

#43 MAY
1967



E. A. WALTON.



Just wanted to write a few words on George Fergus' letter; I saw it before it was published as letters are sometimes sent to me even when I'm not pubbing the issue. Like George, and others, I am sure the club needs improvement. A better official organ than some in the past years (say in 1967) as far as steadiness, etc. goes would be good, and steadier Tightbeams, would help. But I feel bureaus, even when one-man, are sometimes better in NFF than out. I remember when, once, a fan started a Manuscript Bureau outside (as personal project) and gave it up with nobody taking it over. A club is made up to discover willing people. That is why I have tried to get stand-by officers for each Bureau—and we have some; that will help in continuity, also.

"As we have seen, most of the bureaus and NFF-affiliated activities can manage themselves with no help from any of the officers or from the members at large." I doubt this. Whether known or not, most Bureaus have help from officials if official or not—and nudges from them to keep them going if they are delayed. Possibly without the nudging some would fold entirely. The club is a decentralized group because fans work that way best; the heavy organization from the top works in some groups and maybe even in some areas of fanac, but by mail people tend to act because they want to. Still, a President can nudge a slow Bureau officer or anyone else if he does it without insult. Some Presidents are more direct in calling down the fires of heaven (to be too colorful for words in language) whenever there's some delay but not the last few of us, anyway. Few tried it and made it stick. We cooperate or else—help others have fun with fanac, not a headache.

Yes, searching for needs and putting them into effect is job of officers. Directors are ones who usually have final say, but presidents have initiated some activities on their own. The New Fanzine Appreciation Society, I believe, started when Don Franson put it into effect; D'Amassa took it over. But I haven't heard from D'A lately except indirectly in a fanzine letter column where he mentioned, if I remember rightly, that he got a whole bunch of "pledges" and that he hadn't renewed his membership. So, though he hasn't written to me, I must assume the Society needs a new head. In meantime, if you

Send all letters for TIGHTBEAM #44 to:

Jack Haldeman
 4211 58th Avenue
 Bladensburg
 Maryland



were one of those seeking fanzines by your pledge, write to me; it wasn't that I was ignoring you. But if there were so many it scared D'A off, maybe some sort of limit might be arranged with a waiting list ...Ha--something like 65 lines to a page as the clubzine is offset, so if we had 50 new people who wrote in, their names and address would make less than a page probably...and editors would then be able to use as many as they wanted to line up a mailing list.

I started to discuss Fergus' letter. The creation of new bureaux is a possibility that should always be kept before officers, and if we had someone willing to work to make an Art Bureau possible, there are enough members to serve as a nucleus. Artists of the club, arise! Write me and I'll help.

Stan

I can imagine the problems and advantage of using the original letters as copy for Tightbeam, and maybe that would be an idea for TNFF, which is also offset. It occurs to me that maybe there would be some interest in the method I've used in producing TNFF, and the problems or advantages of it.

First, if copy was in promptly at the first of the month it would be possible to either use original reports or retype them. Even though I've retyped material, the result is not going to be too smooth: some material was typed with an older ribbon, and the result is that it is not so black. Because of the time factor I've decided not to retype, for that reason--I did retype at least two other items (President's page and the Secretary-Treasurer's material). Both were redone because newer material arrived, and I would prefer to have basic information out as soon as possible. Janie sent two reports and I've collated the information to include new members and new changes of address.

It is the "rewriter" aspect of editing that affects me the most in TNFF. Some authors train themselves to write down what their subconscious have brooded over, and that's substantially the way it appears in the finished page: Robert Heinlein works like this, I hear. Well, I'm not Heinlein. I do tend to write the first draft word for word as I feel it should be, but if there is something that rings wrong about it, I must rewrite it or feel uneasy. And later, if new info arrives, it's subject to review and rewriting.

The problem is that a certain cut-off date is needed, and there is the chance what is typed is not perfect. A new change of address from personal mail might cause me to type a line and glue it in place--this is the advantage and disadvantage with offset as far as I'm concerned. And while not calling myself a "perfectionist", I tend to want it to look good and be as accurate as possible.

Tomorrow night (as I type this) I start another night-school class in printing. This offset class starts one week after my first "session" ended, and it started January 3, and is 2 nights a week, 3 hours a night. Since starting, I've discovered a nearby offset printer who will publish or rather let me publish whatever I want, and that means cost for TNFF will be very low. And because of this I've not gotten around to trying my hand at the ancient offset press I've had for several years, with materials at hand but unused by me. It mixes ink and water, so I've not had the experience with that system.

I'll get around to working on it any time now. When I've spare time. Ha!

Stan Woolston



4/9/67

MY TRUSTY TYPER IS ON THE BLINK SO I SHALL RESORT
TO MY SKILLFUL LETTERING TO CORRESPOND.
WHEN I FIND MYSELF IN THE AWKWARD

POSITION OF WRITING SUCH: THE END RESULT
IS OF SOME QUALITY, AS TO PROVE MY
USEFULNESS AS A FICTION AUTHOR.

AND SO INSTEAD OF PANIC IN THE W.F. I'LL MAKE MY
TALENT (?) AN ARTIST OF SOME USE BY SUBMITTING JUMP
ILLU'S I HOPE YOU CAN USE THEM.

IN-SO-BENIGNLY YOURS,

Randy Williams



News Note from outer fandom:
Heinleinoid Matt Venable is
planning a fanzine devoted to
Robert A. Heinlein. If you
feel an interest, address all
inquiries to:

*915 W. Hazelhurst
*Ferndale, (a suburb
*of Detroit,) Michigan
* 48220
*27 March 1967 Monday
*7:30 P.M.



Well school has been out for Easter, and I've been quite busy
with life and its many facets. I just discovered that Tchaikowsky
is the greatest composer the world has ever produced. I find nothing
as yet to compare with his "1812 Overture", "Sleeping Beauty", "Swan
Lake", "Nutcracker Suite", his "5th Symphony" and of course his
sixth, but I don't own that one yet.
Perhaps I shall employ my remaining years to the task of composing
the music to "The Green Hills of Earth"...

Now, as for my reference to a precesed column on Heinlein's Ideologies.
To me, it is quite interesting and worthy of discussion to note
the many experiments of Mr. Heinlein into different modes of thought,
unpractical cultural structures, mores, religion, and many other
visionary theories. Has a lot of scope, appeal, and controversy.



Also Matt seems to have somehow
found a way to forward letters,
and intends to send a birthday
card on July 7th. Others who
wish to celebrate Heinlein's
Birthday may send cards c/o the
above address. The usual fanly
warning: All Ticking Packages
Will Be Returned To Sender.

I'm extremely happy that Kusske put out the March issue on time, without waiting for late letters to float in. I understand that the Jan. issue was late, as usual, (although just how late I couldn't say, since my copy never arrived at all) but all that's needed is one editor to get his issue out on schedule in order to get us back into the groove. Unless of course Alma takes four months to get this issue out. Funny, Kusske, TB #2 looked just like one of your minaczines for N'APA....

If you refer to the N3F as a club of vocal, organization-minded stf readers, which it is, then it can provide quite a few services that general fandom can't, because it isn't particularly aimed at fandom. If, however, you take the N3F as a fan organization that covers at least superficially the whole of fandom, which it isn't and wishes it were, then the number of projects are less--but they are still there. As I was reading George Fergus' letter, I was thinking of something on the order of a comprehensive coverage of fandom, and Creath Thorne came up with a similar idea. The N3F should have the contacts that YANDRO has (hell, it should have half the contacts Yan has...), it should have indexed information on all of fandom, it should publish the most comprehensive newzine, and it should give eager neos an adequate, if not complete, introduction to fandom as a whole. These are the functions of the N3F, and if it doesn't do these then it's only reason for existence is to provide an outlet for the tendencies to organize of some of the fringe-fans who are members.

