



WASHINGTON 20

WARHOON

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BILL DONAHO AND HIS ELECTRIC BOONDOGGLE

I must share Steve Stiles's sad amazement at the course of events associated with Bill Donaho's declared intention "to perform a surgical operation, separating Walter Breen and fandom." Somehow, I've been relatively protected from contact with the affair until recently. I doubt there's been a fanzine editor of recent years who has known less of the casual and sometimes malicious gossip of fandom than I have. And I tend to discount what I do hear until I see it remaining undisputed in print -- on the assumption that something prepared for publication will be more considered than conversation. The report from the Pacificon committee on the cancellation of the membership of Walter Breen on the grounds of moral turpitude left me a bit staggered, but since I hadn't seen THE GREAT BREEN BOONDOGGLE, the Donaho fanzine containing the justification for the ambitious decision quoted above, I assumed the crucial evidence had been presented in it and comments should properly await examination of the quality of that evidence or comments on it. I thought it odd I hadn't received the Boondoggle but was mailed a copy of the Pacificon report. It seemed strange that the committee would want to prejudice me before I knew the facts. Perhaps it was intended as a recruitment pamphlet, since I am not a member of the convention.

At the time I prepared a statement on the matter for SERENADE, I had no particular reason to believe or disbelieve the Pacificon report -- except for the puzzling fact that Breen was not behind bars. The events it mentions took place thousands of miles away and I had seen no counter comment from anyone. Since then I have seen Bill Blackbeard's QAR, which contains a lengthy editorial part of which is reprinted later in this issue. On Wednesday, May 20, THE LOYAL OPPOSITION (Trimbles, 5571 Belgrave Ave, Garden Grove, Calif, 92641) arrived and contains extensive quotes from the Boondoggle. Thursday, May 21, the FAPA mailing came seething with outrage re a FAPA blackball of Breen (10 FAPA members are a sufficient number to decide that the other 54 may not enjoy the company of a particular fan). Friday, May 22, Karen Anderson's FAPA postmailing arrived containing Anthony Boucher's statement deploring the blackball. Saturday, May 22, MINAC 12 and 14 were in the mailbox (Ted White, 339-49th St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11220). The mass arrival of the above material in a matter of days cast a far different light on the examination of the information about Breen and on several apparently factual assertions. But there was no rush on my part to believe these contradictions either -- perhaps the committee would be able to explain why three parents involved had testified in THE LOYAL OPPOSITION that "On the basis of our personal knowledge and information, we do not believe Walter Breen to be guilty on the charges made by the Pacificon II committee and implied in the document 'The Great Breen Boondoggle'" though the committee had not done so in the report published after the appearance of THE LOYAL OPPOSITION. But there was time... There was time..

Meanwhile back in FAPA, the struggle over the blackball was being waged. According to Vice-President FMBusby 14 votes were cast against Breen -- though this remains to be seen. The Vice-President has admitted his own vote against admittance, as has

Bruce Pelz, but in a purely personal disposition of the question has decided not to disclose the names of the other voters -- the FAPA constitution says nothing about keeping them secret. I feel that this is a dangerous move since it leaves a terrible weapon relating to admissions in the hands of the Vice-President, whoever he may be, with potentials for strife which could rend the organization at some future time. I have nothing but the highest respect for Busby's honesty, but what would have happened had Bill Donaho, or someone similarly under attack, or someone whose convictions about the importance of his ends left him with no scruples about his means had been Vice-President? Many FAPAns were shocked that the blackball was used on other than known crack-pots like the type it was invented for. After this evidence that weapons are made to be used can there now be any doubt that the principle of anonymity can also hide anything a Vice-President may choose to hide? Busby and Pelz have given reasons for their blackball votes. Perhaps some of the attitudes of the anonymous 12 can be gleamed from attorney Jack Speer's statement "We don't have the facts yet." Jack prefaces that remark with "I might go for a special rule reinstating Walter, but this is too soon for such a thing." Nowhere does he also judiciously add that before the facts is also too soon for a blackball. But if FAPA's blackballers feel uneasy about their ability to decide before the facts have been determined they can take solace from President Gregg Calkins's reminder that the constitution of FAPA "does not require that a member have any sort of reason for objecting to the admission of a potential member, let alone a good reason". Avram Davidson agrees "This is certainly true. Presumably all fourteen awoke one morning, scratched their crotches, and said, 'What the Hell, I'll vote to drop Walter Breen for no reason at all' -- and proceeded with one accord to do so." :: Circulated with that mailing was a petition by Redd Boggs for reinstatement. In a letter replying to Jack Speer's IPO poll of those who voted to admit Breen I explained "I cannot blackball anyone on the basis of suspicion and to have let the Breen blackball stand would have been acquiesce in its implied judgement... however, I 'feel that even if it is true, this would not justify barring him from FAPA'. On the basis of past performance I cannot see how Breen can do anything but make FAPA more stimulating. Breen's activities in FAPA as a non-member earned him a higher place on the last egoboo poll than many members and he qualifies for membership in every respect. I do not see how a person's personal life will have any effect on my enjoyment of his membership in FAPA." At last count 41 people agreed that Breen should be admitted to FAPA; making him, in Redd's phrase, "the first person in history to be elected to FAPA membership by popular vote." Petitions were signed by:

Karen Anderson	R & J Coulson	Al Lewis, EC	Dick Schultz
Ron Bennett	Mike Deckinger	Al Lewis, WC	Robert Silverberg
Richard Bergeron	Sylvia Dees	Bob Lichtman	Rick Sneary
Redd Boggs	Pat & Dick Ellington	George Locke	John & Bjo Trimble
Marion Bradley	Dean Grennell	Andy Main	Bob Tucker
Rich Brown	Charles Hansen	Norm Metcalf	Harry Warner
Terry Carr	James Havelin	Len Moffatt	Charles Wells
Jim Caughran	Lee Hoffman	Bill Morse	Ted White / Jane Ellern
Russell Chauvenet	Ted Johnstone	Elmer Perdue	Art Wilson
Norm & Gina Clarke	Miriam Knight	Nancy Rapp	Howard DeVore

A child molester is a psychosexually disturbed individual. Adults, insofar as they are able, have an obligation to see that children are not initiated into sexual experience in ways that may be harmful to their later sexual enjoyment or sexual functioning in our society. A convention committee has an obligation to act in the best interests of all members of a convention. If the committee believes a dangerous person may attend the convention they have an obligation to take what steps they may consider necessary to protect their subscribers -- keeping in mind the ethical quality indicated by its duty to all its members. The issues at hand, as I see them, are whether or not the Pacificon committee's conclusion concerning the danger of Walter

Breen is justified on the basis of the evidence they give and whether the committee has conducted itself in a manner that fandom has a right to expect of it.

It has been a long time since May 23. As I begin this final draft it is July 12; time enough for the committee to have completely illuminated the issues and to have disarmed their critics. I have not yet seen such a reply and I have seen no additional documented information indicating that the committee's case is any more securely based than what was advanced in the Boondoggle or their report. Something else of import and of a revealing nature has occurred, however. Bill Donaho and, it is reported, Alva Rogers, have gone to the police with their story and information. No charges have been brought against Breen. It might be assumed then, that the committee's case is complete (it being unlikely that Donaho and Rogers would hold back anything from the police once they committed themselves to that course) and that it has been found somewhat lacking in credibility by other than Breen's supporters.

Partisans of the committee, like Pelz, have claimed that the reason no police charges can be brought against Breen is because the parents refuse to become involved in a police prosecution. This is unfair to the parents involved since it accuses them of shirking their obligations to themselves, their children, and society, if they don't happen to buy Bill Donaho's interpretation of circumstances -- and 3 of the 4 sets of parents don't. It also overlooks the fact that Rogers is one of the parents involved, that Rogers agrees with the thesis of the Boondoggle, and that Rogers has expressed his realization of social responsibility from which there can be "no equivocating." Apparently the police don't consider Alva's testimony as damaging as the committee does.

(Another point of minor concern which is advanced as weighing against Breen's defenders is that some of their statements are too emotionally worded. Frankly, gentlemen, it doesn't matter one damn bit. If an argument is valid and you are really looking for the truth you won't ignore it just because it was communicated in terms you find abrasive. The supporters of Breen, don't forget, find the term "child molester" the most abrasive and emotional term yet used in the entire debate. So, too, do the supporters of Donaho -- they think it's strong enough to keep someone out of a convention. So the application of a little intelligence and perception is required in a reading of the Breen case. Arguments shouldn't fail just because some of them are advanced hysterically -- you might be inclined to a bit of hysteria if you were accused of being a child molester or of defending a child molester. Arguments should fail by being shown invalid. Examine the reasons advanced and the reasoning -- not the tone in which it's written. After all, it's no great trick to lie reasonably.)

Of primary importance are the seriousness of the charges involved and the responsibility for the most judicious and fairminded presentation of the evidence that led to these conclusions. The public rejection of a convention membership on the accusation that a person is a child molester is hardly another of your typical fannish peccadillos. The presumption of all fair minded men must be that Walter Breen is innocent until proven otherwise. We can hardly accord him less than the common decency our legal system gives him a right to or less than the fairness we might hope others would grant ourselves under other or similar circumstances. Fandom has a right to expect that a committee entrusted with the care and preparation of its annual convention will operate within contemporary standards of humaneness. The Pacificon committee does not agree: "We are not required or even allowed to present evidence in a legal fashion or to prove something 'beyond the shadow of a doubt'." But their charges are not presented with an acknowledgement that they may not be true. Their charges are presented as conclusions presumably based on facts but nowhere in this report are any good reasons given why we should take the committee's word that their extreme charges are true. (It is not required that any charges be made

at all.) Accusations of the magnitude of these could not be made without proof by a committee that was conscious of its obligations to all its members -- including Walter Breen.

The committee has given Walter a clean bill of health as far as his attendance at conventions is concerned: "...it has not been reported that Walter Breen has been involved in any incidents at the four previous worldcons he has attended...". However they add: "The Discon committee was on the point of cancelling his membership, but decided not to do so as they had no direct evidence." Nor did they after the convention, which should be indicative but apparently isn't.

In a statement signed by the four members of the committee the following appears: (1) "We have direct evidence.", (2) "Walter Breen has engaged in a course of action which constitutes a crime in this state...", (3) "Two members of the committee witnessed certain of these acts with two different children." To date, he has not been apprehended for engaging "in a course of action which constitutes a crime" in California. The police do not suffer child molesters gladly, if at all. The committee's report does not elaborate on what occasions the committee members witnessed "certain of these acts" which constitute a crime in California, however we must suppose that the report is referring to those occasions involving the committee members and of which Donaho has previously made so much in the Boondoggle. One incident concerns Alva Rogers, who goes into the matter in his statement appended to the committee report. Rogers covers the story in some detail and concludes with: "Now, what does all this attempt to prove? That Walter Breen is, beyond a doubt, a child molester? No." He goes on to say that it did give him reason to assume so, however. (But a suspicion is not a fact and a suspicion is hardly sufficient grounds for charging that someone has "engaged in a course of action which constitutes a crime in this state..." and is therefore a threat to the convention,) In the one statement Alva claims that members of the committee witnessed acts which are a crime in California but in the next that the act he witnessed was only a basis for suspecting that acts were being committed which are a crime in California. (And then, only if you grant that Breen is so stupid that he would molest a child while the child's parents were most likely to enter the room at any moment!) While I'm the last person to blame a suspicious father for saying anything I'm also the first to bar him from serving on the jury of the man he's prosecuting. Especially when he disqualifies himself through the contradictions of his own statements.

The other known instance in which a committee member witnessed Breen in an act allegedly qualifying him for prosecution involves Bill Donaho and similarly falls far short of the lurid legal culpability charged by the committee. It is not mentioned in the report but is referred to in the Boondoggle. The father, hardly a disinterested individual, in THE LOYAL OPPOSITION, has described Breen's actions as "certainly completely harmless". According to the Boondoggle, this incident, took place at "a fairly large gathering at the Nelson's" at which the parents of the child were present (some four years ago). Now it does seem fairly incredible that if Walter Breen wanted to engage in child molestation that he would do so in the presence of a large number of people and in the presence of the parents of the child. As much as I trust Bill Donaho's interpretation of this scene I must say that I trust the description of the father of the child more. Rogers has just given us a demonstration of how sensitive the suspicions of a father can be -- even more sensitive than Bill Donaho's, I would imagine. John Boardman comments on this in PILLYCOCK: "Among other things, Donaho seriously expects the readers of the Boondoggle to believe that Walter Breen committed perverted sexual acts with a 3-year-old girl in the presence of both her parents and several other people, and that no complaint was made by the parents for four years. The man who'll believe this will believe anything, and has."

Therefore we see that the delicate construction of "evidence" and legal danger in

the very area where the committee claims to have "witnesses" rests on a foundation so flimsy that one case is demolished by Rogers himself and the other relies on an incident which took place in front of many witnesses and happened years ago.

The committee claims the following additional evidence: "We have letters written by Walter Breen admitting to other acts. We have letters from other fans telling of their own direct knowledge of such acts. We have material published by Walter Breen in his own and other fanzines defending and advocating such acts." Would it be fair to speculate on the nature of these "acts" on the basis of what can be determined regarding "acts" which the committee witnessed and which it sometimes claims constitutes a crime in California? They don't give us much to go on. But as far as I'm concerned they have not revealed good faith by citing witnessed criminal activity and then admitting "No" that it does not constitute criminal activity. Given this evidence of the committee's ability to engage in colorful and imaginative description I cannot accept their interpretation of written material they may claim to have. Particularly not in the face of Donaho's announced intention "to perform a surgical operation, separating Walter and fandom" which suggests that the use to which he is putting his 'evidence' is not disinterested. Particularly not in the face of the police's failure to act on this "evidence". Particularly not in the face of Donaho's statement in the Boondoggle regarding Breen's fanzine material that "he has always claimed in public that "this was an intellectual discussion and he didn't really believe that." After all, confessions are admissible as evidence and the District Attorney can make charges based on them. The committee predisposes me to approach its claims with a wary eye.

