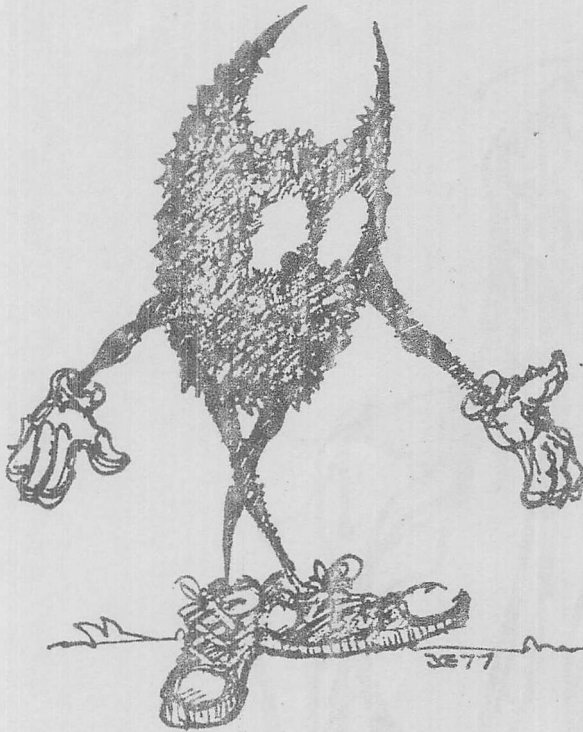




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SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES is the club genzine of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc. (11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601, USA). SHAGGY is published thrice-yearly (October, February, June) and is available for trade, letters of comment, or contributions. As per the LASFS by-laws, all Patron Friends of the LASFS (\$150 or higher contributions to the LASFS Building Fund) receive copies of SHAGGY free. SHAGGY is also available for \$1 per copy (3/\$2.75). Copyright (c) 1980 by the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc. One time rights only have been acquired from signed contributors. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the LASFS, Inc. nor of the editors of SHAGGY. Please make all cheques payable to the LASFS, Inc. Send all artwork to Maureen Garrett c/o the LASFS. All locs and other contributions should be sent to Marty Cantor c/o the LASFS.

EDITORIAL

by marty cantor

Whew. Changes. And, although it is not too likely that the world is going to collapse, it is probable that this issue of SHAGGY is going to be put out on time only if it comes out on some day like October 45 (for example). I am going to put my prepared editorial by the board and am going to wing it with some sort of explanation for this sad state of affairs. (And change the balls, too - enough playing with this selectric).

Which tells you some of the problems - I, Marty, am typo'ing this issue. There is just no time to coordinate things with Neeters to get her to type it.

The problems are, basically, twofold. Firstly, I came down with a painful case of shingles. This almost eliminated all fanac for me for a few weeks (although I still managed to go to the LASFS -- after all, I had just pulled a coup and taken over APA-L, giving me absolutely must work on meeting nights - at least until I had solidified my position in that APA). Fortunately, this period of illness did not occur over a LASFAPA weekend as that huge monthly APA requires quite a bit of attention on that one weekend a month. Also, HOLIER THAN THOU #8 had already been produced, so there was no problems there.

Secondly, there was a worse problem. Mike Gunderloy, co-editor of SHAGGY had been making fafiation noises for awhile. And it seems that he finally did fafiate. And I was unable to contact him for awhile (and then I got sick) - and then it was almost the middle of October. And then panic, of a sort.

Quick consultations - and I managed to get George Jumper to appoint a new co-editor for SHAGGY (a nice, knowledgeable, neo (of my choice) - Mike Glycer. Mike's responsibilities for this issue are to write an editorial (which is not yet ready, so it will not appear after this editorial but will be somewhere else in the issue), edit the letter-col, and to do the printing. After we get this issue out Mike and I will sit down and redefine our mutual responsibilities-- we will become co-editors in fact (and not just in name). I am more or less the head honcho for this issue due to circumstances - future issues will have Mike co-equal with me.

My original editorial was going to include an apology for the rushed nature of SHAGGY 76 - and a promise that this would not be the case in either 77 or future issues. So that goes. I was also going to mutter about how HTT #8 was going to be ready a month early but was going to be mailed late because I needed the postage money to replace my old refrigerator which had died (said old refrigerator now being my fanzine file). All in all, it probably would have been a dreadful thing (the only thing going for it would be the fact that it had been pre-draughted - not off the top of my head as is this thing) -- you are all probably better off with this page than with the other thing, anyway.

---Marty Cantor



SCRIMSHAW

by
ted johnstone

((This unpublished article by the late Ted Johnstone was written September 11, 1969. It is of as much interest today as when it was written. Ted was a popular LASFS member for many, many years. His untimely death a few years ago left a void in the LASFS - a void that can never be filled. Yes, Ted is remembered - even by those who never got the opportunity to know him for very long.))

Since Dwain Kaiser, intrepid editor of *EMPTY SKY*, tells me this will be the fourth consecutive offering of seemingly pointless natter I've contributed to his genzines, it occurred to me that anything with this many examples should have a generic term. I'm not about to keep you in suspense with a drawn-out narrative of indecision, especially inasmuch as my choice of a title should not have escaped your perceptive glance splattered across the top of this page in faultless replication. Nor do I have any involved tales of Hidden Significances or deep introspective probings in search of a title -- I have more names for columns kicking around than I've ever had columns. "Scrimshaw" was a word I liked before I even found out what it meant, and it seems particularly appropriate as a title for something which is usually doodled without any prearranged ideas.

It was used as a title for my co-editorial subsection of Rich Brown's great genzine, *EXCALIBUR*, which regrettably never quite published its first issue, and has hung about unused since that zine folded without ever actually opening. Most of my column-titles I thought up years ago, and in several cases they were used in now-defunct genzines. One particular title, though not really my favourite, has appeared in a number of zines across several years, often by invitation (which is good for the ego). None of the zines would be familiar to half the readership, nor the editors' names. But all of them were doing fine for a few issues before I started contributing "Slow Train Through Gondor," and they all folded within three issues of my first installment.