Why is it that if you want news of fandom, you go to RATATOSK or DEGLER? or some other newzine? Why is it that if you want to know about other fandoms/branches of fandom you go to YANDRO or the "Other Fandoms" articles in genuine? Why is it that for knowledge of fans in other countries you check, say, NIEKAS' series of articles on them (especially since the N3F is supposed to have contact at least with the BSFA)? Why is it that the fannish "Who's Who"'s are done totally outside of the N3F? Why is it that things like PANCYCLOPEDIA II (or I), The Immortal Storm, A SENSE OF FAPA, etc. were done outside the organization and are not available for any reasonable price today? Why is it that knowledge of the N3F and membership has little or no relation to knowing a damn thing about fandom?

I'll leave most of those questions unanswered, as the answers are quite obvious, but I will take up a couple. The N3F should definitely institute a comprehensive fannish newzine, to include everything the editors can find that is newsworthy to the N3F or fans in general, whether cribbed from other newzines or not, and it should be available to general fandom. What else is the N3F but a giant information center? The N3F treasury should be put to good use by officially subsidizing to every fanzine that cannot be obtained by more devious means, and the object should be to set up a fairly complete fannish library. Why is it that Bruce Pelz, a Neffer and OE of N'APA, has the private Fanzine Foundation with thousands of fmz, indexed and available for perusal or making photocopies, while the N3F has at most a good collection of its own publications?



FLUTCHER 67

Since Neffers are notorious for their ignorance of fannish fandom, there should be an article in TNFF, written by a fannish, dealing with fannish fandom and explaining it to the neo. (And not a Leo Carter-type "Here we go, kiddies!" sort of thing!) There might also be a series on subfandoms such as Turroughs fandom, the Baker Street Irregulars, comics fandom, monsterfilm fandom, etc. ad infinitum. They might even be worth handbooks; certainly they should not be allowed to go out of print. Speaking of handbooks, why doesn't Bruce Pelz, as the most qualified person, do an updated version of the one on apas, giving history as well as current apas? And the proposed project of providing a central connection for local fanclubs is an excellent idea, too; where is some action?

going to (good he, a person) - a suitable time long he
has the things mentioned here, as a way of action.
Between 10 and 15 - say 10 - we will have a group of people
- about 10 - a suitable for 12 weeks, probably 2 weeks
for the first - and it's possible. And it would be
a way for a group of people.

///Richard Labonte, continuing///we copied his page 2 for him/// typos ours///

Right now, University exams are two weeks away. But I'd like to get the Bureau into operation around May 1, first by making contacts, then by initiating a couple of stories and starting the reviews. I have a few names, but anyone specially interested, please write.

Janie Lamb's letter in TB 42 was heartening. When I joined the NFFF, a year ago next year or so. I was full of gleeful thoughts of participating in freedom. Then I found out that the secret is to write first. Bureau heads, some wise N3F says told me, are the least likely candidates for correspondence. So participate without being asked. That's what I think N3F is for: self-involvement. The more you participate, the more you'll get out of the whole thing.

If John Kusske's comments had been in a letter to another TB editor, I would have thought it then pretty dull and dumb. But since he himself put out TB 42, I don't take his total negativity too seriously.

///Next suggestion arrived too late for TB 43 but TB 44 might consider it.///

As a suggestion for TB 43, why not print, along with the sender's address, the date the letter was mailed? It would help to keep things topical. And why not spend a bit of money from the Treasury and mail TB 1st class; it took mine 2 weeks to come.

Round Robins, I add, can include anything, not just fiction and reviews, as far as I'm concerned. But suggestions, please.

And a constitutional question: can non-members participate in an N3F Bureau?

If someone with a duplicator volunteers to print a gazette, I'll work on it. It's a great idea.

///Round Robins often go around, we hear,
if they acquire over an ounce of postal
weight from the enclosures. So the one
piece of practical advice we can offer
is: use than thin inexpensive manifold
or onionskin copy paper. You can get
about 1 lb of those to a postal ounce. If
you supply both paper and route sheet,
that little extra attention might get you
a lot more mileage for your communications.

If it will help you any, you might try
giving a fresh start to one of mine --
a Story Robin that flew away and never came back, apparently because the characters
were eliminated by the second author and a lawn roller. Decimate'm as you please, and
hence'm over cliffs, but always leave a little something for the next episode?

"The disk-shaped spacecraft skimmed over the waters of Lake Michigan and came
down unobserved on a grassy sward of the lake-shore park. Dawn was just beginning
to break in the East, and the sounds of the great city were low. An occasional
ground vehicle sped by; but nobody noticed the space vessel cooling off under a
rosebush.

Morning clouds were still pink in the sky when the ship's airlock stopped
clicking to itself, purred the All-Clear, and lowered the landing ramp. To high
bugle notes, a landing squad of insect shapes marched in double file down the ramp,
wheeled and faced the staff officers who followed at a distance. Last appeared
their Captain, wearing the Great Insignia. All presented arms in salute as he
strutted before them.

"Thus far, fellow Buzzenians," he addressed them, "we have the advantage of
surprise. Let us pursue it. Follow me!" and with that he drew and flourished his
Imperium Broadsword, Mace, and Blaster (combined in one weapon more commonly called
The Enforcer).

Striding forward, he at once found his progress impeded by a large green
caterpillar.

"Step aside, peasant," shouted the Captain, "and take us to your leader, whom
we intend to execute."

However, the caterpillar thereupon ate the Captain so promptly that the Captain
was unable to eat his Enforcer ~~before~~ tripped before he was already on his way down
the caterpillar's gullet; and you know what happens if you blast inside an enclosure.
BAMBOOZZLE!!!

The Chief of Staff stepped forward and reverently recovered the Great Insignia
and Enforcer, which being made of imperium/// next chapter & route sheet, Richard///

CARLETON UNIVERSITY



3/31/67

I also thought TB #41 was nice, with the color & all, but I had to borrow it from a friend to read it. The Old Navajo never sent me mine. What do the Old Navajos have against young Americans of Irish descent??

Why was Don Miller dismissed? I'd at least like to know why, and I've seen no indication of that anywhere. While he was doing the TNFFs, they were well reproed and came out regularly. The only reason I can see is Miller's editorializing in the Nov. 1966 TNFF, which I consider slight provocation in light of the good work he was doing. This is the only thing that could come close to a reason for dismissal, and a poor one at that. That is, if it is the reason, and I can see no other logical possibility from where I am.

If Don Francon is going to run for president, he'll certainly get my vote. I think he is a person who initiates action. Not just blundering purposeless action, but something that has been thoughtfully planned.

Best,

///Since Mike Montgomery puts his question very clearly and insists upon a reply, we passed his letter over to Stan, The Man, in case he wanted to take care of this request now. It is hard to imagine Stan Woolston doing anything summary or hasty; you can almost hear his southwestern drawl and innate thoughtfulness and courtesy in the very way he expresses himself. Also it is our understanding that Don Miller was not dismissed but quit the job with advance notice that he would be unable to do it after June and would be very busy off and on in the meanwhile. Apparently this put it up to Stan to use foresight and get TNFF into a format that had not been tried before -- and which does seem to be worth looking at. Here's what Stan says for himself:///

I think a member can only react to what they feel is correct, and if Mike doesn't know why I acted as I did, I'm one who can tell him... Appointing official editors is, of course, a Presidential function too. I did not dismiss Don; I appointed him up to end of 1966, and told him before the December issue again his appointment was up to then. The opportunities of using offset printing, plus the fact Don Miller would be going overseas and interrupting his fanatic, was a strong factor. I believe he has been one of the most active members in the last year (in 1966) and has done much good, but I also think his health was impaired by doing too much. Recently he has said that he felt no officer (director or president) should be editor of TNFF as well as an elected officer, so I guess we agree one job is plenty. Don still manages the Games Bureau, and outside of the club does a JOURNAL for the WSFA--I didn't cause him to fall into sudden limbo, did I?