Further examination of the good faith of the committee is not out of order:

"In addition, in the course of possible legal actions taken against Walter Breen, the convention, its members and the committee may be subject to an investigation into their private and public lives which could be both embarrassing and time consuming." Thus reads the statement signed by the four committee members. And yet the action of Donaho and Rogers in going to the police is calculated to bring about just that investigation which they have claimed was the main reason why they excluded Breen! The Boondoggle is hardly an underplayed document and if accepted at the face value the police would put on it (as testimony) then Donaho has given the police plenty of reasons to investigate the parental conduct of Bay Area fans and the extent of the complicity of fans who Donaho claims were well aware of Breen's activities. A convention committee which so strenuously goes out of its way to attract the attention of the police to the private lives of its day to day fanish acquaintances (and publishes a report stating that the reason for the exclusion was to avoid just such "embarrassing" attention) leads one to wonder if the convention committee isn't proving itself as dangerous as it thinks Breen is.

The committee's attitude "We believe that Walter Breen is sick, not evil, and that he needs help and treatment, not punishment" could be credited as laudable and humane if subsequent action bore out the attitude. The assessment of what kind of help and treatment Breen deserves was "The idea of giving him a stiff warning was abandoned because, although it had kept him out of various homes in the Bay Area, he flatly announced that he was going to attend the convention. Someone suggested contacting various people close to him to get him into a hospital; this was rejected as naive and impractical. Finally, we consulted an attorney." (Apparently the type of help and treatment Bill Donaho felt Breen needed was a dirging up of all details he could find in Breen's past, putting the worst possible interpretation on them, spreading them all over in an attempt to drive him from fandom, and then going to the police with them -- all before confronting Breen himself!) The committee's attitude makes it sound humane, but its actions make it sound quite like something else.

Personally, I don't know whether or not Walter is a child molester. I don't know whether he's an arsonist, either, or a murderer, or a thief I shall be surprised and saddened if he turns out to be any of them, but I am not going to do him the injustice and myself the indignity of believing people who blandly announce that they are not required to prove anything beyond a shadow of a doubt but who announce the cruelest attacks and charges without the shadow of a doubt. I cannot support a convention committee which thinks so little of its responsibilities that it could act as this convention committee has acted. I had hoped to surprise a number of people by appearing at the convention. I will be on the West Coast on my way to Mexico this fall but, now, the closest I expect to get to San Francisco is Disneyland. Somehow, I just don't think I could enjoy the convention.

It might not be a bad idea to conclude with the following quote from the report: "Walter Breen's conduct in the homes and gatherings of science fiction fans has been such that he is a cause of uproar and tumult, and it is likely cause in the future to subject the committee, the convention and its members to public and private action, abuse criticism or ridicule." This cause of uproar and tumult came as a great surprise to me -- it would seem that if this were a fact it would have appeared in the fannish presses before the advent of the Boondoggle (considering that incidents which Donaho illuminated took place years ago), but the reaction to the Boondoggle was the first inkling I and many other fans had that his conduct was creating such a disturbance. In fact, for the past few years I have been regularly publishing some of Breen's best fanzine writing, but not once during that time did anyone write to me protesting Breen's use of Wrhm as a forum, though now that the Boondoggle has appeared its web of circumstance is used as an arguemnt to blackball Breen from FAPA. But still it is charged that Breen's conduct is such that the committee would be likely to be subjected to abuse, criticism or ridicule if he attends the convention, though his good reputation at conventions (to which they testify) had given them no reason to expect that his conduct would not be similarly above reproach. However, it's well known that the actions of Bill Donaho and the subsequent course followed by the committee have already been a cause of "uproar and tumult" (and not merely in the underworld of snide DNQ gossip as the opening campaign against Breen was waged but in public print) and have already left the committee open to possible public and private action, and earned it and/or Donaho abuse, or criticism, or ridicule from:

Karen Anderson	Carol Chazin	Don Fitch	Kevin Langdon	Bill Rotsler
Dave Arnam	Prentiss Choate	Marcia Frendel	Bob Lichtman	Bhob Stewart
Richard Bergeron	Gretchen Choate	Les Gerber	Larry McCombs	Tom Seidman
Sandi Bethke	Norm Clarke	Cynthia Goldstone	Dave MacDonald	Steve Stiles
Burkhard Bluem	Ed Clinton	Lou Goldstone	Richard Mann	Don Thompson
Mimi Bistrow	Jessie Clinton	Charles Hansen	Andy Main	Maggie Thompson
John Boardman	Ted Cogswell	Seth Johnson	Len Moffatt	Bjo Trimble
Hans Bok	Danny Curran	Ted Johnstone	Kirsten Nelson	John Trimble
Marion Bradley	Avram Davidson	Marty Jukovsky	Ray Nelson	Harry Warner
Rich Brown	Grania Davidson	Lenny Kaye	Ben Orlove	Ardis Waters
Redd Boggs	Calvin Demmon	Arnie Katz	Ted Pauls	Charles Wells
Bill Blackbeard	Mike Deckinger	Jerry Knight	Tom Perry	Ted White
Terry Carr	Mike Domina	Miri Knight	Joe Pilati	Frank Wilimczyk
Russell Chauvenet	Dick Ellington	Al Lewis EC	Andy Porter	Art Wilson
Bob Chazin	EEEVERS	Al Lewis WC	Dave Rike	...and you?

If the committee was truly concerned with functioning without descension it could have left the entire exposure in the hands of Walter Breen by notifying him privately of its decision and its intention to keep him from the convention. It would have been just as easy to justify their actions if Breen chose to make an issue of them then as was before he could make an issue of them. But the widest possible publication of its

actions by the committee and an ambiguous now-you-see-it now-you-don't presentation of its reasons and evidence has invited the most strident discussion and controversy on the very eve of the convention itself -- the report was postmailed to FAPA mailing #107, an act insuring that the matter will still be discussed by August 1967. The committee, as an arm of fandom, has not acted as though it were conscious that its responsibility is to dispatch the business of producing a convention not to dispatch Walter Breen. It has acted not as a convention committee but as a surgical instrument in an operation designed to separate Walter Breen from fandom.

REPORT FROM THE IVORY TOWER

QUARK? #7 (Tom Perry, 4018 Laurel Avenue, Omaha 11, Nebraska), quarterly, 25¢: Beginning with this issue, I hope to be able to comment on some of the better fanzines appearing in these lean post-XERO years. I wanted to report on Bill Blackbeard's excellent QAR but the preceding editorial somewhat drained my critical faculties and QUARK? now seems a better candidate to fill out this editorial. Other worthy efforts such as MINAC, HYPHEN, ENCLAVE, SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES, and FRAP will receive attention also at some future time. :: Perry's jaundiced remark that his fanzine was "never in any danger of making the top ten" couldn't have appeared in a worst issue. Not quite as outre or Perlmanesque as THE VINEGAR WORM, QUARK? nevertheless has some of that fanzine's careful style and care with words. Tom and columnist Joe Pilati share a knack for devastating commentary through hallucinatory imagery. Joe's "Persistence of Memory" contains a zany item "Whose Furniture Have You Moved Lately?" based on Steve Stiles's remark "When I moved furnitre for John Boardman I learned all about World War One." Pilati takes this one step further: "When I moved furniture for Ted Pauls, I learned all about the imminent threat posed by the extreme right." I suggest as an additional dimension that the last part of the sentence should also parody the style of the fan being helped but will leave that to Terry Carr. :: It is reported that Pilati is doing post-graduate work on his laurels: Walt Willis's "The Harp That Once Or Twice" makes its first appearance in QUARK? with this issue. Those fans who have been following Wrhn just to see how long Willis can keep up the fantastic quality and life of this column are advised that the suspense is now being continued here. The Harp was lost from these pages during the long publishing lapse of last year but I couldn't have suggested a better home for it to continue in. The loss of the Harp coincided with some overly ambitious plans I had for cutting down the size of Wrhn and consequently wasn't as badly felt as it is now that I see this superb installment in QUARK?. The Harp will be sorely missed and I thank Walt for the many installments that appeared here. I look forward to a long series in QUARK?. :: Sometime ago in a letter of comment I strongly urged Tom to maintain a regular schedule (at least quarterly) and I see that this issue he has taken my advice as well as announcing a larger magazine of some 30 pages each issue. The current one is 20pgs which strikes me as an optimum for this fanzine -- it doesn't seem to me that Tom has either the resources, time, or enthusiasm for hyperactivity. I'd prefer the present informal, quarterly publication for a long time rather than a few nova issues and oblivion -- and I'd like to see the Harp in a smaller fanzine, for a change. Willis always held his own in Wrhn but the number of topics offered each issue tended to cut down the amount of comment any one contribution could receive. Not since the days of QUANDRY has the Harp been the dominant feature of a regular fanzine and that has been far too long. One of the most healthy influences in fandom should be given an unencumbered forum at least once every decade. The current Harp, oddly enough, is concerned with the same theme that dominated Walt's first Wrhn Harp: atomic weapons. It's a virtuoso display of Walt's ability to take unrelated subjects and weave them around a theme into a neatly unified whole -- this time slugs, Blish, and bombers. :: Walt's observation that "Writing to me is something like regurgitating that 'little book' which St. John in Revelations was required to take from the angel and eat. 'It shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth as sweet as hney'. In other words, I hate writing

but I love to have written." is eerily close to my own feelings. And his confession that he has to maneuver himself "into the desperate situation of a promise made and a deadline to meet" isn't very far from my present situation. Test your mental image of the writer speaking against the actuality: Women with pendulous bosoms come at me and walk on. Men and women are lying around in various stages of nudity. I sit with legs spread writing with a ball point pen on an old sheet of blue paper oblivious to the orgy. Before this picture gets me driven out of fandom (and these days it doesn't take much more than that), I'll admit I'm at a beach. And here I am writing. :: The Harp reminds me of telling Jim Blish how I hated writing and his answer that he found it hard to believe: "But you write with such obvious gusto". But it's not for the writing, I explained, it's for the anticipated effects of the writing. Like Walt I love to have written. :: In a front cover "EMERGENCY!" statement, Willis deplores the "multiple surgery" now being performed on fandom, but doesn't mention any names; which will have an Eisenhowerian effect of deploring the healers as well as the surgeons. The only surgery I am aware of is that being attempted by Donaho and the move to blackball Walter Breen in the amateur press associations. The latter has been most effectively healed by FAPA in its own case and the opposition to the former indicates that the only amputation that can result would be Donaho himself, by his own hand. Certainly I hope no one leaves fandom as a result of the condemnation of the moves against Walter. As far as I can recall, no one supporting Breen has suggested any surgery -- which seems rather friendly under the circumstances. :: A well edited and lively letter column contains mail from Donaho and Alva Rogers among others. Donaho admits that some of the results of his recent activities have been "most unfortunate" but "if I had it to do over again I'd still do it, not naming names." Which is an indication of the quality of tactics he's ready to use and a tacit commitment to the doctrine that the ends justify the means/a rather Goldwatered down version of the Senator's defense of extremism in seeking justice. Elsewhere in his letter Bill's thinking takes a more liberal turn in support of the monster fans who will be at the convention: "They've always been well behaved and no trouble at conventions. If they do start disrupting things, perhaps something should be done. But this seems very unlikely and they shouldn't be discriminated against before the fact." In another context Bill has testified to a fan's good conduct at conventions but this hasn't stopped him from making every effort to discriminate against him "before the fact". Bill observes that the ramifications of the Breen affair will extend beyond Breen or the committee and will go into "What should fandom be like?" Perry's answer is brilliant, I think: "One of the things it should not be, I would suggest, is a willing audience for people who believe they have a duty to defame publicly persons they suspect of having committed a crime. There are police and courts adequately set up to deal with criminals. If you cannot recognize this principle by yourself, I hope other fans can make it obvious to you." :: Walt Willis's slugs are still haunting me -- remember I referred to them above. Walt, why don't you just paint a line of poison on the outer edge of the door's threshold and stop the buggers before they crawl into the house? :: I hope Busby's treatment of the DNQ has finally dealt the death blow to it and will serve as an example that DNQ doesn't really exist when the receiver of the letter decides that circumstances demand that he betray the trust placed in him. :: Perry's witty editorials, a long and unique review of a fanzine and two pages of fan fiction, which I haven't read, round out the issue. If you have the impression that I tend to get pretty enthusiastic about this fanzine, you're right. Any fanzine that can draw the first extended comments I've devoted to a subzine in years -- and only lack of space prevents me from covering other points checked in this issue -- is one of my favorites and is highly recommended. (By the way, Tom. Is QUARK? really copyrighted like it reads here on the cover? I was about to name this column "Report on the Public Domain" until I noticed that line.)

.....
 "I hate to see injustice done, especially to me."

--Pilati

POSTMORTEM

By Prentiss Choate

THE COMMITTEE AND THE BOONDOGGLE: Both sides in the controversy over Walter Breen have now published more or less definitive statements of their stand in the matter, a compiled defense of Breen in THE LOYAL OPPOSITION, and the replying "Report from the Pacificon II Committee."

It is time for a gathering together of the facts that have turned up in this controversy and a careful analysis of the way things were handled, for two reasons. One, the air won't clear and this thing settle down until the misinformation gets sifted out; two, fandom needs to understand just what happened and why it happened so it will know how to handle better a similar occurrence next time.