Now admittedly the mortality rate amongst fanzines -- especially amongst the kind of zines I like (and which are willing to publish me) is and always been high. Not for me the perpetual pages of *VANDRO*,

of S-F REVIEW, of FANTASY TIMES -- the zine in which I find inspiration bloom and fade like Khayyam's rose. They come like water, and like dust they tend to go. The bright, brash fanzines I impathise with are characterised by the ephemeral enthusiasm of an editor who is likely to develop beyond fandom and make his mark somewhere else.

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Other essays have been written on the theme of grafia -- growing away from it all --, most of them as the author's Farewell to Fandom. The archetype is probably AH, SWEET IDIOCY. Some fen get so good at it they keep coming back for encores years later. These and similar articles have excoriated crifanac as "do-it-yourself group therapy" at least since Fifth Fandom, and surely there is a great deal of thruth to this. Fandom often resembles a sort of Neurotics Anonymous, and the old allegation has some basis in fact that most of the people connected with it as a full-time preoccupation have something wrong with them. Still I think we do fairly well: we have fewer suicides and violent relapses than most forms of therapy and most of the inmates manage to work out or sublimate their problems on an intellectual level.

Some people eventually develop and stay around because they like it; some actually do outgrow everything connected with Fandom. More find something else to fulfill the same purpose and think that a change is an improvement, and as many more who cannot keep up the intellectual pace use it as an excuse for dropping out. Almost uniformly the authors of such Farewells belong to the majority classes as described. I can think of one exception, and he knows who he is.

Some people mature and stay around -- they're what keep this impossible anarchy of Fandom flywheeled. Sometimes the balance becomes a little eccentric and sometimes everything gets so loaded towards the center it starts to slow down, though I think the system is inherently self-balancing. Currently the size of the wheel is increasing, but as it does the most eccentric masses tend to fly off the edge into their own orbits.

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But I don't mean to sermonise on Fandom: like most human affairs, it works best when it's not taken seriously, and objectivity takes all the fun out of it. The fact remains that even for the evanescent genzines my letters, parodies, columns and articles have graced, there has seemed some particularly mortifying quality about "Slow Train Through Gondor." And more or less in the spirit of Scientific Investigation I recently gave it another test.

The most recent revival of SHANGRI L.A., the Tammuz of Larean Fan-pubbing, looked likely to last, with an expanded and enthusiastic LASFS membership and treasury and all the talent developed by APA-L. There were a group of qualified publishers and hard workers, a stable of eager contributors, and pots of money behind it. It looked like a good bet to win a Hugo and run for years. But APA-L seems to have replaced SHAGGY as a de facto official organ of the club, and the de jure O-O, after three installments of "Slow Train," has fallen into disrepair, dissolution and disgrace. Of course it could be a coincidence. Astrology can be explained by coincidence. Almost anything can.

Now APA-L is fairly representative of the spirit and mood of the LASFS as a whole, voiced by the more articulate and active members. It is practically an anarchic official organ, with everyone who cares to contribute doing whatever he feels like up to and including the actual publishing, a few volunteers needed only for the final bits of collation, and then presto! a fairly accurate clubzine without any trace

of unifying editorial personality. The whole concept is very New Left, and rather McLuhanistic montage of the LASFS scene -- all in all a mixed-media evolution of what an O-O used to do.

SHAGGY looked pretty sturdy with a group of dynamic go-getters behind it and the combined might of the club to keep it going. But a beast without a head is harder to kill than a monster with nine, and an anarchy can never be overthrown. Individual enthusiasms can come and go without affecting the functioning unit. I wonder what would happen if I re-titled my APA-L zine "Slow Train Through Gondor"...

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Fannish organisations have always been essentially anarchic in nature; therein lies much of the appeal of Fialwol. Therein also lies most of the difficulties when some generally accepted goal must be reached in regard to Mundania. But there has never been an anarchic fanzine published on anything approaching a regular dependability before. As anarchy must, it requires the same sort of non-contractual trust that has characterised the most successful co-operations, but here there is no real common investment and only a slight profit.

Other social or hobby organisations a fraction the size of Fandom have nearly professional staffing, formal inter-relations and defined memberships and activities. I have been officially informed by a couple of S.M.O.F. that the Worldcon is the tenth largest non-professional convention meeting annually in the world, and by far the largest with no central governing body running the conventions continually on a fully businesslike basis. And much of our increasing conflict with Con Hotels in the recent years seems to have been caused by a lack of comprehension on the part of the Staff regarding this apparent socio-/logical impossibility and an instinctive fear of something obviously unified but without a leader to deal with or any formal structure.

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So it might not be possible to have a totally anarchic convention, where no one is in charge, no programme is guaranteed, only everyone agreeing amongst themselves to be at a certain place for a certain length of time over a certain period. Such fannish gatherings have been held -- the MidWesCon is one. But it is also small: APA-L is also small, with a circulation of fifty copies. Is size the limiting factor on a functional anarchy? Probably.

SHAGGY could maintain a circulation of three hundred to five hundred and nearly pay for itself on subscriptions because it was organised. If APA-L started demanding a hundred and fifty copies its regular contributors would desert it as too much work; if they didn't, someone would have to be put in charge of keeping track of subscriptions, covering cost of postage and envelopes and the Table of Contents and anything else an audience demands.

St. Louis functioned fairly well with 1500 attendees (give or take a thousand) because it was organised like the very devil, and they still had some rough spots. If five hundred people all decided to go someplace together for a weekend, total chaos would ensue.

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But APA-L continues to function at fifty copies, and though there is a great percentage of dross there are nuggets and veins of value. And a hundred people could congregate in forty or fifty rooms and two or three bars without arousing more than passing interest. Out of a hundred people, anyone should be able to find someone to talk with and drink with, which is most of what a convention is for. Anybody who feels like addressing a group will address a group, and if the group wants to

argue they make it into a panel. It runs until it concludes or is interrupted -- it may go out to a nearby restaurant. If something else starts the audience has its choice. It would be as chaotic as APA-L, but it might work. I think communication would be the key. It wouldn't be quite advisable to call it a "CommuniCon;" too many people would try to put the accent on the first syllable and relexively cause trouble. Maybe we should call it a Symposium. Probably it will have a slightly slangy and moderately degrading popular name -- or maybe it won't have a name at all. It'll just happen.