///Also Don Miller seems to be maintaining his usual aplomb. The note below is from a personal communication, but we suggested using this so that its messages can be passed along, and he will have the leisure he wants to write more expansively for TIGERBARK #44, Jack Haldeman. Go thou & do likewise:///

Dear Alma:

This is just a brief note to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 23 March, and to thank you for the article you enclosed with it. With your article, I almost have enough material for TG #4 -- I only need one more article, and I am putting pressure on a couple of persons for this. I just hope I don't have to write it myself!

I will answer your letter in more detail later (next week, I hope). For now, brief comments: I'll be writing something for the May TB: when is your deadline? I just received the March TB, so it will take me a while to compose my reply.

Yes, please send news of future BPL/Mensa co-sponsored series, as far in advance as possible, for advance announcement in the JOURNAL.



Jerry Page
193 Battery Pl NE
Atlanta Ga 30307

No deadline is given in the latest Tightbeam (at least I couldn't find one) but I think this should reach you in time.

///Times. All Lettersines go to press 30 days before their due date. This letter came in plenty of time; but as this issue, #43, is due in the U.S. mails on or before May 15, anything received later than April 15 is being forwarded to the next lettersine editor, Jack Maldeman, 4211 58th Avenue, Bladensburg, Maryland.

You might put it that there is no fatal deadline for our lettersine, since letters which are late for one issue are early for the next. Okay?///

For a good many years Don Franson has been working on a project of compiling a listing of Pseudonyms of fantasy writers (primarily) which he wanted to publish as a service to the N3F. Because I wanted to call attention of N3F members to my fansine, Lore, I published the Pseudonym Index in Lore 7, which was published right after the Tri-Con. Because of low estimates on the number of N3F members, the mailing of the fansine has been delayed, but by the time this Tightbeam has been published, we expect most members will have received their copies. If not, they will soon.

But the purpose of this letter is not to call attention to Lore 7 so much as to call attention to Lore 8 and a regrettable circumstance of economy that's forcing me to up the cost of the fansine.

When I published Lore 7, I foresaw an increase in price with Lore 8. I knew I was going to start using photo offset in the near future. I had wanted to wait until after the completion of volume 1 so that Lore could be bound with little difficulty. Now, it has become necessary to publish Lore 8 in photo offset. The price, while not so high as I feared, has been raised. Because of printer difficulties, the new cost of 25¢ an issue does not cover the cost of the magazine itself. So, letting N3F members subscribe at the old price of 8 issues for a dollar is no longer possible. I regret this.

The subscription price of Lore, effective with Lore 8, already published, is 25¢ the copy, 4 issues for \$1.00. All N3F members who decide to subscribe to Lore as a result of Lore 8 will have to subscribe at this price.

What the price will be on Lore 9 will depend on my printing costs. If I can maintain the 25¢ price I will do so, but frankly I don't expect to. Most photo offset fansines are selling for 50¢ or more. This is not an attempt to panic Neffers into subscribing now to avoid the higher price later on. (After all, if I can discover a way to do so, I'll keep costs down.) It is merely to explain why Lore costs 4 for a dollar and not 8 for a dollar as is stated in Lore 7. Sorry.

A point brought up in Don Franson's column about Popular Publications holding the copyrights to FFM. The company still publishes about 5 magazines, among them Argosy, Adventure and Railroad. They still hold all FFM copyrights, plus the old Argosy and Munsey magazine copyrights.

The summary dismissal of Don Miller doesn't seem to have resulted in as much uproar as I thought it would—and as it possibly should. I'm rather at a loss, myself, as to how to react. On the one hand, I can't say he was given a fair chance; on the other I can't think what he was doing would be either very useful or successful.

///To save space, we slipped out and returned some suggestions about by-laws, which Jerry may want to write up more fully for some future lettersine. His general conclusions are as follows:///

To put it as simply as possible, the N3F's history demonstrates that the N3F set-up requires a stronger leadership in order to function than we can count on. A Ralph Holland can operate an organization that is dynamic and useful. Others—fine, qualified leaders none the less—cannot. We need to do something so that the people we can get to fill the offices can function effectively—or more effectively. This would seem to suggest a general overhaul of the whole N3F structure, examining who needs authority to do what and how to give it to him. The effective officers (such as Janis Lamb) are having to make too many personal sacrifices just to run our organization for us.

Anyone have any suggestions where to start?

Jerry

Dear Alma:

See they stuck you for T.R.#43. Well I know it will be a good one then.

I note that most of #42 is given over to screams about the job NKF does for fandom. Well I think I can answer some of those screams. They are saying that everything in NKF could run fine by itself. Could it? I think that the reason it goes so good is because it is NKF. If it were just a separate project it would not get as wide a notice as it does with NKF. One of the side lines of NKF is keeping very scattered fan in touch with each other. I would never have gotten to know you or Ann Chamberlain, or Bunia Wyskowski, or Ben Miller, or many others if it had not been for NKF. I had been in fandom some 10 years, before I was inducted into UK & I never had the chance to meet or write any of you. Another thing is the fact that many new fan join NKF just because they are the only ones interested enough in finding out if these fan really want to be more informed about fandom & would like to know more about its many facets. I have taken the time & trouble to write a good many informative letters on fandom. I would not have been contacted at all on these if I were not in NKF. The Laplata group wrote me for all sorts of information because an NKF member had printed my name in his fandom book. I in turn referred them to NKF as being the group they should contact if they really wanted to reach fans as scattered as they had asked for. Sure I could have referred them to each separate group, but then the fan like Ann & Bunia would never have gotten to know about them, nor would they have been able to get in touch with fan from other countries like they did through NKF.

I know too that I was being introduced to local thinking as far as S.F. was concerned. It was a lopsided theory & gave no choice of ideas, nor room for conjecture. NKF widened my thinking and my scope for conjecture & my outlet for ideas. It also widened my circle of friends.

The hospitality room alone serves a purpose that cannot be found any other place in fandom. The Neo-Fan-Fund has no such ideas in mind. What the hospitality room does is give all fan a place to sit & chat, recuperate from tedium, & meet new friends. What the Neo-Fan-Fund will do is help with directions at cons, aid travelers, & aid with funds where needed.

So for all those who doubt the purpose of the NKF is a worthy one, & for those who find it a dull group to be in, I say - Try aiding the NKF for unselfish purposes, try being an extra hand to the ones, try giving new ideas you think others might be interested in & indoctrinating them with long range thinking, try being generous for a change. It really don't hurt & you could find it is fun and friend winning.

