should attempt to prove he's tolerant by deliberately seeking an associational relationship with ex-commies or homosexuals -- this is just plain old chauvinism. But being incidentally associated with an occasional ex-commie or homosexual in the pot-pourri of fandom is not the same as wanting to associate with them. They're there, and you're there, so what do you do about it? Run them out of fandom on the grounds that they are, a priori, ex-commies or homosexuals? This strikes me as very unfannish.

It seemed to me on first reading Joe's article -- and it still does -- that his equating ex-commies with homosexuals was an unfortunate coupling of semantically explosive labels that could do no one any good, particularly when it can be inferred from what he said that there are more of these nefarious types in fandom than meets the innocent fannish eye. Joe has, willy-nilly, clouded his picture of what's wrong with fandom by raising the issue of ex-commies and homosexuals. Whether we like it or not, there are those fans who will eagerly indulge in the happy sport of trying to guess Who's What -- this also applies, as Bergeron has pointed out, to the other labels Joe has seen fit to identify his Lunatic Fringe with.

It seemed to me that Joe did cite the LASFS as a particularly juicy example of conditions leading to the need for a housecleaning. If this wasn't his intent, then why bring it up in the first place? It's only natural to assume that any incident or group he mentions in an article of this nature would have some pertinency to the topic under discussion. I'm fully aware that Joe stated that any "housecleaning" would be a rather dirty job, but nowhere in his article does he come out and say unequivocally that fandom has to avoid it. Indeed, I got the distinct impression that he felt fandom had avoided it too long for it's own good and should resort to drastic action. Joe says I'm in error here because I can't read; but couldn't it as well be due to the fact that Joe might have been less than cogent in his writing?

Joe says that almost everyone who has commented on his article and on his classification of a Lunatic Fringe -- the cheats, frauds, thieves, whores and moochers -- ended up talking only about the moochers they've known, and has taken this to mean that none of them has had any experience with the rest. This would seem to me to lead to an equally valid alternative assumption that these types are not as prevalent as he would have us believe. He suggests that any skeptics wanting proof of their existence should have a go at being convention fans for a few years or get active in a local fanclub. What goes on in the bedrooms and halls of a convention hotel shouldn't be used as prima facie evidence of general fannish conduct in a less artificial environment. Local fanclubs, of course, have their share of petty bickering, jealousies, rivalries, etc., but Joe makes the implied charge that cheats, frauds, thieves, whores and moochers make up the bulk of the membership of local clubs. Now, Joe has never been a hyperactive club member at any time and has a rather bilious opinion of fans who belong to clubs, so his blanket condemnation of fanclubs can be pretty much disregarded, as far as I'm concerned.

I agree with him that fan wars are to be avoided, and that dirty fan politics are repugnant, if not childish. But I also think that making wild and unsubstantiated charges against fandom is something to be abhorred, also. Joe doesn't really substantiate his charges, you know. He resorts to a lot of glib generalities and gives a few examples of misconduct without naming names or providing any sort of temporal or geographic fix; nor does he give any evidence that these are anything more than isolated incidences. It seems to this child that he has done a beautiful job of extrapolation on inconclusive and sketchy evidence.

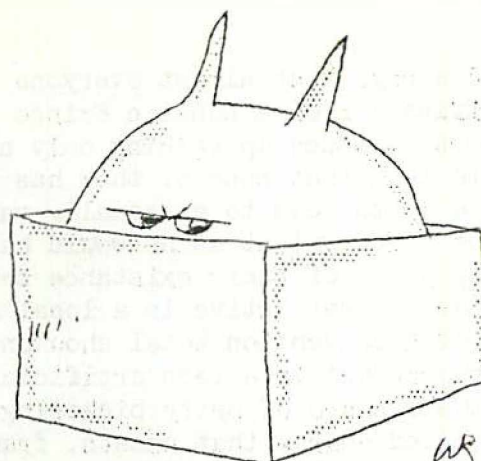
He's on somewhat firmer ground when he deplores the rift that seems to be widening between the avant garde beatniks and younger fans, on one side, and the more conservative, sercon-minded fans on the other. I assume he means by avant garde beatniks those "fans" who don't read science fiction (and in some instances never have), and the "fannish" fan who writes and talks mainly about fandom. The conservative, sercon-minded fan, on the other hand, must be one who still reads, likes, and discusses science fiction. There has been some notable viciousness in exchanges between these two camps, but how serious this is is subject to speculation.