--Ted Johnstone





THE SHAGGY PEOPLE 2 by len moffatt

Where are the fans of yesteryear-
The fans who gathered around
The mimeograph?
The fannish laugh?
Where can it be found?

That was the first verse of a filksong I wrote back in the fifties, a parody of "Where Are The Snows of Yesteryear?," but not really a lament as I ended the thing on an optimistic note. The fans were still with us, still publishing fanzines, and though many of the names were new they were still supplying the enthusiasm and talent required for constant cri-fanac. By the way, the whirl of the mimeo and the fannish laugh can still be heard in Freehafer Hall. The names are newer still but good, bad or incoherent, the fannish beat goes on...

Meanwhile, back in the forties, the fifties and the sixties your Guide through Shaggys Past presents a few more of the actifans who peopled the pages of SHANGAI L'AFFAIRES and SHANGRI-LA.

Bill Rotsler needs no introduction to current LA fandom. His cartoons, illos and writings have been appearing in fanzines here and all over the fannish world since the forties. His fame as a naked lady photographer is preceded by his early fame in fandom as the artist who drew illos of naked ladies with brobdignagian bosoms. Had I been familiar with Cockney dialect then I might have dubbed him Bristol City Bill. Bill is typical of those good fans who turned Pro but still remained fans. His adventures in fandom and in the mundane world -- if, indeed, the things that Bill does outside of fandom can be called "mundane?" -- would make a great book, and I hope he writes it someday soon. Illustrated, of course.

With the possible exception of Harry Warner, Jr., Rick Sneary (ex-director, ex-treasurer of LASFS) is probably fandom's most famous letterhack, especially during the days when he was writing regular locs to the prozines and fanzines. He also wrote articles and verse but his first claim to fame was the caustic wit he showed in his locs. His errors in spelling were not on purpose. Some people thought they were because some of his spelling is certainly more logical than the dictionary's version. He preferred editors to correct his errors (and still does) but Snearyese became such a fannish tradition that few editors dared to do so. Rick has suffered poor health all of his life

and what formal schooling he got as a child was mostly at home. But like all fans he reads a lot and doesn't limit his reading to the s-f field. The Hermit of South Gate knows more about this old world than many people who are out in it all of the time.

During the post-Burbee period, when SHAGGY was barely surviving under the rotating editorship scheme, my ex-wife, Anna, and I put together an issue. One of our lady members, Louise Léipiar, had turned pro author, as had a few other members during the s-f "boom" of the fifties. Louise handed me a manuscript, a fantasy tale as I recall, which I was reluctant to use. Not that it was a bad story but I was hesitant to use fiction in a fannish fanzine. We did use it, of course, as getting material to fill up the pages was difficult in those days.

I wanted a letter column but we had just one letter from Rick Sneary. SHAGGY just wasn't being circulated in fandom in general in those days so it was not surprising that the only loc we had was from a member. I thought of using Rick's letter as an article but he may have objected to that. So I came up with the bright idea of hoax letters, which might inspire others to write letters for future issues. Freddie Hershey (wife of Alan, one of LASFS's most popular directors) wrote one. I forget the fake name she used but it was supposed to be from a nurse living somewhere in Wyoming. I wrote one as Joseph Smith of London, England. The name and the locale were clues to the hoax. Mr. Joseph Smith is the protagonist of STARBEGOTTEN by H.G. Wells. No one picked up on this unless it was Forry Ackerman and if he did he never told me. There may have been another fake letter, plus the real one from Rick, but in any case the effort did not seem to revive the lettercol.

Louise had brought her daughter, June, to the club in the late forties, and June almost never came back after her first meeting. Arthur Jean Cox was director and he believed in Keeping Order during the formal meeting. Louise, who loved to talk, was doing so at a time when she didn't have the floor. Jean finally told her to shut up or words to that effect, and Louise, highly insulted, stomped out of the room, taking June with her. June, new to fandom, said that she had that I-wish-I-could-drop-through-the-floor feeling. But thanks to the ghods of fandom, June did come back and by the fifties was married to one of our best book reviewers, Eph Konigsberg. June and Eph co-edited an issue of SHAGGY, one of the better-looking ones as I recall.

Eph was born and raised in the Phillipines and came to LA in the forties. When he was a kid in Manila he couldn't afford to pay full cover price for his s-f mags but he made a deal with a local shop owner. He would pay half the cover price for the privilege of reading the magazines in the store. I've heard of poor young fans who read most of their s-f in the stores - but without paying, and often being kicked out when the proprietor realized what they were doing.

Another outstanding book reviewer of the period was Ed Clinton who, during a meeting, reviewed the first edition of Matheson's I AM LEGEND by ripping out the first 40 or 50 pages of his copy and then announcing: "Now you have a good story!..."

Albert Hernhuter and his sister Emma joined LASFS in the fifties. Emma eventually married Jim Wilson, another of the many ex-directors of LASFS. Albert was treasurer for a while and let Bradbury attend as a deadbeat for 3 different meetings. The dues were 35¢ in those days and that's why Ray still owes the club \$1.05. Albert visited the club recently after an absence of over 25 years, and offered to pay up Ray's dues. We wouldn't let him as the Debt is a good old LASFS t radi-

tion and should go on forever. Albert left the club for 13 years in the Air Force. He now works for the Government in DC and lives in Maryland. During his recent visit he reminded me that he too had edited an issue of SHAGGY, in fact he wrote the whole issue himself, using more than one pseudonym.