As for the idea that the Directorate committee is falling down on the job, did anyone stop to think how long it takes to get sense from letters sent through the mail to so widely a scattered group? We have started one thing that can help & that is the local con NKF meetings. Another thing that could help is the election of a directorate centered in one section of the country, & the only other thing I can see is a longer duration of term in office. The Neo-Fan-Fund has had its own troubles trying to get work from its committee members. They are either too busy to take time to do what is necessary, or they lose the letters of request sent to them, or they fail to show up at a meeting at cons because they have other work on the con at the time. If I could get a group of local fan for a committee the work on this project would go much faster. I could then have meetings here & set the time & date to suit the committee. When a point is misunderstood it takes 2, 3, 4 or more letters to get the point across & another form letter to get a vote on it. And if anyone thinks for one instance that a president hold the power of vote in his hands, he had better think again. I know from experience with both the Phila. group & the Neo-Fund that the Treas holds first place in most of this work, & the secty. hold second place.

Be that as it may, the NKF does have several lines that serve fandom that could not stand alone & it does serve a very worth while purpose other than keeping the active fanlines running. It is the maintain of a lot of otherwise, cut off people, and keeps them informed on all of the many happenings in fandom.

Some things they could do is, issue a journal of what fan clubs are available in all parts of the world, who runs them, where they can be reached, & when they meet. They could also do a very big job in issuing a write up at the end of each year on all the deceased fan from that year. They might also issue a run down on all fanlines in print & where to send for them & prices. I do not mean with comments. We all enjoy different types of sines, so let each choose their own.

Tome suggestion about reference books on fandom is worth while. One way to overcome the non returns would be to take the books and have them done in fanline style on mimeo & then sell the copies at a minimum price. I often take time to copy just the pertinent part of some of the ones I have on hand, so I won't have to lend them out, & I also did the meat part from the Roberts rules of order for our group. I borrowed it from the library. The thing is to keep the standies handy for reusing from time to time as required & always use the same method of print. The Club you have the book & the fan would have what he required for information. I had one that only wanted information on one author. I took this from 10 different books. Imagine the loss if I had lent the books & not gotten them back! As it was it took me 5 hours to copy the information & a 5¢ stamp to post it. Since I did it in 1 typed & 4 carbons I still had the others for further use. I used them later for other fan too.

One thing that I regret is sending reports & news to sines that ask for it & then find they will not print it because they have another they like better. Still they expect it each time & do not even take the time to return the copy. After I spend 3, 4, or 5 hours doing a report, when I could better use the time for other work, I would appreciate at least a return of the copy. Another thing is that, when you take something from a fan & don't return it, you are robbing all of fandom of material they could well use. So 2 reports, nor books, nor fanlines, carry the same information about the same item. When I do a report on a con & someone else also does one, we each include something that the other lets out or forgets. Even one line can be important. Likewise, even one fan won to S.F. through NKF is important because they bring new ideas with them. Therefore NKF is

IMPORTANT. ///One clarification: The Neo-Fan-Fund is not a department of EFFF, but a respected and separate organization. Also a correction: "Hospitality room" is a popular misnomer for the EFFF Room at world of conventions. We are a hospitable club, thagall. abh///

Neo-Finally yours,

Harriett Kolchak

Clayton Haskins
Box 426, Peabody College
Nashville, Tenn. 37203

I hope this arrives in time for this issue, I just got John Kusske's issue and would like to comment on some of his statements.

Various groups and programs run by N3F are inefficient? True, it is always that way when you do everything by mail. Various programs could be done better by other fanish groups? Maybe, but how come they don't?

Lets take this item by item. story contest, this was my own idea some years ago. Well, Galaxy had what they called a story contest then, but it was limited to novels, and what beginner is going to start by writing a novel? Astounding advertised a monthly story contest too, which meant nothing except they would read a submission from someone they had never heard of. But what magazine won't do that? And finally, at that same time there were two fanzines around which were advertising a story contest. Whatever did happen to them, they certainly never happened. Other fanish groups COULD run a story contest, but only N3F DID!

Lets see why. Well, Alma, Ralph Holland, and myself all insisted that it be open to all fans, not just members. And Ralph insisted, and got, someone to run it who would do a good job. Ed Ludwig, specifically. Ed appointed both Ralph and myself as preliminary readers, since we were both interested. And it turned out to be a good contest, and popular.

It almost collapsed the second year when Art Rapp and Al Lewis took over, and would not listen to anyone else. o they set an entry fee of \$1 per entry, and got just nine entries instead of the fifty the first year.

In the third year, I took over. There were some personal inefficiencies added, definitely, but there were two things that worked out very well indeed. One was sending back comments by the readers before the end of the contest so the author could rewrite before sending it to the final judge. The second was asking Fred Pohl if he would be final judge. He did, and has ever since. As for the other one, two stories were sold that year, and at least one sale has been made each year since.

Lets look at other activities, and summarize later. Lending Library. I'd like to ask John a couple of questions. Would you lend books from your library to strangers? do you know any fanish group that would? And even if so, do these groups have many members who will contribute without any cost from their libraries just so a good selection will be on hand. Again, others could, but N3F DID.

Collectors Bureau. Yes, other have done so, maybe the best of them being Lore. But still, N3F also did, and we have a good one too. There is plenty of room for lots of these, ~~in~~ many fans are interested, and there have been groups like this since fandom began. Still, many younger nees might not be aware of other groups, so N3F has one of their own.

///Clayton's letter continues on the back of the page, and came in late to request a one-sided copy, so we typed the other page over for him.///

Information Bureau. Don Franson has been identified with N3F, it has been years. Others talk about doing things, Don does them, and donates them to the N3F. He gets publications any help that may be needed, and a wide distribution. Sometimes he even pays for it, and earns the respect of every member for his interest in the club. Definitely, the Information Bureau is a better project, because Don wanted it to be that way. Could he have done it for some other group? Maybe so and maybe not, but certainly you must say it's been effective in spite of being a N3F project. You see, there are some of us who, think highly of the club, and are willing to work and put lots of time and effort and expense into making this a worthwhile club.

Now John, I'm sure you are asking, what about N'ASA. Well, let's see. How many new apa groups have started in the past half dozen years? And how many of them are still in existence? I think it takes a large organization, and an active one, to do well with an apa. Certainly N'ASA would not have survived two years if it had not been for N3F and some of its active members, Ralph Holland, Guy Terwilliger, Gem Carr, Art Hayes, and others.

It could also have faded away in times when there were troubles, but the directors and some members would not let it fall apart. Not only that, but can you name any other

An apa group has to have two things, a structure where there are always new members available to replace those who drop out, and a strong group of directors to run things and not let everything fall apart if some of the apas start fighting among themselves. N3F has both, plus a goodly number of rank-and-file members who are always willing and sometimes able to help out in case help is needed. If M'Ala needs members, they will send in their fanzines for two or three mailings until the group can get back on their feet. So tell me, if you will, why make such a fuss over the club exerting a bit of control over policy -- not much, just enough so that some bunch of hotheads can't take away these benefits that the club has built up over several years for our members.

Let's admit it, M'Ala has been good for N3F. Is it a benefit to M'Ala members? Well, that depends on the member. To some, maybe not, except perhaps in having a readily available source of contributions for their fanzines if they need it. With all those ~~xxxxxxx~~ members in the club, you can always get contributions, and there is also our Manuscript Bureau. But whether you personally get any benefit from being a member depends on yourself, and whatever interests you may have. It always has been so, and better that way.

Incidentally, John, you did a nice job on the last issue of Nightteam, better than lots I have seen over the years.

March 22, 1967

DONALD FRANSON
4543 BARBEC AVE.
NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.
9606



10:00 PM BY DONALD
What the N3F needs... is a bigger "faculty". Think of N3F as partly (not entirely) a school for neofans, run by active older fans, and supported by the majority of other members who are not active. Just now there is not enough "organization-type" or "teacher-type" material to fill the jobs, so that some have to be doubled up and some have to go begging. With a membership of 200-300, why is there a shortage of workers?