Al Lewis, in Opposition, indicates that there are two separate issues involved, the action of the Committee in barring Walter, and the action of Donaho in publishing THE GREAT BREEN BOONDOGGLE and attempting to have him ostracized from fandom and/or society. This may be true; however, these two issues are pretty well blurred together. Although the rest of the committee claims to have had nothing to do with the publication of Boondoggle it was published as part of the committee's effort to get advice as to what to do about Breen, and it is upon it that the committee has chiefly relied as its textbook of facts. Moreover it was Boondoggle which actually established Breen's "general reputation" which serves as the basis for the committee's argument of legal jeopardy. Also, there seems to be a good deal of confusion in the committee's motives; it claims it ousted Breen not because he was a child molester but because legal action could be taken against committee members, but when one examines the rest of its statement and actions a rather different pattern emerges.

For example much is made of Tony Boucher's reply to those who asked, "Why didn't you just ask Walter to stay away from children at the con?" that "it seems to work to tell Walter to stop bothering this little boy and that little boy, but it seems impossible to effectively tell him to leave little boys alone entirely." Now this might be a telling point if it was the committee's purpose to get Breen to leave little boys alone entirely. I was under the impression, however, that the committee was only responsible for Pacificon II, and Tony's remark is not relevant to the question of whether it wouldn't be enough to tell Walter to behave himself at the con. The committee says it agrees that a fan's morals are not committee business, but I believe it would have conducted this thing quite differently if its members had not inwardly felt that they were.

Nor, for the reasons detailed below, can I abide with Al Lewis' conclusion that, reprehensible as Donaho's action is, the committee had no choice but to bar Walter. I am willing to believe that the committee (other than Donaho) acted sincerely in accordance with what they thought was right, but I feel their judgment was all wrong and they made a serious mistake.

But let me start by reviewing the data concerning Walter and children that serves as the basis for all this. I have been very hesitant to do this heretofore because of the likelihood of criminal or court action in this matter and the reluctance of parents to have their names dragged around any more. Now, however, the legal threat seems to have abated (the police informed Breen that their investigation of him had been dropped), and the parents concerned have read and okayed the following accounts, except Alva, and I hereby pledge to publish any corrections he may think in order.
/As does the editor of Wrhn. --RB/

THE "EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS": Boondoggle is largely a set of unsupported reports, begged questions, slanted prose and snide comment, but the heart of it, and the part on which the committee says it is basing its case, is incidents involving four children to which there were eyewitnesses. Let us look at these carefully.

Ellington. Walter is reported to have played with then-3-year-old Poopsie Ellington in an erotic manner on several occasions between 3 and 4 years ago. Dick Ellington has published his views on the matter, namely that he found Breen's actions "certainly completely harmless" and is very bugged with Donaho for making an issue of them.

Later when he and Pat became a little dubious they simply asked Walter to stop and he did. The story published by Donaho and Metcalf that he vowed to kill Walter if he came near their child again is, says Dick, simply a lie.

Clinton. Donaho reports that Breen followed Tony Clinton, age 6, into the bathroom, later amended to bedroom. The insinuation: he was trying to seduce him. The fact: Tony's mother entered the bedroom to find him and Walter at opposite ends of the room conversing.

In the committee report Donaho says the Clintons stated emphatically at the hearing that they were not defending Walter Breen. The insinuation: they personally feel Walter is indefensible. The fact: Ed and Jessie made it quite clear that they challenged the right of the committee to hold such a hearing and were not going to dignify it with a defense. Moreover, Ed Clinton has given a generous amount to the Breen Defense Fund.

Isn't innuendo a wonderful thing?

Freudel. Marcia has asked me to let sleeping dogs lie in regard to the stories about Breen and her son: "I hate gossip and Glen and I have nothing to be defended against." She says she believes Walter was a good influence on Glen and that Donaho is psychotic.

Rogers. The committee in its report tends to fall back on Alva's own testimony, saying in effect, "Well, at least he's an eyewitness and he's unmistakably on our side." It also banks solely (evidently) on his testimony for its contention that Breen is untrustworthy and therefore a gentler approach than ousting him was out of the question. Alva's report, couched in impassioned language, is in gist that he found Walter on his son's bed with his arm around him, he indicated his disapproval, and later caught him cuddling Bill again and found out that Walter had invited Bill to his apartment.

Now Alva told me the whole story at Miri's shower and it came out somewhat different, and with an entirely different emotional tone. It seems he came by Bill's open door and saw him and Walter sitting on the bed with Walter's arm around Bill. "What's going on?" asked. "We're watching TV," Walter replied. "Oh," said Alva, and went downstairs. He told Sid. Sid went up and, without making any issue, invited Walter back to the party, blowing smoke in his face as he accompanied her. This was evidently the sole "evidence that we wanted no more of that" given by either Sid or Alva right up until the time they wrote a letter barring Breen from their home, six or eight months later. Correct me, Alva, if I'm wrong.

A few weeks after this first incident Walter was found in the living room, quite openly, with his arm around Bill. Nothing at all was said then, apparently. But the next day Alva took Bill aside and told him about homosexuality and apparently scared

him, so that he felt it necessary to blockade his room door the next time Walter was expected at the house.

Up until this talk Walter and Bill had been friends for some time, and Bill admitted he liked Walter. The fact that Walter invited him to his apartment to see his coin collection means nothing more than that Walter is proud of his coin collection and liked Bill. It has been pointed out that Walter has had children, coin fans and other, visit him quite frequently, apparently without incident. [It has also been pointed out (by Alva Rogers in the Committee report) that "We were then told that he and his older brother had been invited to visit Walter in his apartment and 'look over his coin collection.'" As Ted White points out in MINAC: "they were both asked to come together (hardly conducive to a seduction), and that Walter is one of the biggest names in numismatics, with a personal collection of great worth and repute." --RB/

But, it may be said, doesn't this coupled with the "cuddling" incidents establish a good presumption that Walter was trying to seduce Bill? No, it seems to me that the aura of fear and loathing surrounding Child Molestation creates anxiety over actions that in a different context would be no cause of concern to anyone. The other day I put my arm around one of the office girls. I admit I find her rather attractive, and if various practical considerations hadn't stopped me I might have tried to make her. But as it was I simply put my arm around her.

So Walter Breen is attracted to children. What of it? A damn sight more of us have sexual attractions to children than we normally admit to each other or even to ourselves. The entire issue is, how much does a person have control of his impulses? And, in all the dirt that has flied so thick, I don't recall ever hearing Walter accused of molesting a child in the face of express disapproval on the part of the child, parents, or anyone else close to the scene. Have you?

Now you can say, well, maybe so, but we just can't take chances; he might catch the kid alone under propitious circumstances and the beast in him might suddenly spring free and that would be it -- well, completely aside from a total absence of evidence that Walter Breen reacts in this manner, let's just be aware of how much benefit of how much doubt we are extending to him in any of this. I somehow don't think it fitting to exclude a person from fanac because some other stereotyped child molester is capable of acting like a beast.

As I said, it was some six months or so (Alva is vague on the time) after either of the arm-around incidents that the Rogerses felt it necessary to write a letter barring Breen from their home. It rather sounds to me as though someone did something he felt guilty for and then had to blow up Walter into a monster to justify having done it.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE COMMITTEE: I am told that the committee wrote the first four pages of their report collectively, so presumably the following paragraph reflects the assumption of all four committee members. I am grateful to them for bringing it out, for it constitutes the hidden premise behind the whole way they handled this thing.

"Recognized psychological authorities agree that all (emph. mine) child molesters are psychopaths, not just kooks or neurotics. Child molesters are concerned only with the gratification of their own desires without regard to the consequences to others. They are not able to control their own actions."

This makes it pretty clear. The committee was not dealing with Walter Breen, human being, at all, but with some stereotype of a child molester gleaned out of a psych textbook.

For my money the above statement is utter rot. If Walter Breen tends to form emotional relationships with children in preference to adults this means nothing more than that a part of his psyche got left behind in the growing up process, and as he comes to terms with this part of himself his tastes will mature, which is in fact what has happened.

The interesting thing is how careful the committee seems to have been to avoid any kind of communication that would shake them out of their stereotype and require them to confront Walter Breen, the real person, as he is. Note the following:

"For several months we discussed this question with great care and corresponded with fans throughout fandom asking their advice," says the committee. Strange that throughout this time no one sought the advice of any of the people who knew Walter Breen well. Even the parents named above (other than Alva) -- did any one ask them, "On the basis of what you have seen Walter do, do you feel he is a danger and we might be justified in barring him from Pacificon?" I mean, straight, simple and serious, and without the asker's mind being already made up. From the reaction of these parents to Boondoggle, the answer is obviously no.

Instead the committee corresponded with people throughout fandom who had no knowledge of the facts and so were dependent on the committee's version of them. And if the Boondoggle is any example, its attitude was basically, "We'd like to bar Walter from Pacificon, can you think of a good way to do it?" Obviously by the time of Boondoggle Donaho's mind, at least, was quite well made up, and he found it necessary to bias the reader's mind in as many ways as he could, demonstrating that he wanted not advice but approval.

Alva's mind was evidently long since made up as well, judging from his letter excluding Walter from his house. The total failure of Sid and Alva to broach the subject of Walter's behavior to him at any time is a measure of either their irrational fear of what he represented or their feeling of having done the wrong thing in handling Walter as they did, or a combination.

I asked at the committee hearing why someone didn't at any time pick up the phone and dial Breen and say, "Walter, there are some things that are causing us a good deal of concern..." Alva replied, "Because that would presuppose that Breen was an honorable person." We have seen how slender his evidence was that Breen was not; apparently Alva and all the committee were so certain of this evaluation that it wasn't necessary to make an effort to contact him to make sure.

Sure, the committee invited Walter to defend himself, in the anonymity of a large group at a formal hearing where people would find it very hard to speak freely even if the committee chairman had not created an atmosphere so prejudicial that to discuss things rationally was impossible. Metcalf has brought out that the committee held the hearing only (?) because it was legally required to, which casts aspersion on even that vestigial gesture of fairness -- which is further called into doubt by the committee's announcement at the beginning of the hearing of its intent to oust Walter -- thus giving Breen the burden not only of disproving 8 pages of allegations, many anonymous, the burden of proof being on the defense, but also of getting four people to reverse a stand to which they were already firmly committed.

Would you go to a hearing where you obviously didn't stand a ghost of a chance? In spite of all this, Walter and Marion planned to attend the supposed second hearing, and actually came to Donaho's house. Now the committee claims there was no second hearing scheduled. Well, Alva and Bill and Ben, just let me hear you say that you didn't know perfectly well that Walter and his supporters were expecting there to be

a hearing February 10th. Just claim it and I will stand corrected. Otherwise I would like to know why no one made the slightest effort to correct this impression, and why the arrivers Feb. 10 found Donaho at home alone, sitting around expectantly, ready with an excuse for refusing Walter and Marion admittance, and then turning out the porch light on them so Marion nearly fell down the stairs.

If I'm mistaken and the committee members really didn't know the Breen's expected another hearing, they certainly knew afterward that Walter and Marion were ready to appear in their own behalf. Yet with no further attempt to hear those who appeared at Bill's house February 10th, the committee voted to expel Walter February 11th. (And then published their action in a fanzine before notifying Breen.) I think it's pretty damn dishonest for the committee to say: "We therefore agreed ... to hold up any action until February 10, 1964, and on that date to proceed unless some adequate reason for dropping the matter had been presented to us by then. None was.(emph mine), when those who could have presented such reason were refused an audience.

To sum up, then, from beginning to end the committee's actions have been characterized by a persistent failure to communicate with anyone who could possibly change their minds, or who could help them see Walter as he was rather than as they imagined him to be.

HOW IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN HANDLED: Various committee members have had a lot to say about social responsibility, how we just don't understand that they were fulfilling their moral and social obligation to the parents and children of Berkeley, the convention and the reputation of fandom, and to society at large. In the name of which, they have infuriated and brought emotional and legal hardship upon several Berkeley parents and their children, driven many people away from the convention and caused a deep rift in fandom both locally and nationally that is likely to be very slow in healing, and smeared a man's name from coast to coast, very nearly wrecking his forthcoming marriage, his health and his sanity. I once heard a definition of responsibility as the ability to estimate the full consequences of one's own actions. I don't think the committee has acted in a responsible manner.

Here is how a committee that was being truly responsible to their fellow man, might have handled the Breen business.

First, committee members could have approached informally the various parents and eyewitnesses to Walter's relationships with children in order to establish facts and get evaluations from those involved. Without any mention of an exclusion act their approach might have been, "Several of us are getting concerned about Walter's actions with children and we'd like to know whether you think he presents a real enough danger to warrant some kind of protective action."

If after this they were still worried, they could then have approached those who know Walter well, whether friendly or cool toward him, in order to gather opinions on his general character and trustworthiness to see whether any action other than a talking-to would be necessary. If legal advice seemed to be in order it should have been sought privately and DNG.

Then some member of the committee who wasn't emotionally involved, perhaps Ben Stark, should have visited Walter privately and with friendly intent. He should have explained the legal problem and their concern for the welfare of the children, etc., and asked Walter what he thought should be done.

If they were still not satisfied that this would take care of the problem, then two committee members should have visited Walter privately and asked him on behalf of

the committee to please not come to the con. Only if they felt sure he was likely to sneak in against their wishes should a formal cancellation have been initiated.

If any similar problem comes up in the future, I hope it can be handled in a respectful, civilized manner such as this.

A PERSONAL STATEMENT: My wife and I have known Walter Breen casually for about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ years, and very well since last June when he joined the Scientology co-audit group I conduct. For those of you who think Scientology is a fraud I shan't argue the point, except to say that there's nothing far out about what we do in the co-audit group; we just follow the essential ingredients of any therapeutic situation and establish a nonthreatening, accepting climate with another person who is willing to listen intently and understand what you have to say and so permit you to unburden what's on your mind and come to better terms with yourself.

We didn't have any illusions that Walter was a pretty tough nut to crack. Neither did Walter. But this was largely offset by the tremendous amount of effort he put out in overcoming his difficulties. Walter was my wife's auditor for several months and did a bangup job. Gretch made more case progress under Walter's auditing than under any other auditor she's had, myself included.