When I think of John Van Couvering I always think of Con Pederson and all the other Outlanders. John was the SHAGGY editor who used Walt Daugherty's special-sized paper for his issue. Walt rented the club room and sublet it to LASFS, and kept his own supplied there. John assumed the paper in the room belonged to LASFS, and cursed the unknown person who bought mimeo paper that was somewhat less than 8 1/2" in width. As a result the printed pages had no margins, and I think we stapled it at the top, tablet style. "Oh well," said John, "Who reads the margins?..."

Pederson probably had a hand in SHAGGY, as well as in THE OUTLANDER MAGAZINE. He was an artist and a poet who, like so many fans, had mundane parents who just could not understand or approve his cri-fanac. I remember seeing his name among the credits of the technical/artistic people for 2001: A Space Odyssey.

Ron Ellik, aka The Squirrel, impressed me as a smart-assed kid -- but he did grow out of it. Besides his contributions to SHAGGY and other fanzines, he and Terry Carr published the best fan and gossip mags of its day, FANAC. Ron was easy to work with and though he gave the appearance of a happy-fo-lucky, what-the-hell sort of person he did an outstanding job on anything he attempted. He and Al Lewis put together a bibliography on E.E. Smith, and he and Fred Langley (aka Steve Tolliver) wrote an U.N.C.L.E. novel. (THE CROSS OF GOLD AFFAIR - #14 - by "Fredric Davies," Ace Books, 1968) Ron was killed in a car accident some years ago and we still miss him.

Paul Turner did more for LASFS than merely edit a couple of issues of SHAGGY. He started the Building Fund. The plan was to buy a vacant lot and move an old house on it, and fix it up as a club house. It was also hoped that we could find some single fan to live there as caretaker in exchange for free rent. We had no idea that we could raise as much money as we have over the past several years. But the Money Gouge and other fund raising activities were to come shortly thereafter thanks to an Elephant from Florida.

George W. Fields, Steve Tolliver and Ted Johnstone entered fandom at the same time. Their real names were George Williamson, Fred Langley and David McDaniel. George was a dreamer of great dreams and schemes that somehow never came true. He was an artist and loved to write in what might be termed a flamboyant style. Steve/Fred was quiet and I thought the moody type. He seemed to have a better grip on reality than either of his friends. Ted/David might have impressed me as a smart-assed kid but remembering how other smart-assed kids had turned out I took a closer look, so to speak. (Ray Bradbury had a similar reputation when he was a lad in LASFS.) Ted used to say that he was my protege because I taught him how to slipsheet and crank a mimeo. I was also among those who urged him to Write More. Like Ron Ellik, I still miss him and wonder why so much talent had to be cut off so early. The talent shows in what he did produce in his U.N.C.L.E. novels, his other fiction, his articles and filksongs, etc.

LASFS and SHAGGY owe much to the fans who came west and joined the club -- and took hyper-active part in its meetings, publications and convention organizing. During World War II LASFS was dubbed the Mecca of Fandom as fans in the service passed through on their way overseas

(as I did), and others moved out here for war work. The occupants of the Slan Shack of Battle Creek, Michigan moved to LA during the war and stayed. Ev Evans, who, along with Ackerman and Daugherty, put an incredible amount of time, work and money into the club's activities. Walt Leibscher, always funny, with or without his piano, and a very clever writer. Al Ashley, whose article on homosexuals helped kick off the fussing and fueling that resulted in the formation of the Insurgent Element. Not a plus, but all part of SHAGGY's history.

In later years Redd Boggs, fan writer, poet and editor par excellence, came from Minnesota. Bruce Pelz came from Florida. Jack Harness came from Washington, D.C. Jack, who with Rotsler and Bjo, is one of the few artists I know who have the ability to trace the work of other artists perfectly on stencil, and who can create their own work directly on stencil.

LASFS may no longer be the Mecca of Fandom but it is certainly the place most out-of-town fans look up when they come to LA. Those who have been out of touch for awhile will phone Ackerman or Sneary and get the word from them.

My apologies to those SHAGGY people, living or dead, who didn't get a mention in this two-part article. I have this problem. For some time now I have been writing my fan memoirs, off and on, as the saying goes, and true, more off than on. The early parts appeared in CAPA and FAPA. Thus far I have covered 1939 through 1946...

I hope to write a lot more about all of the SHAGGY People, all of the fans I have known from 1946 (when I moved west and joined LASFS) until whenever. Perhaps someday we'll publish the thing as a one-shot "book." The title is PARTIAL RECALL but I do go into detail on what I do recall, and that makes for many, many words. More words than can go into any single issue of a fanzine, or even serialized in two issues.

Now let's hear from the SHAGGY who are currently caught up in the old club's crifanac. And if they do a good job - let's hear it for them!

— Len Moffatt

REJECTED POET

by Bob Null

Here I sit all weak and bleary

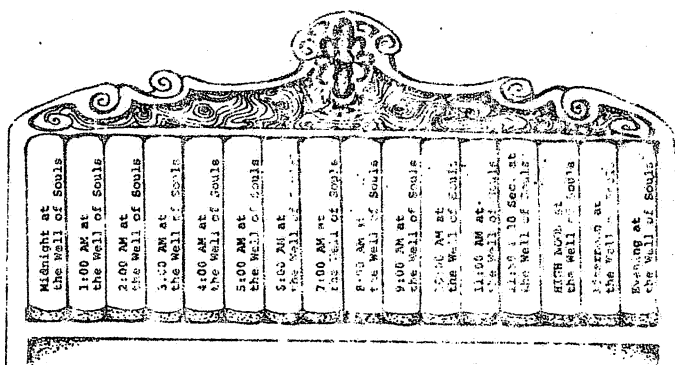
Just a little more than beery.

I think I'll take another hip

For quoth the short rejection slip

"Your made up work of 'alkatorange"

Is not a valid rhyme for orange."