One reason is the recruiting policy. Of those recruited at the Tricon, most were ~~neofans~~ neofans, in contrast to the Chicon where many established fans joined the club. As a result, and as a result of the rapid exodus of older fans recently (unless they have all rejoined since I last looked) the club is low on experienced fans. Nothing is being done to keep or attract this type of fan, either. The trend must be reversed, and soon.

It takes a certain type of fan to run the N3F organization, and make it work efficiently. The main-sequence fan, who progresses from neofan to old-and-tired in three years, can never do it. There isn't enough time for him to learn the ropes before he's gone. That's the average -- there are some who catch on quickly and some who never catch on, but it takes at least a couple years of fan activity to understand fandom enough to do a good job in a responsible N3F office.

Recruiting neofans only, most of whom quickly drop out, will never develop this "faculty". One way to develop it is to work with promising newer members (who promise to stay around a while). The other is by recruiting straight from outside fandom. N3F has made no effort recently to appeal to this type of fan -- ~~this~~ should be at least tried. Not all the established fans work -- they are either too busy or too lazy -- seldom both -- but a certain percentage would benefit the club. We should try to keep a minimum number of active workers, to balance the bulk of neofans just getting into fandom, and the inactive older members who just like the club and support it through their dues and encouragement.

The dues-payer who sits back and complains that he's not getting his money's worth should realize that he has not bought the

services of the officers with his money. They pay dues too, and work as well. The money goes for materials that the individual can't afford and the profit system couldn't pay for. Financial aid to worthwhile projects is certainly a club function. So is personnel help. One of the most important club features is continuity, like a corporation. The Story Contest is successful for ~~not~~ mainly this reason, where several individual efforts failed.

If I get to be President, I promise to surround myself with workers, whether they are of my own fannish religion or not, not only so that I won't have to do everything myself, but so that more work will be done for the club, over all. If this can be done with a minimum of friction, you will see the club continue to do things for the members which they can't do for themselves.

But it's still the members doing it -- not some fictitious machine called the N3F, that you put money in and wait for the benefits to come out. Or kick it hard to get your money back, if they don't come out right away.

Yours,
Donald Franson

83 Lincoln Ave
Newark, N.J. 07104
March 22, 1967

Dear Jane,

This letter is really intended for Tightbeam, but I don't know who is editor. I am very Neo, and I just received my new member packet. It included Tightbeam #40 (11/66), & it's very frustrating not to have a more recentish. Any comments I have are positively archaic by now.

I guess I'm one of those members spoken of who could become active if given a push. Right now I don't know who, how, what, when or where, but I've a willing pair of hands....

///I removed the middle of this letter and forwarded it to Manuscript Bureau as it is an article eulogizing Star Trek which some faneditor will be glad to get, and MS Bureau needs st. ff like that, whereas this issue of TIGHTBEAM is, as you see, pretty full. But as you see, she writes well; so if you want that article, write to Tideland.///

Yours fanishly
Sherna Cornerford.

P.S. Whatever prompted Blush to make such a mess of the Star Trek Paperback?

JMC



NUMBER 67

1, this is Jim Lamb. (Sorry about the above (above... well I meant what has come before) lightness of typing, but this is being written on a crappy manual machine, after just working with a beautiful electric most of the day; such things tend to make you lose your grip on good old manual typers.) Well, Fletch and I decided to split cost of mailing stuff to you, and thus you're getting some illos by JML (that's me) and some by Fletch.

I would appreciate it greatly, though, if you'd send me the illos done on matboard. I'm going to attempt selling these at the Worldcon in New York. (If I get to go, that is....) So, let's hope I get into WILKINS with ish the fifth (or fourth as the case may be) or in the May 11 edition, if it's offsetted.

Well, that about wraps it up. I've got some fiction you may want (I've been told it's fairly good fiction too -- but that's up to you to decide) that I'll send along later.

Please return the illos done on mat-board to me. My name is on the back of each of the mat-boarded illos, so if you forget who it is that signs his name "JML", then you'll never forget again. Well, maybe not ever a sin, but...

Been reading some of Fletch's wilkos lately, and they're pretty good. Especially the repro. Some of the typing is a little thick. That's about the only problem. Hope you get more rubbers to your zinc. Copyright is a very good idea; let me among those to congratulate you for having the thing copyrighted.

Well, this is definitel the close.



STORY CONTEST
Mike Viggiano
1834 Albany Avenue
Brooklyn, New York
VT WHITE VW

Apr 67

The cursed Army is right now giving me a 2wk leave before sending me to Europe and deeper into a longer PAFIA so I'm only now answering ~~my~~ my mail that has gathered on my desk at home over the past several months, the next time is two years off.

First, the N3F membership analysis project...only Jim Corrick or some other fan living near Janie Lamb can finish or update it; my next try will come on 11Sep69, the date they let me out. Also, to answer questions raised in Nov66 TB: (1)The "Martin mystery" baffled me too (2)The Author categories were chose because said authors have some sort of organized group of fans, were repeatedly mentioned on membership applications, and in my opinion were the most likely to be useful on the list (3)I put the code like it was as a convenience to myself (4)When I go back to U.Tenn. I'm going to do the whole project over again from the earliest records up through what will by then be 1970--ray Janie is still there with the records at that time. (5)Curse on the fiend who let out that inaccurate Army address I tried to keep secret and said as much--my home address is the one all mail goes to. It is the one on the roster. When I get my address in Germany which will be my first in years to last over 3mo I will CoA in TNPF and the roster.

How does this idea (partly stolen from TB#42) sound, I dream about it. A booklet listing the name and address of every fan in the world complete with interests (a different version of my code--to be seen in '70) age or birthday, occupation, and organizations he has or does belong to. I've seen it done for the Dixie area and...the possibilities of the survey needed to get the info are limited only by \$.

Ah ha, according to TB#42 Eddie Peares may end up doing what I mention in the 1st sentence of the 3d paragraph

Irvin Koch
835 Chatt. Bk. Bg.
Chattanooga, Tenn. 37402

Putting this edition together was a picnic, in case others are thinking of trying it. Recollected stuff in one box until the 15th, gassed it together on one Saturday and puttered around a few days more, during which nothing more came in. Letters that come in after this goes to Official Publisher Joneser, will be forwarded to the next THORNTON editor, Jack Haldeman, 4221 58th Street, Blacksburg, Maryland.

All letters that arrived so far have been included here, mostly as written, as long as they were one-sided for photocopy. Censorship privileges have not been exercised — just a sparing paring from the longest letters, to make room for some artfinks. The signatures belong to Ken Fletcher, Audrey Walton, Jim Young, Ricky Williams, members good & true. The Gaughan portrait of demon knight was cribbed from the Boskone IV program and is a speaking likeness.

Editorial opinions -- beyond thanks for everything -- are at a low ebb along our shores right now. Receiving the Kaymar Award has taken all the starch out of our typer. Believe it or not, there really can be times when a fan is at a loss for words.

Sincerely,

A. Hill

Dear Alma,

Thanks for your letter. I could hardly believe my eyes when I read that my little monster was to appear on the cover of the letterzine. I am thrilled to bits about it and do hope it photos allright. Enclosed you will find a typed blurb on me, if you think it's awful please reverse it for me. Have you heard that Doreen Parker won the Doe Weir award at the Convention? She says she was very proud to receive it but couldn't say a word and had to be prompted to say 'Thank you'. She is also the first woman to receive it, so has made fan history.