The same earnestness showed in his own auditing. Now I have seen several references to an amnesia covering the first 16 years of Walter's life: either myself or the two others who have audited Walter can testify that he is now able to recall childhood material quite readily. As he has attended week after week I have watched little things change about Walter and his life. He became neater, more fastidious, his eyes twinkled more, he was less defensive, more open with people, more appreciative of how others felt.

When Boondoggle and the committee action came out this abruptly ceased. Please pardon me if I get bitter when I read the committee's profession to believe "that Walter Breen is sick, not evil, and that he needs help and treatment, not punishment." Adherence to which view has led Donaho finally to the announced (in Angmar 12) intention of getting Breen locked up, Bill evidently having actually convinced himself that such a thing would be good for Walter.

It should be quite obvious that you cannot carry on a course of helping with a person's emotional problems in a climate of great anxiety, hostility, destruction of reputation, and the constant threat of criminal prosecution. Naturally all the defense mechanisms and hide-behind shields that we had been carefully coaxing down slammed up again, and effective help just about has to wait until Walter can again breathe freely in an environment where people accept him for what he is and give him a chance to use his tremendous positive qualities to help others as well as himself.

I think Walter will survive. Marion is wonderful, and Walter has made sufficient real progress in the last year that he can pull out of it. I hope.

I don't blame anyone in this. I understand the motivating forces in the people who have done it too well. Fear, desire to protect someone, loneliness and the need for social status, and guilt coupled with the need to prove that one has been right; but it all finally boils down to fear.

I sincerely hope that fandom can grow up a little as the result of all this. It would be little enough positive to salvage from a consummately regrettable episode all around. -- Prentiss Choate. Previously published by Miriam Knight for FAPA and the Cult. Reprinted with permission of the author.

AN AROUSED FANDOM

Clippings

The following quotes from the Breen case are presented, as was the preceding reprint of "Postmortem", in an attempt to give fandom at large a more complete picture of the reaction to the Pacificon committee's preparations for the convention. The circulation of "Postmortem", for instance, was about 100 -- many less than will be reading it in Wrhn and certainly a small fraction of the number receiving the Pacificon report. The other publications quoted from have similarly circumscribed circulations. I hope these few pages give some indication of the articulate response and put the matter in a more revealing perspective than can be gleamed from either the Boondoggle or the committee report.

Wanting to be fair to the people Prentiss Choate criticizes in "Postmortem" I wrote inquiring if there had been any response from the principals in those instances where he had offered "to stand corrected" if his summation of events was incorrect:

P.S. TO POSTMORTEM -- Prentiss Choate: Sorry for the delay in replying; I was waiting for the next Cultzine which I understood would contain a letter from Alva. It was pubbed late and meanwhile I went on vacation until today.

Alva in his cultletter doesn't even mention the Bill Rogers incident, and since he comments at length on Postmortem this seems significant. Donaho in a letter of comment on Postmortem says the following:

"As for the Rogers incident, Alva has repeated again and again that he found Walter lying on the bed clasping the almost nude Bill to him and caressing him suggestively. Yet once again you repeat the old lie that Walter was sitting on the bed with his arm innocently around Bill."

Now this is far beyond any previous version of the incident, either Bill's Boondoggle one or Alva's own in the Report. If this "caressing him suggestively" bit is anything but an outright flight of fantasy on Donaho's part we would surely have heard it before. Meanwhile another Berkeley fan has told me he heard from Alva's own lips the same unembellished version I recounted in PM.

The only factual matter taken up in Alva's letter is an attempt to prove that no second committee hearing was scheduled. He quotes from the committee's summary of the first hearing, in part as follows:

"The committee therefore agreed to continue to study the question and to hold up any action until February 10, 1964 and on that date to proceed unless some adequate reason for dropping the matter had been presented to it by then" (Emph. mine.)

From this it is pretty understandable that Walter and his defenders got the idea there was to be a committee meeting Feb. 10. Whether Donaho et al. knew this or not, the important point is that they certainly knew after Walter, Marion et al. appeared on their doorstep that they wanted to appear before the committee, yet they rushed through the ouster without any attempt to find out what they had to say.

Donaho's letter doesn't deal with any factual matters except the above, other than a couple attempts to twist my words for use in proving Breen is a psychopath, and correcting me to the effect that "Ellington didn't say that Metcalf and I lied; he

said we misquoted him." Now I read the exact wording of that portion of PM to Dick over the phone before publication -- Pat also -- and both okayed it. (The same with the other parents.) The question is whether the distortion was accidental, or deliberate, or the unconscious twisting of someone trying so hard to prove something that he is careless of the truth. In any event, I understand the Ellingtons are no longer on speaking terms with Donaho. --P.C.

THE THEORY AND PRACTISE OF BROTHERHOOD -- Charles Hansen: If the charges against Walter are true it is sad, but it means that he is sick and deserves our pity, sympathy and help, not condemnation. If by chance they are false and were trumped up to ruin Walter and drive him from fandom then this sordid affair which is already sickening becomes something monstrous. :: The con committee has been stampeded into taking a hasty and unnecessarily cruel action -- perhaps foolish and needless as well, but the major share of blame for this outrage must rest on the shoulders of Bill Donaho. Heaven help the innocent bystanders who get caught up in the resulting crossfire. I can hardly believe Bill's own statement of his intention "to perform a surgical operation separating Walter from fandom." It doesn't sound like the Bill I thought I knew. He would protect (?) us by driving from our microcosm a man of whom he disapproves, whether we like it or not. :: Bill, do you really consider yourself properly qualified to rule on what is good or bad for us without our knowledge or consent? Don't you think that is a bit too presumptuous? Could be you've been watching too much Ben Casey. Even Dr. Kildare knows it is unethical, illegal and immoral to perform an operation without the knowledge and consent of the patient -- even if he does need it. After all, you might have been our Patriarch, but not our legal guardian, and most of us aren't minors. The sheer brazen effrontery of this one man operation to protect us against our will takes ones breath away, and a good thing too, the stench is overpowering. I don't condone perversion or child molestation but it is evidence of sickness, not evil. This vicious persecution isn't worthy of you Bill. May I humbly -- but earnestly-- urge you to take your responsibilities as Patriarch more seriously another time Bill, and keep in mind the admonition laid down under similar circumstances to similarly inclined people long ago by a Man of great wisdom and understanding; "let him among you who is without sin cast the first stone." --C.H.

THE CAPTAIN'S FAUNCHING PAD -- Bill Blackbeard: First, to judge from Donaho's presentation of matters in Boondoggle, Walter Breen has been barred from the Pacificon because of the legally defined threat he is supposed to pose, a threat largely composed of IFs, *i.e.*, IF Breen, who is now tackling life in tandem and is rather unlikely to be concerned with such things at this time (IF he ever was), were nevertheless to make contact with an underage fan at the convention, and IF he followed up on it afterwards, and IF sexual acts ensued, and IF Breen and the kid were found out, and IF it occurred to the parents to concern themselves with where the two first met and to communicate that information to a city attorney, IF they decided to prosecute, and IF this attorney decided this case was in some way unlike a dozen others his office deals with every week, and IF he also happened to remember the obscure point of law that provides formally organized conclaves where contacts are made for immoral purposes are liable as corporations IF the presiding members were aware of the seducing members' character, and IF this attorney then proceeded to take the valuable time of his office to dispatch men to investigate the disbanded committee members, looking up addresses and driving around the Bay area to talk to them, and discovered that some of them did actually "know about" Breen, why THEN he might or might not be able to persuade the parents to prolong the ugly affair and the gossip of their neighbors, to say nothing of the anguish of the child, sufficiently to take the committee members into court as a corporate entity in two or three years IF things haven't been dropped in the meantime.

Of course, with the publication of Boondoggle and the involvement of the police,

many of these IFs have been negated, and the authorities are now viewing both Breen and the Pacificon itself with jaundiced eyes, but as an excuse for the action taken, before the fat was juicily in the fire, such a threat doesn't seem much of a bogey; serious worry over it would appear to be a little like giving up driving in a blue funk because someone you know down the street has just been given an unjust traffic sentence. Sure, something like that could happen...just like quintuplets.

Nor would the alternate, sensible action of leaving the status quo unchanged have involved any kind of moral compromise. All of us, facing the grisly situation that has come to pass, have to remember that we have been asked to give credence to the allegation that Breen, literally a world-renowned figure in coin fandom, a constant traveller, and a visitor in hundreds of homes across the nation for years, as well as a regular attendee at both sf and coin conventions, has been over much of that same period an unrelenting and compulsive mishandler of children, somehow at once too diabolically clever ever to be arrested or publicly exposed, and yet too stupid to be able to avoid frequent public display of his perverse affliction. This is a little like what the pulps used to ask us to believe, in a different context, of a Doc Savage or a Wu Fang. ("But...Breen is incredible," says Donaho serenely.) ...

First, there is nothing in Donaho's eight-pager which of itself establishes any actual guilt on Breen's part. Second, a number of points are made in such a way that by omissions and implications the nature of the original events on which they are based has been obscured: for example, Breen was not "in" bed with the cited fan's son, as Breen asserts; he was sitting on top of the drawn covers beside the boy, fully clothed, watching TV; for another example, Breen was not and could not have been responsible for another cited fan's child stripping nude at parties; he was more surprised, in fact, than many others present when this first happened in his presence, since this had been a familiar occurrence at gatherings where the child was a guest long before Breen's arrival in Berkeley; for another, Donaho's story about the boy Walter supposedly "followed" into the bathroom of his home is not even partly true; it is a complete fabrication from beginning to end and has caused, like the other near obscene libels cited, immense embarrassment to the parents involved.* ?/See "Blackbeard", page 42/ Third, Donaho cites no testimony, quoted or allegedly heard, from any child that Breen has taken any worse liberties with them than would any of the physically demonstrable individuals so worrisome to touchy, flesh-suspicious Anglo-Saxons; certainly there is none about any actual sexual acts. There is, however, contrastingly and from other sources, a good deal of information which seems sober and valid from young male fans who have roomed or resided with Breen (some at the conventions where Breen is usually seen in the company of some of the prettiest adult girls around) that Breen made no overt moves of any improper nature toward them at any time.

This makes for what must seem to many fans a pretty sickly document with which to explain the barring of a fan of Breen's stature from the Pacificon.

There remains, of course, the matter of Breen's own "incriminating" statements, both verbal and written, the latter circulated in private mail and a few apazines of very limited distribution: these seem calculated to stand square hair on end...and in perhaps too many cases have managed to do so. In this area, I think many fans, like myself, will be inclined to feel there is normally a vast gap, in sexual matters, between talkers, writers, boasters...and doers. Where there may be even feverishly fanciful inclination, there is not necessarily more. An obsessed mind, certainly, rarely suggests a satiated body. I am, of course, aware that there are obvious exceptions to this rule; I am familiar with Alestair Crowley, de Sade, etc.; the point is that Breen's clear record weighed against his continual opportunity for involvement and discovery; the lack of any juvenile testimony to the contrary; and the inability

of any of his accusers to come up with actual eyewitnessed impropriety of an incriminating nature (even the notorious business of the ballpoint pen and the pubic region now seems to have been largely hearsay), would suggest very strongly that where there is apparently smoke there is in fact only dampness and fog and no fierce fire at all... except that kindled by one man's imagination in those of others.

We have been looking at what Boondoggle has precipitated in fandom and what it fumblingly tried to do to Breen's reputation; now let's briefly examine what the publication of this Bill of particulars has done or could do to the members of the Pacificonmittee. This shabby document has involved Donaho's fellow Berkeleyans in (1) possibly libelous and certainly specious assertions about the character of a fellow fan; (2) possible self incrimination (assuming the truth of the implied charges) insofar as certain committee members might be charged with having conspired in silence for years (at least one asserted act of Breen's took place before Berkeley eyes over two years ago) to permit a child annoyer "known" to them to continue to move with full freedom in the community; (3) possible obligation to testify in court and subject themselves and their backgrounds to damaging investigation (some have political backgrounds which could conceivably affect their present job status if exposed) in order to back Donaho's allegations; (4) possible obligation to bring certain of their children into court to face cross-examination on their behavior and experience with Breen; (5) further exposure of personal and family details (beyond that already made in Boondoggle) to the grubby interests of courtroom sensation seekers, and possibly even the press; (6) darkening the atmosphere of anticipation which the Pacificon as a world convention should have, and leading many fans to feel they have been placed in the uncomfortable position of feeling they may seem to be supporting the Breen ban by attending the Pacificon; (7) earning for Pacificon II the charming repute in fannish memory and reference of being the con which saw the instigation of fandom's second Exclusion Act, any other memorable worth it might ordinarily or extraordinarily have had being eclipsed by this tag. (From QUEEN ANNE'S REVENGE #1)

REDD BOGGS: In dealing with the matter of Walter Breen, both the Pacificon society and FAPA have used or are using methods that are clearly indefensible. In both cases Walter has met all the standards and requirements demanded of members, and in both cases he seems about to be barred for being guilty of some nameless offense or other -- or at least for not being able to prove that he isn't guilty of these offenses. :: I won't say much about the expulsion of Walter Breen from the Pacificon society, partly because I am not a member myself (I understand that committee members are resentful that some persons who are critical of the handling of the Breen matter are not members of the society -- though I am not sure why their status in the society matters at all), and partly because this matter is being dealt with in another publication, issued by Bjo and John Trimble. I will only remark in passing that despite the fact that I hoped to make Pacificon II my first convention since 1949, I have now decided to stay away. Boondoggle was a low and treacherous blow. I don't much care whether Breen is guilty of misbehavior or not; he should not be subjected to such trial-by-libel. (From THE NEHWON REVIEW #2)

ANTHONY BOUCHER on the FAPA blackball: The London theater managers, by a tacit cabal, suppressed the plays of Oscar Wilde after his trial. The American radio & television networks banned the characters created by Dashiell Hammett after he had been held in contempt of Congress. It's sad to see fandom emulating these classic examples of the error of confusing a man's personal life with his written words. (From ALIF #20)

BJO TRIMBLE: Coin conventions are as mundane as possible; women's dress includes

hat, hose, and heels, and all the men wear ties. Children, especially little boys, flock to these gatherings, and love to meet Walter who is regarded as a special sort of person; a genuine authority on coins who will take the time and trouble to discuss collections with a kid. But coin people are the types who don't fret about being "square", they glory in it! They would not hesitate to bring in the police at the slightest hint of anything untoward concerning their children. Walter has contacted these kids after coin cons (a point used by Pacificon as a legal worry) and still no sign of trouble, yet he has been attending coin cons for years. (THE LOYAL OPPOSITION)

GRANIA DAVIDSON: The committee has not produced one shred, not one bloody molecule of evidence that Walter has ever done anything of this sort at a con, or made any contacts at any con which he has followed up. NOT ONCE. (From MINAC #14)

DICK ELLINGTON: Donaho's reference to the parents of another child threatening to kill Walter is probably directed at us and is quite as much a lie, though a stupid distortion also of something that did occur and which was twisted badly. (From MINAC #14)
(RB: See Choate's "P.S. To Postmortem" earlier in this section.-- the final paragraph.)