RUMBLINGS FROM OFF THE BOOK- SHELVES

by paula lieberman

I've noticed that a lot of the newer writers seem to be concentrating on novels that form parts of series: Jo Clayton, Octavia Butler, Elizabeth Lynn, and Lynn Abbey, to name four whose books are on the shelf above this typewriter. A long time ago I suppose newer authors would write lots of shorter works in differing settings. Up until the Amber books appeared I can't recall Zelazny, to give an example, to have ever used the same background or characters twice. (NINE PRINCES IN AMBER was published in 1970. "EVE OF RUMOKO" and its related novellas, and a prequel to ISLE OF THE DEAD and a related novel appeared later.) Now, though, it seems that everybody's jumped aboard the series bandwagon.

Admittedly, some writers have always written novels in series: Jane Gaskell, Ian Wallace, and the author of GALACTIC SIBYL SUE BLUE and THE WATERS OF CENTAURUS (alright, I can't remember her name). And in a separate category there's Avram Davidson: he's written more intended first books of trilogies without sequels than I can think of: PEREGRINE PRIMUS, THE ISLAND UNDER THE EARTH, THE PHOENIX AND THE MIRROR.

It's gotten downright pernicious now: I mean, I really do like the Darkover series, and Anne McCaffrey's Dragon books, but sometimes I like to read a novel without having to have read the previous four, or five, or six, seven, eight..... When I was a junior-high reader-type systematically scrounging through the Leominster Public Library in search of sf I'd not already read, the most annoying fate of all was to read a book and discover that it had prequels that weren't available. The feeling is almost as frustrating as going to a movie and having the second reel missing.

Series writing panders to the desire for continuity: a return to known background and/or characters, and an answer to readers' insatiable clamorings. On the other hand, one might argue that series writing is a form of begging the questions -- taking the easy way out by reusing characters and background.

Authors using a series face several problems which grow with the series -- how to avoid too much repetition for familiar readers, while providing enough background for a book to stand alone (I wouldn't want to count the number of "Holy Klono's Claws!" in the Lensman saga), how to ensure continuing interest in places and characters, and last but not least, keeping everything (or trying to...) consistent. Taken to extremes, one arrives in the midst of Moorcock's Eternal Champion books, where the hero meets himself in several incarnations, and you take your pick of whether you want to read about it in an Elric book, or a Rune staff book, or a Corum book, or even all three, with more than just a touch of *déjà vu*.

But so much for the bad points of series. For the good points, a series allows greater depth and span than even a novel. Series give a culture greater perspective than just one set of characters in one time. Octavia Butler's *MIND OF MY MIND*, *PATTERN MASTER*, *SURVIVOR*, and *WILD SEED* all examine different though descended cultures and people. (*SURVIVOR* takes place in the Patternist universe but not in the Patternist culture.) Series answer the question, "Whatever happened to..." and allow finer structure and greater detail which might drown an incautious novelist intent on explaining everything in one book.

Within a series, too, the author must write more than just an adventure story. The background has to extend a greater distance than just one book can or should portray. Novels of a series should show some relation to one another: continuity through culture, characters, location, ante- or pre-cedents. In the worst cases, though, instead of using the series format to show depth of characters and cultures or breadth and span of intercultural relationships, writers rewrite the same plot and character interactions, merely changing the scenery and names of characters a bit. Edgar Rice Burroughs, as a notable example, seemed to be forever writing the same book, with only the color of the Martians changing.

From the reader's point of view, a series is both a source of enjoyment and a source of annoyance. Waiting for the next installment of something like the Amber series is frustrating. Some novels can stand alone within their series. Unfortunately, others cannot. Hal Clement's *STARLIGHT* stood well on its own, but suffered by comparison to *MISSION OF GRAVITY*. Not having read *MISSION OF GRAVITY* before *STARLIGHT*, I wasn't affected in that instance. But the comparison may have cost Hal Clement a Hugo.

Probably series do cost authors Hugos. It's a rare sequel that exceeds the expectations of the earlier book or books in the series. Too often a series novel misses the balance an author must strike for both the readers familiar and not familiar with the series. The novels of a series can all be of high quality as a group, but without one outstanding enough on its own to win an award from amongst the rest. Or worse, the author has out two books which compete with one another for votes and nominations.

A successful series grants lots of egoboo: the writer hears the clamor for more books and receives royalty checks and other financial encouragement to continue. The readers get a pool of books of similar background and style. Eventually some of the series have even generated subfandoms: Erbdom, Darkover fandom, Deryni, and of course, Star Trek, though the latter was based on the TV shows rather than books.

The biggest apparent difference between the newer writers doing series (including the four authors mentioned at the start of this) and writers (such as Heinlein, Anderson, Norton, etc.) in the field many

more years who've done series is the deliberateness of the newer writers. Heinlein's and Anderson's future histories happened to be noticed by readers as growing into the shape of series, whereas the works of the newer writers are consciously created as series. Norton's seventy plus books include contradictory events, alternate histories, and even crosstime quests. Certainly her books do not form one coherent, deliberately plotted and consistent work.

I suspect that there are two compelling reasons for the popularity of series. The first is economic: series sell well, especially if any one of the books is particularly good. The guaranteed paycheck is a very good inducement and motivator. The second reason is one that should appeal more towards the readers. Sf characterization and description has changed a lot -- and much for the better, in my estimation -- in the past couple decades. The stereotypes of scientist (male) with beautiful (and incapable) daughter, all-American crewcut blond hero, and melodramatic villain, have mercifully subsided, along with the all male and/or all boys list of characters-type stories. The range of characters has grown, and so have their traits. Sf has opened to descriptions of alternate lifestyles, sexuality, existing social problems, and become much more flexible in its worldview. Characters are used as characters rather than exclusive foils for technology. And the greater emphasis on characters and their growth means that more time and wordage is needed to fully describe the characters and their growth. The second reason, then, for the trend towards series is that the extra length gives the author much more time and space to use on the characters.

Perhaps the series bit is being overdone. Some writers seem to tend too much towards solipsism and self-indulgence with all the available wordage of a multi-novel series. On the positive side, though, the increased attention to characterization is a long-delayed, much needed, and very encouraging literary leap. The current long-windedness of the newer writers is thus a symptom of the learning process, and a result of economic conditions. Eventually series will become less predominant, as the newer writers learn to write their plots more tightly and describe their characters more concisely. Meanwhile, be careful that you don't wind up with the second and third books only of a trilogy, with the first having gone out of print before you decided you wanted to read it.