As a very new member, may I just say what an unexpected pleasure it is to find myself the cover artist on your letterzine. It seems a description is needed. What on earth can I say? I am average height, plump and jolly with dark brown hair and eyes, and a very cheeky grin. I like chewing carrots, talking to congenial company, (by that I mean people who are ready to argue the leg off an iron pot without losing their tempers), love crowds at football matches and speedway meetings, so long as my husband is there to clear a path for me. I don't much like parties though. I do enjoy a good brisk walk but can be quite content curled up before a fire with a book. I love reading, seeing or hearing anything by Shakespeare and never miss a chance to see a performance of Gilbert & Sullivan whether amateur or pro. I have been drawing funny sketches ever since I can remember. My other interests are history, writing, camping and gardening, in reverse order of pleasure derived.

Sincerely,

Audrey Walton.

25, Yewdale Crescent,
Coventry, Works,
England.

15th, April, 1967.



///Here follows a message written by our Life Member Frederik Pohl, about our Founding Father Damon Knight, for the program of Boskone IV, at which dk was Guest of Honor. It seems only fit and proper that we make room in our letter-sine for this message and dk's BOS speech.///

ABOUT DAMON KNIGHT

About a quarter of a century ago there came into the Futurist Society of New York a fellow who claimed to come from Washington or Oregon or one of those places, looked a little bit like a Martian, sketched nasty impressions of all us Big Name Fans of the day, talked about writing, gave as good as he took in the never-ending game of Futurist Put-Down...well, in short, he fitted right in and we took him to our hearts.

His name was Damon Knight -- no, it was demon knight; he couldn't afford upper-case letters in those days. We never managed to get him to go away. The war came and a lot of us suffered our various travails. (Its principal effect on Damon was to give him a new religion. Or so the records said. See, he told the sergeant he was an agnostic. The sergeant said, "A whatnik?" Damon said, "A-G-G-O-S-T-I-C"...and the sergeant, writing down what he thought he heard, wrote "G-M-O-O..." Making Damon the world's only official, accredited hemostic.) Then the war was over and we gathered again, limping a little now, and Damon was still there. Only he had taken to writing -- under pen-names like "Stuart Fleming," at first, then under his name. Even with capital letters. And he began editing magazines -- matter of fact, my magazines; when I went off to sling a psychrometer in the face of the enemy, Damon replaced me, thus making it possible for me to free a WAC for active service. And next thing you know, he was writing reviews and criticisms.

In all of history there have only been about three persons both technically equipped and temperamentally suited to criticizing other people's science-fiction stories. You can get an argument about who the other two are; but one of them, surely, is Damon Knight. He has the proof to offer, too: the only Hugo ever given out for criticism, at BYOON II, is his. He may not always be right, if there is such a thing as "right" in so subjective a judgmental affair as criticism. But he is always persuasive, and articulate, and you know when you read him that even if he's wrong (i.e., wants to be scratched where you yourself don't itch), he needs to be taken seriously...because you just might be wrong too.

As a short story writer he is maybe the best one there is. This isn't to say that he's the best all-round writer in science fiction, only that he is a master of the short-story form and sets the standard by which to judge the rest of us. As an editor, his anthologies speak for themselves. The critic in Damon, never far from the surface, breaks through when he wears his editor hat. That can be dangerous, with the wrong man: Damon is the right man. His introductions and commentaries illuminate, point up, and inform. That more can one say?

But is is, at this moment, as President of the SFPA that Damon swings about the biggest biceps in science fiction. There have been, let's see, oh at least three other attempts at organizing sf writers into something more or less like a trade union. Every other one sank without a trace, right off the launching slip. Every other one had someone other than Damon running it, however, and that was their mistake. He has done things that everyone knows were right and necessary. He has done things that many think were wrong-headed from the start. But he has done things. Fred Pohl



PLOTCHER '67

Speech delivered at the Boskone, April 2, 1967, by Damon Knight

Guest of Honor

In the beginning, there was Gernsback. And the world was without form and void.

And Gernsback said, Let there be science fiction. And it was so.

Let us pray.



/// During the respectful hush that followed these opening remarks, a worshipper in a back row cried, "Hallelujah, brother!"

Thus encouraged, The Great Knight resumed:///

I mention this charming myth, because I believed it for 30-some years, until I read a scholarly volume called *FUTURE HISTORY*, by H. Bruce Franklin. Franklin says flatly that "There was no major 19th-century American writer of the first rank, and indeed few in the second rank, who did not write some science fiction or at least one up-utopian romance." And he backs this up with the selections in his anthology, and by referring to works by Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Herman Melville, Oliver Wendell Holmes and so on.

He finds "scientific fiction" being discussed critically as early as 1876. And the point he makes is that during the 19th century in America, science fiction was not a segregated form; it was not looked down on; it was published, as a matter of course, in all the literary magazines of the day -- Harper's Monthly, Putnam's, Scribner's, the Atlantic Monthly, and so on. Mark Twain wrote it; William Dean Howells wrote it; and it never occurred to anybody to look down on those who wrote science fiction or those who read it.

What Gernsback actually did, it would now seem -- but he may have had some help from the dime novels that began to appear in the late 1800's -- was to ghettoize science fiction -- to make of it, what it had not been before, a separate and despised genre -- published in magazines with gaudy covers and read by a little group of nuts.

And it has taken us forty years to struggle back into the daylight again.

#####

L. Sprague de Camp, Robert A. Heinlein, and so on right up to Roger Zelazny and Samuel R. Delany.

I have a personal reason for feeling this way too: if there had been no Hugo Gernsback, I honestly don't know where the hell I would be now or what I would be doing. It gives me a peculiar feeling sometimes to realize that my whole life has been determined, in the strictest sense, by the existence of this gentleman, now in his 80's, whom I have never met. If there had been no Hugo Gernsback, praised be he, there would have been no August-September, 1933 issue of Amazing Stories and I would not have read it; there would have been no fanzines for me to imitate and I would never have published snide; there would have been no Futurians and I would never have gone to New York to join them; I would never have gotten a job with Popular Publications or with the Scott Meredith Literary Agency, praised be it; I would never have met my wife, and my children would not exist. I don't know what in the world would have happened to me: I suppose I would be back in Oregon still, doing God knows what. So you see Gernsback has a heavy responsibility.

But aside from such personal considerations, I must tell you that I believe that the concentration of science fiction into a ghetto was essential to its growth. A ghetto -- and I use this ugly word deliberately, because it is apt -- a ghetto is a kind of hothouse. Science fiction writers, instead of being scattered and absorbed by the literary world, were crammed into this narrow little field, where every writer was intensely aware of what the others were doing. They wrote for each other and for a coterie audience of people who knew what they were talking about; they picked up ideas from each other and fed them back; they built up a body of common assumptions and knowledge -- and it was this concentration which made science fiction the fantastically rich and vigorous field it is. Last year 213 science fiction books were published. About 20 of these were anthologies, and this happens year after year -- 20 anthologies, most of them in hardcover, of stories from this little bitty magazine field. To realize how extraordinary this is, you have to compare it to the much older and more respectable mystery field, which



Now I don't know whether the dime novels and the pulp magazines took up science fiction because it had ceased to be respectable, or whether it ceased to be respectable because the dime novels took it up. Some research on this point would be of interest.

But whichever way it was, the curious thing is that I find I cannot be sorry that Gernsback existed. I say to myself, suppose this downgrading of science fiction had never happened -- suppose it had remained a perfectly respectable literary form -- what would the result have been? Well, of course we can't know what we might have had in the way of science fiction by literary writers of the early 20th century. But I think it's quite clear what we would have missed: E.E. Smith, Jack Williamson, Henry and Catherine Kuttner,

considers it has done well if it cranks
three or four anthologies a year.