I can't get too worked up over the possibility of some old fugghead with a middle-aged spread being forced out of fandom because some nogoodnik slips a fanzine to a mundane business associate or friend in an attempt to sabotage him. I doubt if this has happened very often, but mainly I believe that any old fugghead (like Joe and me) should know enough not to become involved in anything that's going to jeopardize his livelihood; or, conversely, if he's in such a critical position that the picayune quarrels of fandom could seriously jeopardize his job or social standing, then he should get out of fandom...fandom is not for the thinskinners or hypersensitive.

Which leads directly to the next subject Joe brings up, lawsuits: All I'll say about this, without discussing the merits or demerits on either side of the Moskowitz - White embroglio, is to quote that paragon of sanity in fandom, RSCoulson: "No matter how tactless White is, Moskowitz has no valid defense for his actions. He has his own fanzine to reply in, to exactly the same people who read White's comments." Joe mentions A. Langley Searles' threatened suit against Laney because of some intemperate things Fran had to say about him in, I believe, FAPA, and notes that Laney published an apology in ACOLYTE. What he fails to take into account was the fact that Laney published his apology because he was forced to simply because he couldn't afford the expense of fighting Searles in the courts. Fran never honestly retracted anything he said, and he never forgave Searles for threatening to settle a fannish quarrel outside of fandom, in the courts. For a man of average or marginal means a threatened lawsuit is a fearsome weapon to have used against him. Now, my attorney happens to be a real sharp cookie who could probably make something of Joe's assertion that I can't read (my livelihood

PICKING A BODIL WITH SHAGGY

conducted by Bob Lichtman



Ted White, 107 Christopher Street, NYC 14

"Cheats, Frauds, Thieves,
Whores, and Moochers" is a bang-up
title, and it's a shame Joe couldn't

find anything suitable to go underneath it. I began reading it wondering if ol' Uncle Joe was about to Plunge All Fandom into youknowwhat, like he did almost ten years ago in STF TRENDS. That time he was all het up over convention politicking, smoky rooms, and Why San Francisco Didn't Get It At Chicago. I don't recall whose side (if any) he was on, now, but STF TRENDS' lettercol seethed for years after that. (I'll admit that part of the reason for this was Hickman's annual and biannual schedule...)

So, like I say, I was all primed to see a new expose of fandom.

Instead, what I found was two and a half pages of buildup, and one and a half of let-down, with nothing inbetween. I see that Joe knows a whole bunch of people whom he regards as dangerous, and while he thinks nothing of his own skin, he wouldn't recommend it for us tolerant types, because he-- Joe Gibson--is Real Tough, see. Wow.

So I read on, and I found that Joe doesn't think much of Queers, Queers are people he doesn't like. (I was so enmeshed in his style, I almost wrote "don't like.") On the other hand, there are sexual deviants who qualify as friends of Joe's, and bigolly there's nothing Queer about them, nosiree!

It all seems to boil down to "bad uns" and good ones, and Joe can't make up his mind who he thinks less of: the dirty bums who're mooching off the goodwill of fandom, or the soft patsies who feed them. And somewhere along the line, there, pardner (see, I can do it too!) he's roped in jest about ev'ry one of us.

Without naming more than a handful of names, without being specific more than twice (and once about a guy having a nervous breakdown--boy is it easy to get nasty about him; he's in no position to hit back), Joe stands up there on this great big platform, see, and waves his arms and rants and raves and somehow out of all this he's supposed to make us think he's said something.

He hasn't. The vague allusions to common-knowledge history are mind-prodding, in a-what-ever-happened-to vein, and the unsubtle hints about current-day fandom gave me a good five minutes of guessing-game fun.

But Joe has chastised no one, spoken about nothing pertinent, and--

worst crime of all--wasted four pages in beating around the bush, exposing only his own myopic prejudices.

A damn shame; the subject deserved a major article.

Harry Warner, 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Md. You have demonstrated superb
----- confidence in the possession
of more resources than you
know you possess. To distribute with Shangri L'Affaires a Christmas supplement
that is barely hinted at in the magazine itself, and a splendid calendar that
isn't mentioned at all is a most impressive and specialized type of oneupman-
ship. It didn't bother me a bit that the Christmas art was late arriving, be-
cause last year, I was in no condition to enjoy the supplement until my broken
hip had stopped most of its aching, and I got accustomed at that time to time-
binding from late January to mid-December.