-- Paula Lieberman



the murder of marty massoglia

A TEAM OF THREE IN JENKINTON

Marty Massoglia was a fan of middle height and middle weight. He had black hair. At many LASFS meetings he brought books to sell - mostly science fiction, but books of all kinds, varied in their range and wondrous in their desirability.

I use the past tense advisedly. I found him dead between the buildings of the clubhouse before last week's meeting.

I'd arrived early for once - about six-thirty. I parked the car in a legitimate space, tried the front door and found it locked, and wandered around to the back to find Massoglia's crumpled body.

In one of the Matt Helm books, the hero explains the logic for picking up a smoking gun that lies near the corpse you've just discovered. There's obviously a murderer still around somewhere, and you need something with which to defend yourself.

The logic didn't apply here. Marty had been strangled.

Rather than leave the body unattended - and thereby presumably let the murderer return and tamper with the evidence - I resolved to wait until someone else arrived.

It was a long half hour, and I sometimes shivered with a chill that had nothing to do with the temperature.

The back door of the front building swung open, and George Jumper poked out his massive head.

"God damn," I said, "am I glad to see you."

"What's all this?"

I told him about my discovery of the body and the decision to wait.

"Great," he said, disappointment in his tone. "Just great. The turkey was supposed to provide tonight's program, and he has to get himself bumped."

By now more people had arrived. I don't know if any of them could swear which one of us produced the idea that Marty could be a program item after all - that the LASFS could solve his murder as a group.

I declined to join the ad hoc Clues Committee, and hung around inside the front building as it grew darker outside.

Finally, the meeting started. Minutes dragged by. Then old business, and new. Announcements. Reviews. The program proper commenced.

George explained the situation. We would call the police after the meeting, solution or none. Frank Gasperik had been funded and despatched to buy Milt Stevens (who works for the LAPD) endless drinks across the street, thereby saving Milt from a crisis of conscience. Stan Burns had taken many photographs of Marty's corpse before the rest of the Clues Committee touched it. Stan gave the details.

"Here's what we know. Marty wasn't killed very long ago. Rigor mortis is just setting in now. He presumably knew and trusted his killer - strangulation seems to have been from in front, judging by the position of the thumb marks. He had this clutched in his hand." Stan opened his own hand, and those in the front two rows could see a tie bar, constructed of a rectangle of silver and a clasp. "We assume it belongs to his murderer."

George resumed control. "What assumption can we draw from this tie clip?"

"The murderer wore a tie!" chorused the meeting.

"Who wears a tie?" The general level of dress at the LASFS ranges from casual to scruffy. There aren't many people who wear suit and tie to the meetings.

"Milt Stevens!" someone in the audience shouted.

"They were on the same Westercon committee. That's motive enough." George said.

Sandy Cohen wrote Milt's name on the chalkboard.

"Jack Martin!"

Jack stood up and began to shake his head vigorously. "I assure you, with complete sincerity, that I am not guilty of this heinous offense." It was entirely typical of Jack that he knew how to pronounce "heinous".

"We can't disqualify you on your word alone," George pointed out. "Write him down, Sandy."

Sandy complied.

Marty Cantor, someone suggested diffidently.

"Naaaah," said the audience. "No chance."

The issue of Marty Cantor died a-borning.

Peter Edick pointed out that he himself wore ties, but that he never wore tie clips and felt he should be excluded from consideration.

I wondered if everyone was dense or if I was brilliant. I gained the floor.

"There is one name that has not yet been mentioned. A man who wears suit and tie to the meeting. A man who is connected on the Langdon chart to Massoglia, and who might therefore have reason to kill him. A man who seems to have had Marty's confidence, and a man Marty would have come to the clubhouse early to meet."

Everyone in the room addressed a comment to his immediate neighbor. I waited till the clamor died down. "I put it to you, members of the LASFS, that the author of this crime is well-known to you. I suggest that Ken Butler did it!"

Clamor. Confusion. Standard LASFS practice.

I breathed a sigh of relief. The police were almost guaranteed to follow the track of these already-convinced witnesses. I knew Ken wouldn't be punished for the murder.

If he couldn't prove an alibi, and it did come to trial, I could always confess. Marty had sold me too many books I didn't need and couldn't afford, and made too many puns I didn't want to hear. A man like that doesn't deserve to live.

editorial
material
by
mike glyer

I WAS A RENAISSANCE MAN
ONCE, BUT OF COURSE THAT
WAS DURING THE RENAISSANCE.

I TAUGHT MICHALANGELO
HECTOGRAPHY SO HE
COULD DO THE SISTINE
APA.



Mike Gunderloy's burden of crifanac finally became too much to bear - even for that dervish apahack. Among the titles he jettisoned was "co-editor of SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES," forcing Marty Cantor to comb fandom for a replacement. After auditioning hundreds of eager applicants, Cantor settled on me because -- well, at least the initials on the towels won't have to be changed.

Cantor is eager to see that this issue gets out reasonably near its deadline, and I share his interest, wanting to be sure that people realize the previous issue was real, not a phantom night noise, the sound of earth settling over an old grave.

What Marty doesn't realize is that I wrote my introductory editorial as the editor of this fanzine in 1976. What I didn't realize is that I threw away the manuscript in 1979. On the strength of whim and a hearty handshake from Dan Goodman, I decided to revive the zine in 1972. Real Soon Now didn't arrive until the fall of 1976. The demise of an LA worldcon bid stimulated many feelings, including (in some hearts) a resolve to rid LA of its isolationist image. With a resurgent interest in genzines, I offered to revive SHAGGY on my own terms, published in the format that SCIENTIFRICTION used later on. Most Lasfsians were underwhelmed by the suggestion, and as long as I had offered to underwrite the zine, and do all the work, I figured I would be better off with full editorial responsibility and a zine of my own.