The reason for this vigor and explosive growth, I believe, is the same thing that outsiders have always complained of -- the over-technicality of science fiction, the in-group jargon, the things that make most science fiction just incomprehensible to the general reader.

Science fiction writers did not have to water their stuff down to make it acceptable to the man in the street, because they knew that he was not going to buy it anyhow. They could write for a specialized audience who would not have to have every damn thing explained to them in simple terms, and therefore they could tackle any idea they could understand themselves, and make it into a story which would be published and read with understanding and pleasure.

Now this may seem like an odd stance for anyone to take who belongs to what has been variously described as the Blish-Knight axis or the Milford Mafia. If any of you have read the recent debate in *Habakuk*, edited by Bill Donaho, you will know that I am supposed to be one of those who are trying to ruin science fiction by importing literary values into it.

Let me try to explain. I was struck particularly by one thing that was said during the *Habakuk* debate. A couple of people, including Donaho, made the point that -- for them -- literary values in science fiction are not only unnecessary, but actively interfere with their enjoyment of the story. These people say that they are not literary troglodytes, that they read mainstream fiction with pleasure -- but that if they want that kind of thing, they can get it from the mainstream; they don't want it in science fiction, which they read in a different way and for a different kind of pleasure.

Let me say that I understand this attitude perfectly, because I feel the same way about mystery fiction. I have been told, and I believe, that the mystery novel in the last decade or so has staked out serious claims to consideration as a literary form, and I couldn't care less. I read mysteries, when I do, for pure entertainment, and I often like them even when I know they are bad.

Is it not inconsistent of me, then, to be trying to import literary values into science fiction? I don't think so. The mystery field, like science fiction, covers a broad spectrum. There is the pure-entertainment stuff, like James Bond, for people like me. There is the highly technical detective mystery novel for those who like it, and the literary mystery novel for those who like that. The mystery tent is big enough to cover all those people, and the science fiction tent is big enough to cover me and Bill Donaho. And I submit that we should all be glad there is this much variety in science fiction, because if there were not -- if it were all one kind, no matter which kind -- three out of four of us would be left out.

I've been using a term pretty loosely without defining it. When I talk about science fiction with literary value, I simply mean stories which are well written. I have no interest in making science fiction more like the mainstream, or, heaven forbid, more like the avant-garde movement. I simply want it to be well enough written that I can read it with pleasure, and stand some chance of being able to read it again, ten or twenty years from now, without finding that it has gone rickety-tick on me.

I have tried to reread some of those stories from the 1930s *Amazing*, and I know that most science fiction does not stand this test. But this to me is simply another illustration of Sturgeon's Rule --

"Nine tenths of everything is crud."

I want a science fiction story to have exciting ideas, logical development, and all right, the sense of wonder -- but I also want to get through it without tripping over gross grammatical errors, clichés, and cocky-cutter characters.

In my Father's house are many mansions.

If we have anything to be grateful for, it is this pluralism of science fiction -- the fact that new things, oddball things, can get published for those who like them, and that there is still room for traditional things for those who like them.

Now about the general reader again, the man on the street. Look. I am not toadying to him, I think, or to the editor who knows nothing about s.f., and therefore likes it only when it is least like itself. But science fiction is being read by more people than ever before, and it is losing its stigma. I think this is a good thing, and I want to support and protect it. It really does make a difference how many people buy and read science fiction. If we could magically increase the science fiction audience -- let's say if we could double it tomorrow -- there would be more science fiction published because there would be more money in it, for the publishers and the writers. The proportion of it would stay the same -- 90 per cent of it would still be crud -- but numerically there would be more good stories.

All right, but what can we do about that? Science fiction is not big business, but it is business.

We have always had the feeling that decisions about it were being taken by vast cool intelligences somewhere over our heads, and that we were helpless to affect them in any way. The scale is all wrong. There are perhaps a thousand or two thousand science fiction fans. How can we possibly do anything to increase a readership which is already in the neighborhood of a hundred thousand?

Some of you may remember F. Lin Tremaine's each-reader-get-one-new-reader

campaign; or Gernsback's essay contest on "What I Have Done For Science Fiction". These things may have helped some, but not enough.

PROJECT BOSKONE

The number of people who are interested in science fiction has increased dramatically. But the sales of science fiction magazines and paperbacks have not increased in proportion. The audience is there; the publishers are in no way reluctant to sell more copies.

The trouble comes in the middle -- in the distribution.

Science fiction magazines and paperbacks are distributed in the following way. The publisher makes an arrangement with a national distributor, of whom there are several. The national distributor then ships these magazines and paperbacks to local wholesalers. The wholesalers, in turn, distribute them to dealers, that is to the places where this stuff is actually sold.

Now the interesting thing is this: there are about 800 of these wholesalers in this country, and the wholesalers are the bottlenecks in the distribution system. A potential audience of at least double the present maximum of 100,000 readers is there, and is waiting; but the stuff is not getting through the bottleneck.

You know how hard it is to find science fiction on most newsstands. If you are like me you have probably asked, "Why don't you have more science fiction?" And you have probably been told by the dealer, "I've asked for it, but I can't get it."

It's the wholesaler that the dealer can't get it from. Now why isn't the wholesaler distributing more science fiction? I believe that the answer is simply indifference.

Science fiction is a very small part of his business. The wholesaler gets a commission on each copy sold, but there aren't enough sales to amount to much; it just doesn't matter much to the wholesaler whether or not he puts out a lot of science fiction.

Other publishers, big publishers, have field men who visit these wholesalers. This clears the bottleneck. Science fiction publishers can't do that; they can't afford to. But we can do it. If there are a thousand of us, and 800 wholesalers, we outnumber them.

Now let me make it clear just what I am proposing. I'm calling for a concerted campaign by science fiction fans to visit these 800 wholesalers and persuade them to put out more science fiction. I believe we can do it. I propose to call this "Project Boskone"; I think that's appropriate for two reasons -- in honor of this conference, and because, as you remember, Boskone was a highly organized and effective conspiracy.

I have copies of this speech and hope that as many fan editors as possible will publish it. I want to suggest the following steps:

First, if you haven't already done this, visit at least one dealer in your area and him that question -- "Why don't you have more science fiction?" If he tells you, "I don't want it," or "I haven't got room for it," go on to another, until you find one who tells you, "I would, but I can't get it." Then find out from the dealer the name and address of his wholesaler.

Then go to see that wholesaler. Bear in mind that these people are not villains; they are just businessmen who don't happen to know much about science fiction. Don't approach them with a hostile attitude, be friendly; you will probably find out that they are human. Explain to them that you and many of your friends want to buy more science fiction but can't find it on the stands; be sure to mention the name of any dealer who has told you he would handle more of it if he could get it.

If you are polite and friendly, if they like you, these people will probably be interested and intrigued: they have never met any science fiction fans before. This is the point: they may agree to distribute more s.f. just to do you a favor, just because it does not matter much to them one way or the other.

If you do this, it will be a thing to be proud of. And it will have consequences as far-reaching and profound as the consequences of that first issue of AMAZING STORIES published by Hugo Gernsback. I hope some of you here will want to help.

I'd like to get fans from at least half a dozen areas to undertake this as soon as possible, and report the methods they used and the results they got, so that other fans can profit from their experience. If possible, I'd like to have these reports by next September, so that I can bring them up, in more detail, at the NYcon.

Meanwhile, I'm here. I'm in the mood for talking and listening, and I'll be glad to answer any questions.