I won't claim that this Christmas supplement is quite up to the level
of the first two, but I suspect that the reason for this is the quite basic
fact that your artists used up the most logical ideas in the first year or two.
I think that the illustrations this time are better drawn than ever before, and
the only thing that represents deficiency is the comparative scarcity of pic-
tures that cause your eyes to pop and your jaw to drop in admiration for the
brilliance of the artist's imagination and dismay that you didn't think of that
angle yourself. However, Dian Girard and Jim Cawthorn are as excellent as
anything in the other supplements, and the Harness illustration is positively
superb as a piece of craftsmanship and technique. I know that this paragraph
sounds as ungrateful as all getout from a person who isn't paying for an ex-
pensive publication like this. But I must practice honesty and impartiality
in preparation for writing fan history, and I console myself with the thought
that these hundreds of hours of notetaking are destined to become a special
sort of repayment to fandom for the free fanzines I get, assuming that the
fan history gives pleasure to most of its readers.

The calendar is a good change from the fannish imitations of 'mundane
calendars. I assume that the overlays are done with some kind of silkscreen
technique. They look so good here that I think they could serve by themselves
as a form of cover art for Los Angeles fanzines. (The process used on those
calendar illos is brush-stencil, using special stencil and a weak acid that
is painted on the stencil. Bjo is the main proponent of this process here in
Los Angeles, because she does the best work with it. Witness the cover of
Fantasy Amateur #98, and Tightbeam #11.)

Shaggy itself looks startlingly like Cry this time, when you look at
the cover and with the pages stenciled on the elite typewriter. I'll even
make myself still more unpopular with Los Angeles fandom by saying that I'm
happy that it isn't such a big issue. Fanzines are arriving at such a hectic
pace nowadays that I get a sinking feeling every time that I get one with
more than 30 pages, knowing the struggle that will be caused by the effort
to find time to read it. The fact that the bigger the fanzine, the better the
quality is the general rule makes life even more complicated. (It doesn't
follow quite that way. Discord, *SKOAN*, and even Horizons are all less than
30 pages, and all of them are top ten material. ## Could be that the general
lack of artwork in #59 gave you the impression of Cry-ness. As long as I'm

Art Editor for this fanzine, it will have less artwork than it used to, when Bjo was Art Editor. I'm lazy.→)

However, I don't see any particular loss of quality along with the slight reduction in size for this issue. You seem to have achieved complete mastery over the Rex Rotary quite rapidly (←that's what you think!→), and the material this time is quite well balanced among commentary, faan and stf-slanted stuff.

Alva Rogers says sensible things quite well. The only thing that might be added is: a blast like Ah! Sweet Idiocy! or the Joe Gibson article is a good idea once in a while, because it will tell newcomers to the field that they are beginning to mix with a mixed batch of people. Even if these blasts exaggerate in the wrong direction, they are a useful antidote to the tendency of some fannish cliques to keep out of print the less pleasant happenings.

Ron's column brings up something I've wondered about. How does the telephone company prevent cheating on direct-dialled long distance calls? Suppose I have a sudden, vital message that I must convey to Mathom House. I dial the proper sequence of numbers, rattle out the information real fast, and hang up after ten or fifteen seconds. Then I dial the operator, tell her that I was dialing another number on the same Los Angeles exchange, and my finger slipped. She makes a notation of the fact and the call is wiped off my bill. Maybe the operator then takes steps to make sure that a completed call to another number in the same city really is placed by the defrauding customer. Even with this protection, I can imagine cheating if the called party was making arrangements for the dishonesty, too, and supplied in advance a fairly similar number of a business firm, for instance, whose switchboard wouldn't be attended in the evening when the call was placed, so the second call would get no response. (←Sounds like fun. Sometime when you must convey a vital, urgent message to us, why don't you try it and see?→)