AVRAM DAVIDSON: As of now, although I've made hotel reservations, I don't know if I'll show up at the Con or not, because of this and for no other reasons. The chances of my agreeing to take part in any official function there is pretty damned slight. :: This has all been most unwise, most unkind, most imprudent. It rings in my ears with a dangerous sound, like that of "an alarm-bell in the night." The Con Committee has seen the beginning, but they have not yet seen the end. McCarthy never destroyed communism. All that he did was to destroy McCarthy. (From MINAC #14)

HANS BOK: ...If Breen were a convicted molester, Rogers might have a point, though even so I wonder at his & the others' playing-of-god... /Rogers/states that he found Breen in compromising position etc etc, though nowhere did he state any actual hanky-panky going on, and I can only sensibly wonder: IF HE CAUGHT BREEN MISBEHAVING WHY IN HELL DIDN'T HE CALL THE COPS? Because if he didn't, he is now taking law in own mitts and assassinating somebody's character. :: Heck, I've never met Rogers, & only once met Breen. Why mail such a thing to me? Why on earth should I give a damn one way or another about fandom-creeps? ... So, though I doubt I'd even recognize Breen if he walked in here, I'm rooting for him and gagging at Rogers-and-ilk. ...(MINAC #14)

MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY (now Mrs Walter Breen): Bill Donaho, in Boondoggle, indicated that he had no personal animosity against me and even expressed a hope that my influence might be beneficial to Walter. Since that day, however (Donaho is unbelievable) he has circulated, in letters, a slander about me which -- in addition to being provably false -- is so unbelievably foul that I cannot repeat it here. When apprised of this slander, our lawyer warned us not even to send a copy of it through the U.S. mails but to have it delivered in person to her office! Now, I'm not the kind to worry about what some fan might say about me -- I'm mentioning this only to point out, to Boondoggle readers, the peculiar variety of doublethink^k which lies behind Donaho's alleged mind. From being a person who might possibly exert a good influence over Walter, I have become a person who could only drag Walter down to even deeper depths of depravity. (From THE LOYAL OPPOSITION)

.....
"He bears honorable scars from wars of the future."
.....

WR

ACCIDENTALS & NOMICS

By James Blish

The opinions espoused below are not exactly new -- in fact I delivered them at the Pittcon. But I offered them in hopes of influencing my listeners, and under a promise that they would go into print shortly after I spoke them.

Their subsequent non-appearance distressed me, but since I was rewriting the speech up to the last minute in Pittsburgh, I had no copy, and a tape recording that was made of my actual delivery turned out to be as inaudible as I myself must have been. Nor was I able to re-possess this sole draft short of a trip to the 1963 Westercon.

Nevertheless, I still subscribe to these views, and I'm delighted to publish them even at this late date. I called them:

A QUESTION OF CONTENT. I would like to use this platform to raise some questions which have been exercising me for several years, in the hope that some of you may have come up with the answers that have been evading me.

In particular, I've been wondering: What is it about science fiction that so attracts its readers and writers? What are we seeking when we turn to stories about other worlds and other times? Why do we most of us prefer a story set in the future to every other kind of story, even though almost all such stories are both unredeemably bad and very remote from any experience we are ever likely to undergo? What does it do for us, that we cling to it in this strange way -- though to an outside observer it doesn't seem to merit a tithe this much devotion?

Well, there is that odiously familiar word "escape" lurking in the wings; but even if we assume it to be valid, it is too broad to be useful, for the obvious reason that it fails to explain why people who want to escape choose this particular, narrow little branch of fiction instead of some other. All of the easy answers I've encountered thus far have similar defects, and this includes a couple of psychoanalytic hypotheses that would curl even Phil Farmer's hair.

But the stubborn fact remains. When I say that we cling to science fiction, I'm talking even more about writers than I am about readers, or even fans. A good many scornful things have been said about science-fiction readers, but all the evidence shows that they are better read, outside their hobby, than are most other devotees of specialized fiction -- those who love detectives, say, or Westerns. Most of those people seem to read nothing else at all. Even the science fiction writer, when you look at him as a reader, is often very catholic in his tastes. I know a few, and I don't think they're at all freakish, who strike me as being quite erudite outside their specialty.

But except to turn a mechanical buck, most of them will write nothing but science fiction, no matter what else they like to read. I myself have been reading the stuff every month for over thirty years, and writing it for twenty, until now it bores me almost to the point of insanity; yet I can't leave it alone, and I really don't want to.

At the 1959 Milford Science Fiction Writers' Conference, the group was polled one evening on how many present were then involved in some writing project outside of science fiction. Every single hand was raised, and at the 1960 Conference there was an

identical unanimity. This would seem to undercut my point rather drastically, were it not for the fact that I simply don't believe in those shows of hands. At least, I have yet to see a serious non-science fiction work from any of those people. I don't doubt that some of them raised their hands because they were also counterfeiting ribald Classics in broken English for the men's magazines, or ghosting an autobiography for a paper napkin tycoon, or feeding copy to a sports-car journal; that's the kind of buck-turning every professional writer finds on his hands from time to time -- and it's amazing how much better they pay than science fiction does -- and maybe can be regarded in the same light as the copy Clifford Simak turns out for the excellent newspaper he works for, or I do for my advertising agency. And of course serious work takes time; I have been waiting more than a year but that may very well not be nearly long enough. (It wasn't; one of the hands raised belonged to the author of "The Sand Pebbles.") But I think that many of those hands were raised only because the boys and girls were worried about the state of the market and felt that they should be developing a few sidelines, at least.

In fact, if you ask yourself how many writers science fiction has had in its whole history who wrote other kinds of fiction as competently -- or even tried to -- you will not be forced to take off your shoes to reach a total. Most of us, after writing a detective story or a popular medical article or a speech for a company president, return to science fiction with relief -- with the feeling that this is what we really like to do, no matter how small the checks are.

Why should this be? Any sane writer would work in this field only now and then, for kicks, because he has an idea he just can't resist. But that's not how almost all of us behave. We go on and on, year after year, churning out science fiction -- about 200 of us, in a field that can't print the total output of more than 50, maybe not even half that many. We do it not because each piece is irresistible and might also turn out to be good, but because we love the stuff even when it's dull and we're sorry we bothered with it.

As for the readers: I don't know how else one can account for the grand and abiding passions which have been aroused by Edgar Rice Burroughs, H.P. Lovecraft, A. Merritt, and a long list of technically still-living writers whom the law of libel forbids me to mention, except on the assumption that in our field boredom is not necessarily the enemy of love.

This subject was touched upon by 1959's Detention guest of honor, Poul Anderson, and had he made it his central subject I should find myself with no problem on my hands. But Poul's own subject was an appeal for a unitary approach to science fiction, in which philosophy, love, technology, poetry, and the elements of daily life all play important roles. Now this is an ideal prescription for good science fiction, and it is nowhere better exemplified than in Poul's own novel, "The Man Who Counts". But it is a good prescription for science fiction only because it is good for fiction as a whole -- and indeed, no good fiction of any kind has ever been produced in any other way, and I feel safe in saying that none ever will be. One-sided novels may be satire, or allegory, or "key" novels -- that kind of novel where you can't figure out what's going on unless you know that the character named Horace Mills Fitzcampbell is really Henry Luce -- but they are never complete novels, and they have about as much lasting power as a piece of Kleenex.

This description fits most science fiction very well, alas, and Poul did a very thorough job of expanding upon it. But it seems to be that Poul's unitary principle also goes a long way toward explaining why popular or critical successes like "1984", "Player Piano", "Limbo", "Brave New World", "Star of the Unborn" and the like never increase either our audience or the prestige of our idiom. Many of these books turn

on gimmicks which to us are old and stale, and usually they handle those gimmicks clumsily and with varying degrees of naivete. Yet they command an audience, and a respect, which our much more skillful and experienced practitioners can't even get close to. Nor does this happen because the books were written by "big names." That was true of Franz Werfel's last novel, yet it was his least successful work; Huxley was only moderately well known when he wrote "Brave New World", and a science fiction novel written after he was world famous, "Ape and Essence", was a flat bust; Orwell had only a small reputation as a novelist; Wolfe and Vonnegut were virtually unknown. And you may remember that Herman Wouk's attempt to muscle into the field, undertaken when he was the fair-haired boy of TIME MAGAZINE, got no farther than COLLIER's before dying of sheer unworthiness to live.

But the successes can be accounted for. Each one of these outside authors can visibly be seen to be thinking about something. George Orwell was not simply pushing around the devices of that old plot about the future Asiatic-type despotism, in the hope of finding an angle fresh enough to sell. He had something fundamental to say about one of the great philosophical problems of all time: The nature of the relationship between the individual and the state. No wonder people snatched up the book as though it were bread in a famine! It's of no importance that Orwell's futuristic devices looked a little seedy to this roomful of jaded specialists and scholars. What is important is that the proposition he set out to show us is perhaps the most important contribution by an artist to this problem since Sophocles wrote the "Antigone", and perhaps the first original such proposition since then. This proposition, which is the drive-wheel of "1984", is only six words long: "The purpose of power is power." Not wealth, not luxury, not fame, not a woman a day, and most certainly not the public welfare, but the naked enjoyment of power for its own sake; to most of the kinds of people who are attracted to politics, power is not a means to another end but is in itself the greatest of all possible ends. This is a pretty bloodcurdling notion, precisely because so much of history seems to support it -- particularly recent history; but it not only shocks, it commands attention, in a way that the rats and the torture machines in the very same chapter can't possibly do.

The ostensible subject of "Player Piano" is the Second Industrial Revolution: the Cybernetic Revolution, already well under way, which is likely to terminate with the great bulk of mankind, including most of its educated citizens, with nothing to do that will be worth anybody's money to buy. This is a good science fictional subject but there was certainly nothing new about it; the marvels of the machine civilization, in which human beings are freed from toil, is one of the oldest science fiction themes. But Vonnegut raised the question: Leisure for what? Most people have no more capacity for leisure than they have for creative mathematics or corporate management. Just how Utopian can a civilization be in which most people sit about staring blankly at each other until it's time to go to the next bowling match or eat the next meal? And just how long will they sit still for it? The prospect is immediate, Vonnegut made it seem immediate, and the reader knew that he was personally involved -- not just being amused.

Werfel asked very much the same sort of question; in his case it read, Personal immortality for what? In "Star of the Unborn", you will recall, people didn't die; they were scientifically changed into a sort of vegetable organism and planted, so that in effect they lived forever. But the process sometimes went awry, and produced monstrosities; since these were irreversible, they were just thrown away. The monstrosities had a tendency, too, to resemble whatever character defect the man had during his human life; a grasping man might turn into a huge, flopping arm and hand, and so on. Here again, personal immortality in the flesh is an old science fiction subject, but the question of what is to be done with all those years seldom comes up. When it does, there is usually a little ritual about how wonderful it would be to have

all those lifetimes to become expert in some subject, or pursue some gigantic project... outcomes which just might be probable in about one person out of every hundred thousand. For the rest of us, the chances are much better that we would simply wither, as Tithonius did; or vegetate mindlessly, like Werfel's flowers; or become more and more single-mindedly and monstrosly the same kind of cripple or sinner we were during our first seventy years. For Werfel, who was a Catholic, it was perfectly obvious that the human psyche isn't built to take immortality of the flesh; to me, an agnostic, his conclusion seems 100 percent correct.

So we have Orwell talking about the problem of power; vonnegut about the problem of goals; Werfel about the problem of time and mortality. Bernard Wolfe was interested in two big facets of the problem of evil: the questions of why men fight, and why they suffer. Here I think he didn't come within miles of supplying convincing answers, in fact he simply took over a little Freudian voodoo from the late Dr. Edmund Bergler; but observably his subject was one of the big ones, the kind of subject that stirs the reader whether he likes science fiction or not and whether or not he agrees with the author's approach to it.

In short, all these books are about something. I submit to you that very few science fiction stories, even the very best of them, are about anything -- and that in this sense they fail Poul's unitary test in the worst possible way. For all their ingenuity of detail, and their smoothness as exercises, they show no signs of thinking... and by that I mean thinking about the problems that mean something to everyone, not just about whether or not a match will stay lit in a situation of no gravity. In that realm they are about as rewarding and as interesting as rope-dancing, trick roller-skating or any other act on the Ed Sullivan show (and like most such acts, they are fatally preoccupied with mimicking each other.)