John W. Andrews, 212 Marion St. Apt 511, Madison, Wisc, 53703

Not only have I moved, but in a few months I shall move again. That's life.

I heartily agree with the Creath Thorne-Tom Perry suggestion that a number of famous old classics about fandom be made available to ~~sub~~ members. I for one would be delighted to get my hands on—~~excuse me~~—get a chance to read The Immortal Storm. Well, I suppose that the idea should first be tried with items that aren't quite so rare. Also, not more than one thing at a time to a member. Perhaps ~~of~~ a gift of some paperbacks to the Lending Library should be required before receiving an loaned document.

Recently I was fortunate to hear a talk given by Prof Larry Travis of the U of Wisconsin here. He has evidently been trying to spread his ideas around for some time; perh aps they will find an attentive, if not acceoting audience in the WJF.

The title of his talk was "Computer Based Utopias." His thesis is that we n ow have, in computers alone, or soon will have, a technology that makes possible either the BEST or the Worst kind of government. He then proceeded to criticize our American sytem of universal suffrage. He points out, and I am afraid I have to agree with him, that the voting tends to be a manipulation of the mob by the mass-media. Also many issues are voted on by people who have no understanding of them.

He pointed out Walden II, by Dr Skinner, and "The Marching Morons" by Kornblith, as examples of nightmare worlds of tyranny that can be generated by modern technology. World Out Of Mind by J. T. McIntosh was mentioned by someone in the audience as a sort of parallel to Travis' own suggestion for a computer-utopia.

Namely, universal suffrage shoud be done away with and voting by the "wise" substituted for it. Who is to determine who the "wise" are? If you know anything about politics, you know that this is an ancient riddle. However, Travis points out that our computers represent a Major invention in the history of the world—like the invention of fire or the printing press—that enables things previously undreamed of. The wise could be chosen anew for each election by a test administered by computers to the general population. Only those who passed would have the vote that time. Furthermore, a very complete "career" can now be kept on every individual from death to birth, and ~~that~~ easily looked up and changed via computer. This technology is a perfect device for totalitarianism. But he suggests a "good" use for it: each person would be allowed to vote on certain technical issues only if his file showed that he had sufficient knowledge to vote intelligently. Thus the membership of the "wise" could depend on the issues at hand, as well as on individual "worth" as measured by machine scored multiple-choice tests. What do you think of such ideas? Cany anyone think of safeguards to insure that such a system is not abused?

I am afraid that the best political wisdom man has been able to garner declares that a political system can be tested only by its bad operations, not by its best

Continuing.

Thus, fail-safe constitutional checks and balances are needed ~~if~~ in case someone tries to take too much into his won hands, or in case the elected officials happen to be inert, prejudiced, or treacherous. I believe that SF has prepared its readers for the coming possibilities better than most political science courses. I hope you have gotten a certain amount of "social imagination" from these stories. Perhaps you can think of some way that safeguards could be built into such a computer-utopia. In particular, what would act against the temptations of those who programmed the computers? (I happen to be a programmer myself).

In case you don't know how fast technology is developing, just let me point out that now, or in a short time, it will be feasible for the tests to be given by remote terminals to each voter as he or she is actually in the private voting booth; it will

be possible as a matter of course to randomize questions to prevent cheating; and the machine can give virtually perfect scoring of test answers. No one would "know" why was taking a test or who got what score except the computer and the individual voter; the tabulation and statistics could be made for all the millions of voters in a given time-zone, checked several times and made public in just a few hours. Such is the power of real-time computer systems for good—if you think this would be a good system I am sure that SF has warned you of some evils.

One last closing point: why have most of the stories about imaginary societies written since 1910 been anti-utopias? Are we becoming pessimists?

Sincerely & Fannishly,

John W. Andrews
John W. Andrews

DEPARTMENT OF FULLER EXPLANATION

The next issue of TIGHTBEAM will be #44 and is to be edited by Jack Maldeman 4211 58th Avenue, #10, Bladensburg, Maryland, 21710

Letters for TIGHTBEAM #44 should reach Jack by June 15, so that he can bring the letters out on its due date, on or before July 15.

TIGHTBEAM #45 is to be edited by Gary Labowitz, 562 Prince Frederick Street, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania Letters for TIGHTBEAM #45 should reach Gary by August 15, so that he can bring that letters out on its due date, on or before September 15

CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE CAN START CAMPAIGNING ANY TIME

Tightbeam is our vehicle for letters from the membership to the membership. Letters which are too late for one issue can be handed along to the next editor, and letters which are too hot to handle are sometimes dropped. But most of the time, anything goes, as you can see. Join our cracker-barrel.

Extra copies and undeliverable copies go to our beloved and respected Secretary-Treasurer, Janie Lamb, Haiskell, Tennessee. If for some reason you don't get your copy of TFFF or TIGHTBEAM, the one to hear about it is Janie -- as early as you realize -- while she still has extras.

So we thought we'd let JANIE have the
LAST WORD

Janie Lamb

TB # 43

Dear Alma TB:

First things first, so let me congratulate you on winning the Kaymar Award. No one deserves it more, and I'm happy you are IT!

Now to answer the question

Kuske ask in TB # 42. Hope I'm not trespassing in D. Franson's territory. I'm assuming of course, that fan nature is similar to human nature, therefore I will deal with this much as if we were dealing with human nature. One outstanding need for belonging to a club or group when heading a fannish activity is for audience applause. But the main reason would seem to be continuity. When a fan starts a new venture even tho he gaffiates he wants the project to continue. As a Bureau or Committee of NSF someone would be ready to take over, and no loss of ego thru gaffiation.

Next Lettersine Editor is JACK WALDMAN
4211 Fifty-Eighth Avenue
Bladensburg, Maryland

Public Relations:

This is a costly item which few fans can afford if he tries to operate any fan activity alone. And lone fan operations do not turn out very successful. One example of this is the Games Bureau. Read Thorne's letter in TS # 42 to find out about this. In NSF a member has free advertising, a ready made mailing list. Two different publications in which he can answer questions about his project. A club wall to duck behind to dodge brickbats. A host of advisors which will help if ask, a host of critics which will help if not ask. Few fans have the time or money to write individual letters which any project requires. NSF takes care of all this by giving space in their publications. And good Public Relations is the backbone of any project, NSF is the backbone.

Participation:

Fans seem to be skeptical about participating in a lone wolf project, but given the backing of a club they will venture forth. One reason is the short life of lone wolfe projects thru gaffiation of the fan. Where, as I mentioned before club sponsorship suggests continuity as long as fan interest lasts. Fans will donate time, and money when necessary if a project is club sponsored, not so if its a single fan sponsored activity. Again, a fan is so near human in nature that they want to continue activity in a project which interests them, they want assurance it will continue before they enter.

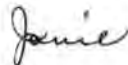
Now for myself, no place other than NSF could I derive the pleasure I do from fanning. NSF affords me contact with both old and new fen, thru NSF I'm given the chance to meet many interesting fans both thru the mails and personally, fen I'd never otherwise know existed. And by being on the NSF roster I get price lists from various Stf Bookdealers, this alone is worth the price of NSF dues.

One thing I haven't mentioned, is the Chairman of any NSF Bureau or Committee receives a monthly list of new club members, showing their fannish interest, many of these are new to fandom. The new member is given a leaflet explaining the activities within the club or sponsored by the club. This is a double way of helping the Bureau recruit participants for his activity. Outsiders do not get this list.

Something which many critics of NSF seem to overlook is....members of NSF, whether they be just members or officer, or leaders of some club activity IS NSF! So when a member criticizes NSF he is criticising himself.

So Be It

Janie Lamp



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