Ah, but I have lived to see the day when the Lasfs' genzine is back in the mails -- and somehow the dynamic duo of Cantor and Gunderloy not only put the project over, they got the club to fund it. I'll never know how they did it. But then I'll never know how the Vikings discovered America, either. All I know is somebody just handed me an oar and said it's my turn to help get this thing moving.

+++++

This issue's letter column demonstrates that the topic of true and mock weaponry worn around conventions is a live one. I will return to it in a future editorial, after seeing where the discussion leads. In the meantime let me offer this report on an exchange in the headquarters hallway at Noreascon 2.

Several fans with plastic zap guns passed by where I was sitting with Paula Lieberman. Her disparaging comment, made in Paula's normal speaking voice, arrested their attention. A discussion group formed, with a young female Nesfan (name unseen) protesting criticism of innocuous plastic pistols. Why was Paula against people simply enjoying themselves? Paula said, "Because I've seen too many of the real thing." Paula serves in the Air Force. This seemed to trigger a memory in the younger fan, who squinted at Paula's namebadge and said, "Oh! You're Paula Lieberman! I've heard my mother talk about you..."

This discussion drew in passerby. Chris Tucker, a defender of zap guns, was ripped into by a white feminist. Tucker, she said, was a white middle class male, not one of the oppressed groups at whom weapons are usually aimed. She also said several hundred other choice words I wasn't quick enough to write down. Mostly because I was distracted by a third group talking over the same topic, led by Steven Fox, the black fanartist from Philadelphia, who had no patience at all with Paula's point of view and saw no harm at all in such toys...

---Mike Glycer

THE LETTER COLUMN

edited by Mike Glycer

Harry Warner Perhaps in all the jubilation over SHAGGY'S rebirth, 423 Summit Ave. one matter will be overlooked. It strikes me as encouraging that the vastly changed LASFS still has Hagerstown, MD enough fanzine interest to have backed the resumption 21740 of publication for a large-scale clubzine. I know my wishing son't cause the rebirth of the years when half of the active LASFS members were publishing fanzines, because fanzine fandom has receded to a minority status in fandom as a whole. But maybe it isn't foolish to hop that at least two or three other LASFS members of the 1980's will be inspired to publish generally circulated fanzines of their own, after they see the good reviews that SHAGGY will undoubtedly receive and the locs that should flood into it. I know how much pleasure LASFAPA and APA-L have given club members, but remember how much pleasure fans elsewhere in the nation and the world have never felt because almost all the fanzine publishing in Los Angeles for many years has been concentrated on those groups with little distribution outside Southern California.

I can think of lots of other parallels between Jews and fans, in addition to those Matthew Tepper mentions. Both groups subdivide into the traditionalists who attend synagogues regularly and have traditional rites at home on holy days and attend all the program items at world-cons and read every issue of Analog and MSFS faithfully. Beanies are a common factor. And there are a lot of similarities between the anti-Semitic propaganda in Germany during the Hitler regime and the things that certain feminists have been saying out fans in the 1970's.

Buck Coulson There seems to be a general influx of people who P.O. Box 188 wear masquerade costumes all the time at a convention (and at home as well, for all I know). Probably an identity problem: they don't feel their own personality is interesting enough to attract anyone's attention. They're probably right, for that matter; their error lies in thinking that dressing up in a costume will change them. Hartford City, IN 47348

Most of them are only a minor annoyance; the clutter up the place. The weapons freaks are more of a nuisance. The toy guns don't particularly annoy me, since their wearers aren't in such numbers in the midwest, and tend to just show them off, rather than indulge in such chase scenes as Mike mentions. The swords are more of a nuisance, since even a toy sword takes up a lot of room when someone is waving it around in a hallway. And a lot of the swords and knives aren't toys. (I've seen one or two handguns in masquerade costumes that didn't appear to be toys, either; so far their owners haven't been the type to wear the costume all the time, but wearing a real handgun in a big city can get the wearer in a lot of trouble, and anyone stupid enough to wear one to a costume ball deserves it.) Sooner or later, if it hasn't happened already, someone is going to get accidentally stabbed or sliced.

I'm also glad Mike pointed out that the people who perform these asinine feats aren't SCA members; a lot of midwestern fans who dislike the trend blame SCA unfairly. They aren't Dorsai, either; the ardent pacifists around here tend to blame the Dorsai for anything they don't like at a con. (Which makes them bigots, of course; fandom abounds with liberal bigotry, which is another unique aspect of our little culture.) What they are, is half-assed kids who never learned any manners beyond "I want...".

Fans are like Jews mainly because a hell of a lot of fans are Jews. And that is my philosophical nugget for the day.

Ed Zdrojewski
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49022

I must comment with some interest on Mike Glycer's apparent paranoia of weapons. I find it rather interesting that he'll tolerate and respect SCA folk bristling with all manner of deadly steel and get the willies over some kid who probably got his nose bloodied every other day in junior high sporting one of Tullio Proni's plastic toys that does nothing more than flash a Christmas tree light at you and make funny noises. I guess I took Mike's article kind of personally. You see, I'm one of those evil, satanic psychos that Mike is so worried about. I am usually armed at conventions, generally with a blade somewhere on my person. It is just under 6 inches long and is legal in most places.

Some of you reading this loc who have met me might be surprised, because you have never seen me wearing one. That's because I tend to be discreet about it. It is usually hidden under a vest or other article of clothing tolerably well. And unlike some idiotic fools, and I admit we have our share in fandom, I do not flash it around, either. In fact, the only use I've ever had for it at a con was recently slicing a grapefruit one Sunday morning in the privacy of my hotel room.

I do not consider the blade to be part of a con "costume." That's because I do not take it only to cons. I usually have it somewhere on my person while at work, which often takes me into a couple of the nastiest ghettos this side of Michigan -- I'm a newspaper reporter (yeah, folks, I live in THE REAL WORLD that some of you are pretty scared of, nyah, nyah). I've never had occasion to use it, or even take it out while on the job, and intend to keep it that way. The blade also doubles as an athame for use with my witch coven as a religious article. (No, we do not sacrifice chickens, dogs, or teenaged cheerleaders to Cthulhu -- there are enough of us witches running around fandom that anyone can easily find out what Wicca is really about, and I've written about it elsewhere.)