And what happens when a general reader, fascinated by Vonnegut or Werfel or whoever, steps into our field for more of the same? He may very well notice that what he is now reading is more adroit in some ways, but that one gain isn't going to last him long. General readers and critics may be taken in temporarily by small ingenuities which are new to them, but only temporarily. That is not the kind of thing they admire in fiction; nor should they. Nor are they seeking to have their sense of wonder stimulated. The genuine sense of wonder, which is a piece of standard equipment in the mature human brain, can get along very well on what is commonplace to the distractible; it does not need to be bludgeoned by an endless succession of concocted and visibly spurious marvels. Anti-matter, galactic collisions, and numbers with long strings of zeroes after them do have their own fascination, but none of them is nearly as awe-inspiring as a five-year-old girl who happens to be yours.

I know that SCIENCE FICTION TIMES isn't going to award me any headlines for having gone to the Pittcon and come out foresquare in favor of fatherhood. However, "Wonders are many, but none so wonderful as man"; yet you may read several hundred science fiction stories a year without finding more than one which reflects any consciousness of this banal and ancient axiom. The writer or reader who still thinks that an exploding star is inherently more wonderful than the mind and heart of the man who wonders at it -- himself -- is going to run out of these peripheral wonders sooner or later; and then perhaps he will blame the readers, or the writers, or the editors, or the benighted public. But what will really have happened then is that he has grown up. What he is now seeking from fiction of all kinds, science fiction included, is not the sense of wonder but the sense of conviction -- the feeling that the story you are reading is about something that is worth your adult attention, and that the author approached it in that light.

Some few works of straight science fiction are as serious and as rewarding as any--

thing their authors might have attempted outside our field. "Childhood's End" and "More Than Human" both pass my proposed test magnificently, and I am sure you will find some other candidates for your own list. I also happily grant any writer full marks for trying, even where I am not too sure of the artistic success of the effort; for this reason I'm delighted that both "Starship Trooper" and "The Sirens of Titan" won Hugo nominations, and distressed that George O. Smith's "The Fourth R" did not. . But I have the awful feeling that many of us continue to read science fiction and to write it for no better reason than that it is comfortable and safe; no matter how outlandish it looks to outsiders, we grew up with it, and we're used to it. And I think it manifestly impossible to write well about any subject you regard as comfortable and safe, nor to read well if comfort and safety are what you're seeking. Good science fiction is neither, and it is precisely the science fiction story that rattles people's teeth and shakes their convictions that finds its way into the mainstream. And by this I don't mean ikon-smashing, as ably exemplified by "The Space Merchants". Once an ikon is smashed, you're out of business until you can find another one; Madison Avenue is certainly a tempting one, but it too will not last forever, but the great problems will. I personally feel quite certain that people will still be reading Sturgeon on the variety and nature of the love relationship long after the advertising boys have wrought their final offense and departed; just as they still read "The Brothers Karamazov" but won't even open "Uncle Tom's Cabin (though they were written in the same decade). No, I am trying to define the kind of book from which the reader emerges with the feeling, "I never thought about it in that way before." The kind of book whereby the author has not only parted the reader from 35¢ and an hour of his time, but has in some small fraction enlarged his thinking and thereby changed his life. For this kind of operation an exploding star is not a proper tool; at its best, it is only a backdrop.

Isn't that, in fact, what we all felt about science fiction when we started? It's still a young field, and most of us first encountered it as youngsters. It was a wonderful feeling...that sense that interplanetary space was not only there to be looked at, it was there to be travelled in, which the scientists themselves were busily denying that we would ever be able to do. We felt bigger thereby, because what we were reading made our world seem bigger. But both we and the field are not children any longer, and we have reached the stage where our physical horizons can't be expanded much more without bursting the bubble of the universe. The ethical, the moral, the philosophical horizons remain, and those are infinite; and it is there, I believe, that the realm of good science fiction must lie. That is always where it has lain in other forms of fiction; either we invade it, or we become just another brackish little backwater of literature, as deservedly forgotten as the mannerisms of Eupues.

My grizzled old speech teacher used to tell me that I must never leave my audience with a general point, but must always provide them with some action they might take if they agreed with me. As it happens, I have one handy. The only place in our field, in fact, where any kind of influence can be exerted on what gets written is right here -- not just in the speech-making, but in the voting. I have no personal reason to complain about the Hugo nominations, but nevertheless it's happened often in the past that popularity contests are not won by the best man; and though Poul's appeal for unitary science fiction last year was a most eloquent one, it didn't seem to reach many of the voters on this year's nominations. I would like to try to do that. Next year, when the magic time comes around again, and you have made up your list of five or ten possibles, I suggest that you put aside your other reasons for admiring them, just temporarily, and ask yourself about each title: IS IT ABOUT ANYTHING?

Nothing could be better for the health of our field than to let every science fiction writer know, beginning right now, that from now on there will be no escape from this question. --James Blish.

THE FIFTH COLUMN

By Walter Breen

Did you ever ask yourself what happened after "And so they married and lived happily ever after."? Did you ever try to imagine what the hero and heroine did? It would be a dull life indeed if, after god alone knows what derring-do, what thud and blunder, what risk and bloodshed, they merely settled down to a routine of provider and housewife; and yet most stories ending with the stated or implied "...lived happily ever after" leave no obvious alternative. More to the point, what becomes of the hero whose lifework has been violence and all of whose training has been oriented for violence? What does the marine sergeant do after V-E day? or V-J day? Some, true enough, have tried to make a lifework out of training more of their vile kind; others have thrown themselves into political activity of a sort approved by their local American Legion post; others have sought activity as similar as possible to their earlier career, in police departments, as jailers, private detectives, insane asylum attendants or the like. But all these are evasions of the main problem, and it is one seemingly never touched on in the literature.

"Well, hardly ever," says Captain Corcoran. In Tennyson's "Ulysses" is a brief statement of one way of solving the problem: Ulysses -- whose very name is said to mean "wanderer" -- is quoted as saying that he has wandered lifelong, but finds Settling Down pointless, and sooner or later he must leave. And so Robert Heinlein, taking the clue Tennyson provided, has given us a novel based on this very problem. Many critics of Heinlein's "Glory Road" have objected to the sixty or so pages of seeming letdown after the quest has been brought to a successful outcome; but in those pages is the precise statement of the ex-hero's problem in its acutest form. Jock Root even characterized the book as "the only good study of the hero after V-E Day"; it is in fact a study of the hero repeatedly presented with this same situation, and a so devastating critique of the "...lived happily ever after" way of ending a story, that once "Glory Road's" full implications are understood, probably nobody will dare use the equivalent of that cliché again.

Or at least not with a hero whose training has been that of Violence as a Way of Life, anyway. Stories are told -- I cannot vouch for their veracity -- of certain Marine commando troops who were so thoroughly indoctrinated in killing-for-its-own-sake that those few who survived World War II and perhaps later "police actions" have had to be kept under what amounts to protective custody ever since, lest they make mincemeat out of any innocent civilians who have the misfortune to look at them with the wrong facial expression, let alone shout "Hey Mac! watch where you're going!" when toes are trodden in a crowded elevator.

And so Heinlein presents us with a hero specially trained, by a combination of events he thinks are chance, in an odd combination of swordsmanship, math, survival skills (which for Heinlein always means ability to get the Other Guy before he gets you, at the always looming Moment of Truth), etc. He is taken through a group of incredible dangers, getting scratched up along the way, despite having for companion a woman with as varied a group of psi techniques at her hands as Valentine Michael Smith; then, having married her, discovered all the wealth he could possibly imagine available free for his use, and found himself relegated to the status of Prince Consort/Gigolo/Kept Man -- not even Sire, and monogamous yet! -- he naturally becomes bored. And after trying this and that, back on his own home planet, he goes out with his appropriately named sword -- Lady Vivamus ("Let us live!") -- for more of the same kind of derring-do which had brought him into his earlier condition of rolling in wealth and the hay. Is there no other answer? For Heinlein's type of hero, perhaps

no. For the run-of-the-battlefield graduate of World War II or Korea, or for you or me, perhaps yes. Some of us, after all, become quite content to get our major excitement between the sheets. We are not all either born to be heroes or trained to achieve heroism. We may not all find Utopia as dull as Heinlein would.

"Some are born heroic," said my beloved MZB in -- I believe -- "Men, Hapflings and Hero-Worship"; "some achieve heroism, and some have heroism thrust upon them." The Middle-Earth exemplars of these three categories are, of course, Aragorn, Frodo and Samwise. Heinlein's Oscar Gordon -- a most significant name, as we shall see in a moment -- partakes to some extent of all three, so that he has no way of escaping his intended destiny. As in all major Heinlein books, over the last decade or two, one expects to find a Wise Old Man character: generally he just happens to be a polymath with experience in the derring-do line himself, and to have opinions remarkably parallel to Heinlein's own. And he expounds them at length: like the game or not, it's the only game in town; victory consists of survival, of being quicker on the draw and smarter than the opponent, and one plays for keeps; democracy, i.e. "counting common man's runny noses," doesn't work out indefinitely in practice, above a certain level of population and/or technology; and so forth. Nor are we disappointed here, though there are two important changes. (1) Heinlein has two such figures in this most wishfulfillment of all his wishfulfillment stories; one of them is his younger and nymphophile (though in the end monogamous, f'gwadsake!) Hero, the other the Sancho Panza figure named Rufo. (2) Even though for once it isn't the only game in town -- for there are twenty universes -- the games have enough features in common so that the winner is likely to be the same sort of person, after all.

Nor does even an apparently inevitable victory mean that one can relax and disregard the opposition. This lesson is hammered home in "Glory Road", in much the same way that on the one hand the Roman church and on the other hand the communists have been hammering it into their respective faithful. Belief that in the end, whenever that may be, the Kingdom of God or the dictatorship of the proletariat will eventually win out, does not entitle one to assume that it will do so without one's own maximal effort, so give it the old college try and RAH, RAH, RAH... This is spelled out in the "Horned Ghost" episode. Much as in "That Share of Glory", even if the dangers are a kind of training for the real Final Push to Victory, they are still dangers, and one can lose a leg or a life if one is neglectful for a moment. The propaganda here, as in the rest of the story, is fairly well sugar-coated with adventure, and much of it is gotten across by incident rather than by preachment -- which distinguishes the Grand Old Man from lesser writers of SF With a Message such as Ayn Rand, Walter Miller jr., etc.

Yet the messages are plain enough. "Sin is cruelty and injustice: all else is peccadillo." In an ideal utopian government there is necessarily a focal point, quasi king or emperor, but his function is mainly to let most problems work themselves out, providing decisions when needed, and learning by predecessors' mistakes. "Don't impose your customs on me." (I detect here an echo of Nietzsche's "Rule? Press my type upon others? Dreadful! What delights me most is the sight of many different kinds.") "The youngster might get himself killed on the first mile of that ((Glory)) Road. But that is better than sitting over the fire in your old age, sucking your gums and thinking about the chances you missed and the gals you didn't tumble. Isn't it?" Noblesse oblige, even to a little swineherd. And so forth.

Aside from his fascination with occultism betraying a lack of practical knowledge of the field, and aside from his somewhat uneven knowledge of the biological sciences, limits in Heinlein's studies are something I hesitate to speculate about. For this very reason, when I see names and references in a Heinlein book suggesting some unusual knowledge or ingroup, I tend to assume that they were deliberately put there.

I shall leave to some other commentator the task of unraveling the Freudian tangles in this book, culminating in Our Hero's slaying Cyrano de Bergerac, who might well have been his own father, and in his marrying a woman who -- besides being for all practical purposes both an immortal and a witch -- is a mother of fifty and an adept and as changeable as the moon and the sea, i.e. who is represented as an avatar of the Great Mother Goddess.

But while on this subject I am going to suggest a new game for the Los Angeles crowd based on "Glory Road." This book is as full of names and ingroup references as John Myers Myers's "Silverlock," and the exegesis will be about as much a fun game as the "Silverlock" exegesis was. Perhaps some of the JMM fans will even set to music some of the verses found in this book, the way they did with Myers's own.

I already mentioned Our Hero's name Oscar Gordon as significant: Oscar (so Paul Zimmer reminds me) was the son of Oisín mac Fíongáil, and an Irish hero to model for all other heroes; in his own way having numerous parallels to Gordon. "Gordon" naturally suggests Flash G., that most swashbuckling and swordswinging of sfnal comic-strip heroes. The Gordons were among the most warlike of the Scottish Border clans. Most, or at least a great many, of the other ingroup references crammed into "Glory Road", contribute to Heinlein's intended meanings, giving them added depth. Some, to be sure, are there for laughs. I shall mention, somewhat cryptically, a few of those I spotted, and leave the rest to the LA crowd:

"Ettarre" is a character in a minor French Arthurian legend, associated with Sir Pelleas (or Pelias); the French legendry is the same which spawned Sir Launcelot. Cf. also Cabell's "Cream of the Jest", "Way of Eben", &c., where she recurs as a witch goddess figure. "Rufo", besides being a cat in the Mr & Mrs North books (Heinlein is a cat fancier), seems also to have been the badgered assistant to Pinocchio's puppet-show captor in at least one version of that legend, and I have the strong feeling I have encountered the name elsewhere -- commedia dell' arte? Carcassonne, the castle town the dying Cyrano recommends Oscar to visit, was the site of Simon de Montfort's massacre, where he said "Kill them all: the Lord will know His own". (A motto, by the bye, not too far from some of Heinlein's own ideas.) Cyrano's recommendation is itself the subject of an old ballad. The Egg suggests both the cerebrostyle records in "Venus Plus X" and the legend of Kashchei the Deathless whose soul was embodied in an egg. (There is more to this than meets the eye, too; if the information content is embodied in some such record, its guardians or successive users become for all intents and purposes Gosseyn bodies, nothing being lost on death save individual identity.)