Maybe the proposed TAFF fanzine could be supplied with less trouble by combining a page of TAFF news with the ballot. It should be possible to get both the platforms and the voting form onto one side of the page, and the TAFF news on the other side; the TAFF administrator would supply a copy of the latest batch of news to any fanzine that planned to distribute ballots. A separate, regularly scheduled publication sounds like a lot of work, and as soon as an issue is delayed, fans would begin to scream that TAFF was being neglected and was dying on its feet. (←I think this is a wonderful idea. Why, you know, the usual procedure for most fans is to throw away TAFF ballots and other kipple when they find them in fanzines. Now, under your system, all the completist-types would have to save TAFF ballots because each one would have a different newsletter on its obverse side. Hmm, I wonder how long it'd take before enough of them appeared so that Bruce Pelz would have to bind them...??→)

It's odd that The Last American should have underestimated population increases. Most of the old predictions were far too generous around the turn of the century. People making the forecasts had to allow for the United States' tremendous growth from immigration, quotas on which were not as strict as later, and the birth rate was much higher then, too. As late as 1920, one expert was predicting 100,000 residents for Hagerstown by 1960; it's only about 50,000 counting sububrs outside the city limits.

There's no reason why the Coventry people would want another spaceship. The United States probably wouldn't be able to launch it, anyway. ((This is true.)) If there's short of room, all they need to do is accelerate a bit, and the ship will immediately grow larger, thanks to Mr. Einstein.

Redd Boggs, 2209 Highland Place NE, Minneapolis 21, Minn.

Shaggy #58. Well,
I think you-all lost
that letter of com-

ment I wrote about the previous issue entirely on purpose, even though I only said what John Trimble admits in the "Gafia Gazette" (I'm suing for copyright infringements) accompanying this issue. To wit, that most of the pomph seems to have dissipated and Shaggy is just coasting these days. While the magazine is frequently amusing it's such a minor and ineffectual performance compared with the one a large and presumably active fan club ought to be able to turn in that I find myself irritated with it. I felt the same way about John Barrymore in the twilight of his career when he was content to play himself in the role of a drunken fool. He was pretty funny, I thought (well, I was but a boy), but after all, he was supposed to be the finest Hamlet of his generation. ((Frankly-- and DnQ this because I guess it's mutiny--I feel much the same way about the magazine myownself. We are a bunch of active nuts out here, but we're active on our own projects, primarily, and S-L'A sort of takes a second place. This lettercol, for instance, is being stencilled at impossible times, spread out over a period of much more than a month. Like, who has the time...?))

Incidentally, I'm damned if I can understand anybody who can finish a fanzine right up to the collating and stapling and mailing and then leave it unmailed for months...! I have to force myself, often, to sit down and write and stencil and even to spin the crank, but never to assemble, staple, and mail. By that time most of the drudgery is over with, and it's worthwhile suffering just a little more. Like a thirsty longhorn sniffing water, I break into a gallop at that point -- all a-lather to get the thing in the mail and start receiving all that egoboo. ((That sounds like a lot of bull to me, Redd.)) Burbee wrote somewhere that he likes to sit down, light up, and pick up the top copy from a finished stack and start rereading his golden words. ((But Burbee doesn't smoke.)) Not me. ((He drinks, you know.)) When I have a finished stack of magazines in front of me, I start mailing them out with all possible speed. I seldom read the magazine till most or all the copies are in the mail.

Eric Bentcliffe's "High Flying Lepidoptera" had a nice opener, but the rest was so bad that I wonder if it exists merely to retail that line, "I was bugged on the Empire State Building"? ... After reading "Instant Minutes" I sometimes suspect that they may do more damage to the LASFS reputation, if any, than Laney managed to accomplish. Only thing to match them in round asininity are the Nameless Ones' minutes in CRY. As long as you publish the LASFS minutes separately, I can't think of any good reason to present them here. It's certainly enlightening to read, in December, that "the new Galaxy and F&SF are on the stands," back in August. Wow-ee. ((We're one-upping SFTimes, you see. Seriously, I agree about the Minutes, only some people seem to think that a club publication should present club minutes, no matter how dull.))

It's pleasant to see these Ackerman ads again after a lapse of so many years, and some of the jokes were pretty funny, like the annotation for The Knaves. By the way, whatever happened to Walter J. Daugherty?

- - - - -
Larry McCombs, 147 Bradley St., New Haven, Conn.
- - - - -

I unfortunately missed the opening article in this argument about fandom's less-desirable

elements, but I've read enough reviews, rebuttals and rehashings to have a fair idea of what Joe Gibson said to start all of this off.