I guess what bothered me most was Glycer's phrasing of "Libertarians with Bowie knives, practicing for the imminent Collapse," presumably in SF con hotel lobbies and such. Now I'm a Libertarian, and I happen to believe that Collapse is imminent, within the next few years, at any rate.

I don't know what sort of Libertarians you folks have in LA -- maybe they really practice for the collapse by whipping knives past each others' noses in consuites or such. You hear some pretty strange things about LA these days. But none of the Libertarians of my acquaintance out here in the Corn Belt are quite so stupid, quite frankly. We're doing more useful things, like stockpiling manufactured goods and survival gear, making monthly payments on cabins and such far away from nuclear targets, studying useful arts like organic gardening and first aid, and stuff like that. We're not particularly impressed with the survival value of dressing up in medieval clothes and beating on each other with rattan sticks, either.

Now I have nothing against Mike Glycer personally, of LASFS, and I think a lot of you are pretty wonderful people. But while most of you fry with the 20-megaton warhead that takes out Los Angeles, I intend to be making a comfortable living as an independent businessman somewhere far away and rural. (Of course, none of you really has to fry, but you'll have to take the trouble to be prepared for the inevitable day first.)

PFC Leigh Strother-Vien
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Glycer's column - I Strongly Disagree.

Restrictions o.k. - but the tone of this

column was Ban The Weapons. I have enjoyed seeing the beautiful and often highly creative weapons at cons. What is required is restrictions on melees, sorties, etc. - but not banning!!

Essentially, you are recommending Discouraging (accent on the capital 'D') "media" fen. What bloody right do you have to pass judgment? Hell, I probably would never have found my way into fandom if it weren't for *Star Trek* cons. Though I had read of 'regular' cons, they always seemed to be past tense.

You don't feel comfortable around them? So? I have yet to attend a con that was so small you're not given a choice of several places to be (and the few I've heard of would all be 'regular' fen) while still being at the con.

Greater good? Yikes! I thought fandom allowed one to be an individual? Relax, make your views heard without being condemned?

((Basically I attend SF cons to relax, and escape from much of the friction and mindlessness imposed on me by everyday life. I find my ability to do this is impaired when surrounded by people whose manner of enjoying themselves is to fantasize about violence, wearing toys that parody violence, and worst, wearing real implements of combat.))

Kay Shapero
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As for real weapons of the swords, knives, maces and whatnot variety - I doubt we need to ban them altogether simply because someone *might* be crazy.

Try the Renaissance Pleasure Faire rules - no weapon to be brought into the convention area without first being secured in it's sheath (or whatever) by a chain, thong or the like so that it cannot be drawn without spending a shile untying it. That and adopting the SCA rule that one *never* draws steel (or whatever) except when allowing another person to examine the weapon, in which case it is pre-

sented in such a manner that it cannot be used. To make it simpler, it could be ruled that such examination must take place outside the convention area. Thus, if the hypothetical crazy wants to draw his sword and hit someone with it, but the time he finishes untying it several large security guards can be sitting on him. Arms that cannot be secured could be banned. Why not suggest this to whatever con you're involved with? I believe something similar worked quite well at last Westercon - certainly it has worked well enough at the Ren faire.

Jan Brown
1218 Washtenaw Court
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A few thoughts or suggestions: (1) Plastic ray-guns don't damage anybody. Swords and knives do. (2) Anything that looks like a real gun may be treated like a real gun. (3) Costumed

mediafreaks may turn your stomach, but they're having their kind of good time, and so shouldn't be discriminated against. If you don't want them at your convention, cancel the masquerade, ban media paraphernalia from the huckster room, and publicize your con only through fannish sources. They're like bugs -- if you don't leave food for them lying around, they'll go away.

"The few who spoil things for the many" has always struck me as an easy way out, an injustice, contrary to the spirit of a society in which the majority rules. Hopefully we can come up with a more satisfactory solution, one that can enable those who carry weapons responsibly to continue to carry them, and still restrict the irresponsible minority.

((I agree with your practical ideas. As to your point on majority/minority - The idea of catering to 'responsible' weapon wearers is a red herring, obscuring (at least in my view) the real issue which is the excessive indulgence in the imagery of violence at a celebration.))

Jim Meadows
P.O. Box 1227
Pekin, IL 61554

Your first issue (and I have to say yours, since it's obviously not the zine's first issue) had a little of that tepidness in it, something you'll have to watch out for as the issues loom ahead.

But you helped make up for it in #76, by basing a large portion of the articles on the club and its members. That way, the personality of the club was established to a certain degree. To a non-LASFS member, that's important; SHAGGY is my only view of the club. How that same material reads to members of the club is something I'm not sure of. Do they want to read about themselves all the time in their clubzine? Tipping the hat to vanity and good ol' egoboo, I'm sure they do. But then, do they want to read the same stuff I want to read? Perhaps what I find interesting is old hat to them. But again, what titillates club members may seem like a collection of somewhat forbidding in-jokes to outsiders like me.

Teresa Nielsen Hayden
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Look at it this way. If you outlaw costume-- weapons, the people whose con wouldn't be the same if they didn't come armed to the teeth will call you a fascist, and maybe even stop coming to cons at all. And wouldn't that be awful? It makes my day just to think of it.

WAHF: Bob Lee, Sally Syrjala, Ed Cagle, Seth Goldberg, Teddy Harvia, Dick Lynch, R Laurraine Tutihasi, Barney Neufeld, Keith Williams,

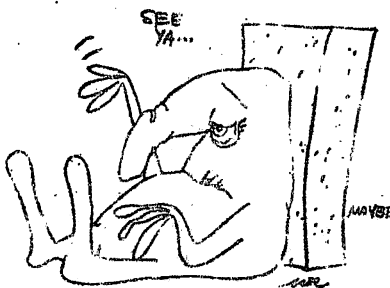
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