More briefly now: numerous dirty limericks and bawdy ballads are referred to, mostly for fun; an old joke about Oscar Wilde with the punchline "H'all right, guv'nor, but oo does w'at to oo, and oo pyes?"; Lewis Carroll; L. Frank Baum; Edgar Rice Boresus; "The Three Musketeers"; the Robin Hood mythos; Coleridge; George Bernard Shaw; South American Amazon legends of the Singing Waters; Rider Haggard; Leigh Brackett; Tolkien -- mostly via some bad LA-style puns; Dante; "Three Hearts and Three Lions"; "The Incompleat Enchanter"; various romantic Gothick novels; a couple of Eric Frank Russell stories; and so on, far into the night.

And the point of all this? Heinlein, the Grand Old Man, in a position to write just about whatever he pleases and get it published, is doing exactly that, playing games with his readers, reminiscing about his own boyhood reading of swashbuckling fiction, and withal stuffing his books full of ideas he could hardly publish in any other way. Instead of criticizing him for what he was not trying to do, we might as well at least first understand what he has been in fact saying. -- Walter Breen.

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AUFGEKNÖPFT

By Robert A. W. Lowndes

It has been frustrating to read the discussion on opera libretti that has been running in Warhoon, as I certainly did not need Jim Blish's invitation in #15 in order to want to get into the fray. Thus, each issue found me wondering if someone else had made the points, this time, that I'd been wanting to make -- and perhaps, making them better than I was able to. I'm not at all sorry that no one has; and, actually, the delay has been valuable, since between #15 and the present, I've had occasion to do some intensive listening and reading. Whether the debate was an unconscious spur, I can't say; at any rate, the special Verdi issue of HIGH FIDELITY urged me to start at once on a project that I'd been thinking of for some years as desirable: to get to know Verdi's work; not just "Otello" and "Falstaff", but all of it that's available. So my "Verdi Year" started last September, and it may continue long beyond a twelve-month period. There are six more early operas to obtain, and alternate versions of the "middle" or "late" operas are needed. (Several writers who agree that such a designation is useful in respect to Verdi nonetheless seem to shift their ground at times, so that I cannot be sure whether "Rigoletto", for example, falls into their category of "early" or "middle".) All this however, is beside the point.

The point I want to make is that, so far as I've seen, the argument has mostly been centered on irrelevancies and side issues; no one seems to have brought up the question of what opera is and what a libretto minimally needs to be in order to make a first-class opera possible. (If the point has been touched on, I either missed or do not remember seeing it.) This is not to charge anyone with ignorance: Jim Blish, Bob Silverberg, and Harry Warner are certainly aware of it -- but it is very easy, in the heat of a discussion on peripheral matters, to overlook the possibility that some of the speakers have not thought of, or are not aware of, the essentials. My impression is that some of them are not.

For the most part, when we speak about opera, we refer to the opera of the late 18th century and thereafter; and while Mozart may not be the earliest composer to write this sort of work, he is probably the earliest who is widely known to everyone who listens to opera at all. This opera, then, is an art-form wherein the conflicting emotions of a person or persons in a particular situation or situations are experienced, commented upon, analysed, and brought to dramatic climaxes by music. It is not-a stage play with a musical background. The play (libretto) is meaningful only to the extent that it provides the composer with the opportunity to realize the emotional implications presented in music; and the opera is meaningful and effective only insofar as these are realized. The relevant plot of an opera libretto is not the story-line or action chart as such; it is the emotional line. One may, of course, see an interesting, believable, or amusing story being acted on the stage (insofar as opera singers can act, and some of them can) or see it in the mind's eye when listening to a radio or recorded performance. But the story line does not need to have anything like the verisimilitude of straight fiction, or even a first class stage play, in order to realize great opera.

This is a generality, and I am not offering it as an absolute. A generality, if sound (really general) is valuable in that it allows an explanation for phenomena observed in most instances, or in considerably more instances than those where it does not. You can apply science to the various physical means through which an artist works, in some instances; but art itself is not science. (If it were, then the greatest musical masterpieces of all time would be coming to us now, through electronic music.)

One does not read an opera libretto, therefore, in order to experience a work of literature, as one would a play or novel, etc. One reads it only in order to be able to know what the situation is at any particular point and to know what words a singer is singing in order to experience the full emotional value of the music. In many instances, the emotions conveyed by the singers and the music they sing alone conveys a tremendous amount. You can listen to Zinka Milanov singing the aria "D'amor sull'ali rosee" ("Go, mournful sigh and find him") in Scene I of Act IV of "Il Trovatore" (RCA Victor LM 6008) and you do not need even the title of the aria in order to experience the sorrow and yearning conveyed, sung in a voice that can float tones in a way that is truly ear-ravishing, however that phrase may have been abused. You can hear the "Miserere" that follows: the chorus of the monks praying God for mercy on one about to die; the palpitating beat of the orchestra and Leonora's projection of dread in "Quel suon, preci"; the despair in Manrico's "Ah' che la morte ognora", from the high tower, that follows -- his farewell -- and Leonora's interjections; the repeat of the "Miserere" and new stanzas sung by Leonora and Manrico, singly and together -- and you do not need to know either the situation or the meaning of the words to experience pity, dread, and despair, projected unforgettably by singers and orchestra. But if you know the libretto, know where this short scene fits into the total emotional content of "Il Trovatore", then your opportunity for experience is vastly enhanced and you may be able to enjoy just what the composer has done.

The structured pattern of an opera is greater than a sum of the parts, however enchanting any of the parts are. The person who endures an opera for the sake of a few arias is as cut off from an experience of the work as someone who endures the places in the Schubert 8th that lie between the tunes he likes. This is a very common defect in audiences, and it contributes largely to the sloppy "traditional" performances one usually hears. Since, to a large part of the audience, only the big areas are important, then there is no reason why the singers shouldn't do anything they feel like doing to them, so long as it sounds beautiful or exciting. All manner of effects are added, which serve no purpose than to show how well exhibitionistic singers can produce these effects; tempi are altered to suit the singer's convenience, dynamic markings ignored generally, and the orchestra reduced to the role of compliant accompanist. The results -- let's be honest -- are often very beautiful; but when this sort of thing is done to "Trovatore, (since we've mentioned that opera) what comes across is no more Verdi than the charge of the Light Brigade was war. And another corruption takes place; all this exhibitionism is defended by singers and too damn many alleged critics on the grounds that "Trovatore is a 'singers' opera". That is just plain bull. Verdi did not write any singers' operas -- at least, not after "Rigoletto," and I seriously doubt if he did earlier. He intended his works (good, bad, or indifferent) to be experienced as a whole. That meant that no one element was to be allowed to dominate the others to the point of putting them in the background, as effects which might contribute, but were not important, really, and it didn't matter if they got lost. Verdi knew what effects he wanted from his singers; he knew what effects were and how to get them, and he was quite capable of calling for what he wanted.

This doesn't mean that an occasional interpolation by a particular singer, during a particular performance, that is in keeping with what the singer is supposed to be doing, is always wrong. It can often be wonderfully right -- for that performance. It becomes a corruption if the singer thereafter mechanically strives for this same effect at each and every performance, and if everyone else thereafter takes it up as traditional interpretation. As with everything else, when you really have the rules inside you, and respect them, you can go beyond them at times, keeping to their spirit, without violation. But you have to have them in your nervous system in order to know at the moment when and how to go beyond them, without artistic disaster.

Opera, in a very important sense, goes beyond the rules of prose fiction or play-

writing. When this is done by a master, who has thoroughly ingested the emotional verity of the play he is setting, then any number of things which are indeed absurd in straight fiction, or in an ordinary stage play, do not come out absurd at all -- except to the person whose nose is buried in literary criticism, or ideas about verisimilitude outside of opera, and literally cannot hear what is going on. (Except perhaps to acknowledge that something sounds pretty, or exciting, etc.)

What the libretto of a great opera (and it is the music that makes it so) demands of you is essentially what any science fiction story will demand of you initially: that you accept certain things as "given". It is given that the people in "Il Trovatore" believe literally in witchcraft; it is given that ladies and gentlemen follow a certain code of honor (and, as has been pointed out, Di Luna is a villain precisely because he violates this code; he exceeds the authority that has been granted him); it is given that "blood will tell", so that Manrico, though not aware that he is Di Luna's brother, instinctively follows the knightly code: something seems to stay his hand when he has the chance to kill Di Luna. All the things that are given insure that particular people will be beset by powerful and conflicting emotions when certain situations arise; and the business of the plot is to put them into such situations. But the opera is not "about" these situations; it is about what these people feel in the situations. And the intensity and psychological surety with which Verdi realizes the potentialities here is what makes "Il Trovatore" powerful and effective, irrespective of how silly the plot seems when viewed with the eye of cold logic. Here we see the difference between science fiction and opera; science fiction ought to present valid emotions and persons, but if it is not satisfying intellectually in its story and science line, then it fails. But opera is not a vehicle for intellectual satisfaction -- even though the intricacies of sheer musical working-out, aside from the emotional impact when the work is heard, can give intellectual pleasure.

Of the Verdi operas that I am now fairly familiar with -- "Rigoletto", "Il Trovatore", "Traviata", "Simon Boccanegra", "Masked Ball", "La Forza del Destino", "Don Carlo", "Aida", "Otello", and "Falstaff", and the earlier "Macbeth" -- I would say that only "Macbeth" falls short of emotional conviction in places; and these are places where the music Verdi wrote, while not despicable, is simply inadequate to convey what needs to be conveyed. (But in many more scenes, the composer's hand is sure, and "Macbeth" cannot be written off -- too much comes through to call it a failure.)

As a play, I agree that "La Forza del Destino" is silly -- to twentieth century eyes and standards and thought. But if you are willing to suspend not so much disbelief as your standards of sensibleness and attitudes, then there is nothing silly in the libretto at all. Given the codes and beliefs of the time, these people are all behaving normally, and the seeming excess of their feelings is rather an indication that they're really alive. For many people, such empathy is impossible, and it isn't easy for anyone, perhaps, in these days -- but if you can make use of what you've learned in science fiction, you can do it. Whether you do it or not, is your own business; but the price of not doing it is missing the full impact of a truly great work of art. (Of course, innumerable people gladly pay this price rather than take the trouble of active participation in opera -- or other art forms.)

Shakespeare's "Othello" is my own nomination for the prototype of the idiot plot, so far as the leading character is concerned. But Verdi's realization of the emotional content of his opera "Otello" makes it easy to put this aside. The drama is the drama of a man manipulated and destroyed by the intensity of his inner insecurity, expressed in psychopathic jealousy. This is the underlying truth of "Otello" (and Shakespeare's play, too) which makes such intellectual considerations as the silliness and idiocy of the plot entirely irrelevant.

And it is the elements of underlying truth lying behind the fogbound teutonic

mysticism of Wagner's "Ring" operas that, realized in his music, gives them enough moments of overwhelming emotional impact to make it worth the bother of sitting through pages of vocal tedium — or, if you remember the librettos thoroughly, which I do not — verbal nonsense. Nothing could be more imbecilic than Wotan as a god in the sense that Christians know God; but seen as a blown-up human being, trying to behave as if he were indeed the center and ruler of the universe; as if he could do or get anything he wanted, and all would come out well, just because he was the Almighty, and wanted it that way — now we have meaning. Wotan's self-centered optimism, his irritation when causes work through to their natural effects, his anguish when his favorite daughter turns against him (coupled with the guilt of knowing that she is following his real wishes) his feelings of impotence and despair -- these, among other things are what make the "Ring" series a valid, if flawed, masterpiece. Siegmund is believable. Siegfried, as a hero, is utterly ridiculous. We are told that he is a hero, and the music attempts to convince us -- but he does nothing heroic at all. We do not even know if he's brave, as he has been shown to be far too stupid to realize that the dragon could hurt him, for example.

Here, I would say, is a genuine faulty libretto; it is this sort of thing, not the absurdities which sound so magnificently funny when Anna Russell summarizes them, which mars the work. In addition, Wagner piles on more sheer information than the music and vocal line, as such, can bear. He tried to make the poetry of equal weight to the music; and aside from the fact that it is often atrociously bad poetry, that doesn't work. It wouldn't work even if the poem were the masterpiece in itself that he so obviously thought it was. As a result, just where he considers himself most profound, he is often a crashing bore. Some of these errors are saved by the music; nothing anybody says convinces me that love has conquered in the end; nothing anybody does convinces me -- but the music is convincing.

Incidentally, let me say clearly that I do not think of all teutonic mysticism as "fogbound"; that is the last adjective I'd apply to what I've read of Luther or Dietrich Bonhoeffer.*

(Incidentally, I cannot agree that all Mozart opera are equal, even though I'm going on memory of responses many years ago. But feeling now that I only really know "Don Giovanni", I'll reserve further comment.)

With "Rosenkavalier", we have an interesting example of something else: the opera with an excellent libretto, composed by a first class musician, who here as well as elsewhere demonstrated his capacity for realizing emotion. Many hearings have convinced me that, as a play, "Rosenkavalier" is very good indeed; but it is just some of the very things which make it a delightful play which also make it inadequate (at least in its entirety) as an opera libretto. Wit and humor are certainly not off-limits for valid opera treatment; "Falstaff" proves this. But to give just one example, the scene between the Baron and the Marschallin in Act One comes off only if you know the libretto by heart and can get exactly what they're saying. Intellectually, it's delightful; and as a stage play, everything should be there; but as a realization in music of emotion, it fizzles. It always seems to me to be much longer than it is. Despite the amusing scurry in the orchestra, in terms of opera this scene is static and offers very little value for the attention it requires though some of the information is necessary. The music detracts more than it enhances, if you're reading the

(Concluded on page 42.)

*Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Lutheran pastor and theologian, who went back to Germany after he'd been gotten out safely, was arrested and imprisoned; and finally hanged by the Gestapo, just before the liberation.