First of all, I think that both Joe and Alva have missed Laney's point altogether. I have just finished reading AH! SWEET IDIOCY! for the first time, and I think that the charges of homosexuality and communism were a minor part of Laney's grotching. The last few pages, written some time after the main text, consist of a number of vague anonymous charges of immorality. In the remainder of the 130 pages, Laney is talking largely about a tendency on the part of fans to escape into the world of fandom in order to avoid admitting or correcting their deficiencies which bar them from success in the real world. His remarks about various forms of immorality are only side-snipes and largely intended, I think, to give shock value to the whole essay so that people will read it. Whether these communists and homosexuals really existed in Laney's time, or whether they exist in modern fandom, Laney's major challenge to fans is still valid:

"I took something which at its strongest should be no more than a desultorily followed hobby, and made of it almost a full-time job. If the truth were known, I am willing to wager that at least 50% of the more prominent fans are active in fandom for the same basic reasons I was -- evasion and compensation.....I hope you've enjoyed this little opus of mine, and that you set it down with a resolve to make it a false picture insofar as your own participation in the field is concerned."

So, ignoring these irrelevant questions of whether Laney and Gibson are seeing immorality where it doesn't exist, let's apply Laney's real point to modern fandom. Are we deliberately or unconsciously ignoring the faults of fans because we depend psychologically upon their praise and approval, and don't dare face the fact that they are actually psychic misfits, just as we are? I think the answer for many fans must be yes. Our microcosm has its intelligent and worthwhile members, and most of them are distinguished by the fact that they maintain a well-adjusted existence in the mundane world. For the boy or man who gets nothing but disapproval from the mundane world, faanish egoboo is as vital a need as dope to a drug addict. And since he will not admit to himself that this egoboo is any less valid than that he could gain by being a success in Mundania, he must ignore all possible faults of the fans who are providing his daily fix of egoboo. It is an easily observed fact that several well-known people who live only for fandom are also well-known for their high opinion of fandom and fans. But any well-adjusted fan is able to recognize the neurotics, the moochers, the homosexuals, and other undesirables. He either tries to help them, tries to keep them from harming himself or others, ignores them, or in severe cases helps laugh or annoy them out of fandom.

Certainly Alva is 100% right in saying that the prevention of a possible future purge is no excuse for a present purge. And, as Harry Warner points out, fandom is always plagued with an excessive amount of gossip. It seems to me that there is only one effective way to deal with it. Whenever you hear a piece of gossip about another fan, drop him a note and tell him what you've heard, asking for his side of the story. About 50% of the time, he will not have known that he's being talked about, and will be able to straighten out the matter by repairing some oversight or apologizing for some mistake. Another 40% of the time he will have a version of the story which is equally convincing to the original gossip. In both cases, it seems wise to let the story die without passing it on. If the alleged offender doesn't answer your query or otherwise fails to satisfy you, then you can pass on the story with a clear conscience. But don't contribute to the circulation of these vague rumors about So-and-so's sexual habits or Whats-his-name's sticky-fingeredness until you've made sure they didn't begin as a joke, a misunderstanding, an oversight, or a faanish exaggeration. About 90% of fandom's "cheats, frauds, thieves, whores and moochers" are products of these fictions.

Thomas Dilley, Box 3042, University Sta., Gainesville, Fla. Re Mrs. Kujawa's
----- letter: Indeed there
appear to be a fair

number of wives who disapprove of nudity, even in regard to their husbands. As far as I know, there are no readily available figures on how many wives will not allow their husbands to see them in the nude, but there are tables given showing how many women remain clothed during coitus with their husbands, and it may be possible to draw some conclusion from the information for the tactile case and apply it to get some idea of the state of affairs in the visual instance. Kinsey, *Sexual Behavior In The Human Female*, table 101, p. 400, shows that, of a sample of females drawn by fairly good sampling methods, and adjusted to be reasonably applicable to the United States, 16% do not have coitus in the nude. This breaks down in a number of ways; for example, by educational level, of those females who enter high school but never enter college, 23% remain clothed; of those who enter college, 11%, and of those who go into graduate studies, 10%. Kinsey found that the most profound effect on this sort (and on certain allied sorts) of behavior came from a person's educational level, one's religious training, and the decade of one's birth. The general tendencies were for the lower educational levels to condemn nudity and most forms of petting, coitus only being allowed in many cases (and allowed rather profusely); the stricter religious orders also condemned any sort of sexual activity which was not considered directly causal of reproduction (& so condemned nudity, petting, etc.); further, females who were born in earlier decades (1890's, 1900's) were found to have held, in their lifetimes, much more restrictive attitudes than the females born in later decades (1910's, 1920's). The greatest percentage of females not participating in nude coitus came from the lowest educational group of women born prior to 1900....41% didn't. Unfortunately, this particular table did not give information (as many of Kinsey's tables do) for members of that educational group who did not pass grade school. The condemnation of most activities other than coitus is most severe in this group.

Kinsey also shows that there are indeed males who hold similar views. In the companion volume of the study (same title as above, with "Male" substituted), it is indicated that quite a number of males in the grade-school educational level may have rather astounding frequencies of coitus with hundreds of different women, but will very much disapprove of such things as kissing. Kinsey gives precise tables and figures, none of which I can insert right now, as that volume does not happen to be on hand. But the phenomenon of marital non-nudity is, seemingly, not rare. (Meyer, you ought to look into the Cult...)

-oOo-

WE ALSO HEARD FROM Joe Gibson and Alva Rogers, whose letters are presented in a Special Section elsewhere in this thing. And a whole bunch of other people wrote too, including Archie Mercer, Don Wollheim, Burkhard Blum, Betty Kujawa, Ethel Lindsay, Ruth Berman, Gary Deindorfer, Terry Carr, Jack Vance, Dick Schultz, and Frank Wilimczyk, but none of them are really good enough to print. I mean, they're comments, and all, but who wants to read a bunch of routine comments. If you want your letter to get printed while I'm editing this part of our coasting old fanzine, and tired, why don't you Say Something? I mean, if you say something worth reprinting, a lettercol editor feels more enthusiastic about going to the trouble of stencilling it.

Like, Shaggy is saddled with an old man of the sea, who's gone through this crap with his own fanzine and is a bit tired about it all. Yaaawnnnn.....

(Continued from p. 27)

depends upon my being able to read), his statement that I can only draw when I'm half-crocked (damaging to my social status in my community), or his calling me a fugghead (just wait until I show him Eney's definition of this word in FANCYCLO-PEDIA II!), all made in a letter printed in a fanzine distributed to some two or three hundred fans. He could probably make a good enough case for me to cause Joe some slight discomfiture and financial inconvenience, but what good would it serve me in the long run? I'd rather slug it out with Joe right here in the pages of SHAGGY than in the courts -- it's much more fun this way, and less traumatic.

Actually, everything I've said so far could be reduced to one small sentence: As a jury of one I'm forced to render a Scotch verdict on Joe's case as presented in his article and his letter. Not proven.

((And Alva's postscript:))

I don't know what he hoped to prove, but Joe knows as well as I that As-f was the ONLY sf mag published in 1940.

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WESTERCON XV, the 15th Annual Science Fantasy Conference, will be held on June 30 and July 1 this year, at the Alexandria Hotel, in the heart of Los Angeles. Guest of Honor will be Jack Vance, the author of such noted sf novels as The Dying Earth, To Live Forever, and Big Planet, to name a few. Alva Rogers will be the Fan Guest of Honor, and Anthony Boucher will act as Toastmaster at the Banquet. Membership in the Westercon is \$1.00, payable to Bill Ellern, Treasurer, Westercon XV, at P. O. Box 54207, Terminal Annex, Los Angeles 54, Calif. You can pay at the door, but why not join now and get the Progress Reports, too?

In addition to such staple features as panels and auctions, this Westercon will inaugurate two "firsts". One is the first West Coast Fantasy Art Exhibition. Any artist living west of the Rockies is eligible to compete for the show ribbons. Any artwork entered in the WCFAE will also be eligible for the Third Fantasy Art Exhibition at the Chi-Con III. West Coast artists: here's an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone. Fans: this might be your opportunity to get a reservation on a prize-winning piece.

The second "first" will be the "Solar Whirl", the first of (we hope!) a series of Westercon fashion shows. The theme will be "A Trip Thru Our Solar System", including a Blast-off Gown and a Freefall Gown.

Don't miss it. Join now.