MAIL WARP

Letters from the readers

JAMES BLISH: The "message" that Richard Kyle reads into both "The Star Dwellers" and "A Life for the Stars" -- that "The go-between, the coat-holder, the 'diplomat' is the man to admire, the man who shapes the world" -- is certainly there to find, and was to some extent intended. In the first instance in particular, since I was partly out to write a counter-tract to "Starship Trooper," I deliberately set up a situation in which resort to arms would have been the clearest sort of folly, and demanded that my characters use some of the other skills of humanity that might apply. In many such situations -- "The Puppet Masters" is also an example -- Heinlein characteristically tends to stress man's "meanness", his "orneriness", his cornered-rat bravery; he wants all potential comers to be warned that we are tough kids under our sometimes effete trappings. I don't reject this, for it's probably the truth as far as it goes, but a steady diet of it (whether in Heinlein or in Goldwater or in the editorials of the New York Daily News) tends to give the impression that there are no situations too complex to be solved by bluster. Too, a teen-age hero in the real world necessarily operates in a rather restricted theater, a fact that most teen-age novels ignore studiously. Both Jack Loftus and Crispin deFord would have liked to have taken far more part in the action than they did; Jack is forced to guard the ship, and Chris to hide in a hole, because those are the orders and it is sometimes required of actors (not just teen-age ones, either) that they work within the rules laid down for them by others. This does not make them as ignoble as Kyle seems to imply...Kyle goes on to say, "The epitome of man must be something more than a creature with educated hands who can hold two coats at once without wrinkling either." I quite agree, and the notion that this may instead reflect my real "convictions and beliefs" is a bogie. If Kyle has read anything else of mine, he knows that, and his peroration is purely rhetorical.

Sneary says I have "been repeatedly guilty of some of the more major violations of our code (unwritten), as well as a few other things." What code is this? Not to call for better stories and turn out clinkers? But many critics don't practice at all in the art they criticise -- this is especially obvious in music and the visual arts-- and no reputable critic known to me tries to make his audience think that he could have turned in a better performance than the one he's criticizing. If, for instance, I say that the "little" G minor fugue of Bach is a pretty badly constructed fugue -- and it is -- I don't mean to say that I could have written it better; I couldn't have written it at all, and sensible readers know this without my pausing to say so. Or to cite an example once used by Schuy Miller, the superb pieces about boxing by the late A.J. Liebling cannot be read as an offer by Liebling to lick any of the men whose antics he often mocks. Sneary's dictum would have it that nobody but Sonny Liston should be allowed to write about boxing, and he only so long as he remained undefeated. Silly, isn't it? :: I will agree that some knowledge of the craft one is criticising is essential, and that practising in that craft is one of the best ways to gain such knowledge. On the one side, we tend to think that the practitioner must have some sort of inside knowledge -- as Pound put it, that the man who makes cars is in a better position to criticise one than the man who merely drives one; and on the other side, there is also a tendency to admire the critic who sticks out his neck by practicing. But loving observation of an art is often just as good a preparation for criticism, and the test of this is that great critics and great practitioners almost never come combined in the same person. On the whole, I think it's a good thing that this proviso of Sneary's "code" doesn't exist. :: "The code says ...acknowledge your bastards." Since I have 183 titles currently in print, to a total of more than two million words, it is no surprise to me that many of them are clinkers; and from time

to time I've granted that some of them should never have been printed, and some never even submitted (though I apologize for nothing I have written; every line is worth something to me as practice). But I am hardly likely to pause and rub these shes on my forehead in every critical paragraph I write. Actually, I guess that what Sneary wants me to do is admit that something he thinks is a clinker is also a clinker in my view, but the situation is seldom so simple. For one thing, my view of a given piece of mine tends to change as I change; for another, the audience I may have had in mind for a given piece may not have included Mr Sneary, or the piece have been required to pass his critical tests only by accident (I presume, for instance, that he doesn't care what I now think of an essay published in the Spring 1950 issue of SEWANEE REVIEW). :: Incidentally, were we to apply the Sneary dictum about production to Mr Sneary, where would that leave him?

The Breen piece is splendid. I object mildly to the Jungism on page 18 -- Capek's lizards "perhaps touching on ancestral fears of dragons, ie, dinosaurs" -- not only because I don't think such ancestral fears exist, but also on the more minor grounds that no human being ever saw a dinosaur. On page 24, I think Walter passes too swiftly over an area where the rational and the irrational tend to join forces rather than to be antithetical. He says, "Taboos, historically, seem to have begun as some kind of propitiatory measure, probably as the result of erroneous assumptions as to cause and effect." Quite so; and this means that much magic was intended to be operational, functional, and an abstract from the facts of nature to the possibility of solving problems by taking thought about them. The only difference between magic and science lies precisely in their assumptions about cause and effect; as I remarked some years ago, "Identical actions produce identical results" is only a refinement of "Similar actions produce similar results," and the fact that the first works and the second doesn't in no way prevent the two assumptions from being examples of the same kind of thinking. (New York)

ROBERT BLOCH: Wrhn #19 both delighted and dismayed me: that is to say, I was delighted by 42 pages and dismayed by two -- those on which Walter Willis purportedly describes his alleged visit to my home during his 1962 invasion of the United States. :: In the interest of accuracy and fair play (you might explain the meaning of these terms to Willis when you write to him: you might explain, but I doubt if he'll understand) let me set the record straight.

1. Willis did come to my home, but not as an invited guest. Madeleine was invited. How he managed to find out about the assignation and disguise himself as Madeleine's young blonde niece in order to impose his unwelcome presence on my unsuspecting self is another story, which could only be printed by Grove Press.

2. There is no swimming-pool in my back yard. What I do have is outside plumbing-- and in all fairness, let me state that I did my very best to shout a warning to Walt before he took that unfortunate running dive into what he apparently presumed was a very small enclosed pool. His churlish attitude upon being fished out, and his muttered Irish asides ("Bad cesspool to yez", etc.) cast a pall on the day's festivities.

3. It is quite true that Madeleine did see a page of a Hitchcock TV script in my typewriter dealing with two characters called Walter Willis and Gertrude Carr. Willis says that "Since I came back home I have been glued to my screen, but it has not so far appeared." I suggest that Willis unglue himself and go take a bath. This is no way to watch television. As a matter of fact, the show will never appear anyway -- the network thought that the characters were too gruesome.

4. Willis's complaints that I couldn't get frozen orange-juice out of a container are certainly out of character, coming as they do from a man whose customary method

of playing a slot-machine is to use a hammer. Similarly, his carping about my difficulty in putting the top up on my convertible sounds a little bit like the pot calling the kettle black. Willis is the only man I know who removes his trousers by pulling them over his head.

The rest of Willis's account is entirely accurate, save for exaggerations, misrepresentations and erroneous statements. But then, one has learned not to expect very much from Willis; and this I must say for him -- he seldom disappoints you. Somehow, in spite of it all, I keep reading what the man has to say, even though his attempts at humor are laughable.

I was especially interested in John Baxter's thoughtful rundown on the Ian Fleming opii, which are now smashingly successful on screen and serve to remind us that the public appetite for sex and violence remains as voracious as ever. Contrasting his remarks with some of the Wrhn dissertations on "La Dolce Vita" and "Last Year at Marienbad" points up the dichotomous approach of critics who, while conceding that the film is a medium of mass-entertainment, also insist on evaluating motion pictures as though they constituted or should constitute an art-form. I believe there's room for both "pure" (or "impure") entertainment and for art-films, but boggle at critics who belabor one at the expense of the other. The real snob ploy, of course, is to pretend, as a critic, that a James Bond film is really "art" and that a Marienbad is somehow "entertaining". There's probably no way of completely satisfying this breed of cat; one finds them in the field of music, pictorial art and the legitimate theatre. I suppose the only way to compromise would be to compose a musical comedy and title it, "Hello, Dali!" Now, back to the old drawing-and-quartering board. (California)

WILLIAM F TEMPLE: Enheartening to see Wrhn emerge from suspended animation. As ever it opens up so many lines of thought that I feel like pursuing them all. To chase but one: Lowndes' remarks on lying, conscious and unconscious. As he says: "Our ignorance, even with the most learned of us, is such that we make innumerable statements that are false to the facts..." :: Arising from the Shakespeare Quatercentenary to-do here, we've just been deluged with innumerable statements solemnly presented as facts. Yet, as Masefield said, all we really know about him could be written on half a sheet of notepaper. Stratford-on-Avon today is comparable to Disneyland, fantasy town, a showplace born from wishful thinking. :: So may "facts" are pure supposition. You can prove anything you desire to prove with statistics. "History is bunk," as Ford said. It's not fixed and immutable, but an ever-changing flux as historians constantly rewrite it. A small example: after an exhaustive search, historians have failed to find any evidence that Wellington said "The Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton." Which pronouncement was always presented to us at school as an historic fact. Anyhow, the Germans are taught that they-won the battle. British, of course, know that we did. And the French believe they never really lost it. You Americans regard Bunker Hill as a victory. Actually, you were defeated...weren't you? :: I've just read "The Dillinger Days". I'd always thought Dillinger bluffed his way out of jail with a dummy wooden pistol. But a reporter thought that one up. Dillinger used a real gun. But the public got a greater kick out of believing the fantasy. So did Dillinger himself, in the end, succumbing to the pressure of everyone else's belief, although he was best situated to know the truth. :: I'm reminded of an incident at a Sourdough Convention, where the old-timers of the '88 Yukon Gold Rush gathered to talk of the old days. An old favorite was Mike Mahoney, reciting his party piece, "Dan McGrew", and adding his eye-witness account, in glowing detail, of the shooting. An old Sourdough named Monte Snow knew that McGrew was written before Robert W Service ever set foot in the Yukon. The whole incident was fictitious. He got up and said so. He was howled down by all the old-timers who had been in the Yukon at that time. Then they gave Mahoney the greatest ovation of his career. They didn't really want to hear the truth. :: Sometimes the truth is just

too hard to take, and we try to kid ourselves it never really happened. Hochhuth, referring in "The Representative" to Auschwitz: "The impression of unreality which it gives off, even today, fifteen years after the events, supports our already strong temptation to treat it as a legend, an unbelievable apocalyptic fairy story." :: Sometimes truth is too dull. "Plain truth will influence half a score of men at most in a nation, or an age, while mystery will lead millions by the nose." (Henry St. John -- 1678-1751) :: Even scientific truth must be regarded with caution. Science and medicine are always confusing theories with fact. The latest theory tends to be accepted as final truth by scientist and layman alike. Lord knows why: it seldom turns out to be. Pick up a scientific or medical textbook of 50 years back. About only half the "facts" in them remain precise facts. :: Take a few medical facts: Boracic lotion soothes eyes and skin. Prescribed for decades. And now decried: it's sheer poison. Similarly, picric acid for burns. Heart patients were always enjoined to take plenty of rest: activity could be fatal. But now: take vigorous exercise. Avoid sitting around: it could be fatal. After appendix ops. or childbirth, stay in bed as long as you can. But now: get up and around as soon as you can. Alkali is good for stomach ulcers. But now it's harmful. :: In READER'S DIGEST for March 1964 it's reported that whereas psychiatrists have always preached that rationalization is a bad thing, and a cure can be hoped for by ceasing to evade unpleasant past events and facing them and living through them again, they now hold it's a good thing: rationalization is a safety valve, and without it we'd all go nuts. :: A complete about-face, but take it in your stride. It goes on all the time. The latest theory is final truth. :: (Anyhow, O'Neill underlined a hundred times the point of "The Iceman Cometh" -- that a man must cling to some illusions, for life goes if hope goes.) :: Recently, I wrote a story about Venusians conducting a kind of not so much psychological warfare as a psychological defense by mixing truth and fantasy, on a 50/50 basis, in all they said to Earthmen. It utterly confused Terrestrial spies, one of whom finally accepted all of what they said because, on reflection, he came to the conclusion that only about 50% of what Earthmen said was in fact true, anyhow... Both species were using the same kind of double-talk, one consciously, the other unconsciously. We'd managed to rub along so far on a working average of 50% truth, so it would make little difference if we believed the Venusians. For we could never really hope to know the whole truth. :: Incidentally, he fell in love with a Venusian girl, discovered that although, as someone said long ago, language seemed to have been invented to conceal truth, the language of love speaks truth without words. :: John W. Campbell, Jr., wished me to make a couple of changes before he could consider acceptance: (1) Set it elsewhere than on Venus, because (quote) "we know Venus to be uninhabitable." (His italics.) (2) Cut out the love interest. Don't have them marry. :: The main point of the story is to demonstrate that we don't know Venus is uninhabitable. The latest theory, based mainly on the dubious telemetry of a thermo-couple mounted on a probe which missed Venus altogether, remains theory. Possibly, maybe probably, it's true. But we don't know. :: The secondary point of the story is that wordless apprehension, like love or hate, is the nearest we can get to fundamental truth. :: Cut both out, and I'm left with a pointless story. So I refuse. My agent shrugs and probably thinks 'I'm just being cussed. "John's a stickler on the science end," he says. "So am I," I protest. "It's unscientific to say you know when you don't." :: But I've had this argument before with editors who are "sticklers." Especially Bert Campbell, of AUTHENTIC SF (meaningless title), now where he always wanted to be: in a lab. Even well before the first rocket left the atmosphere, he knew what conditions were like deep under the lunar surface. (Yet, although rockets have since hit the moon, we're still -- at the moment of writing -- arguing about the nature of the visible lunar surface.) :: I can't resist quoting von Fange, a top engineer at G.E.C. (from his book, "Professional Creativity"):

"It would seem that our world to a great extent stifles the development of an independent judgment. Eventually we begin to believe that everything that now is,

is absolute and unchangeable... :: The effects of this are evident after a student has completed -- as he must -- thousands of assignments based on existing neatly detailed theories or procedures. Each exercise of this type has only one answer easily checked for accuracy. After such an indoctrination, only uncommon men do not lose sight of the facts that one definition of a theory is 'a more or less plausible or scientifically acceptable principle offered to explain phenomena.' (Webster's Dictionary.) :: Instead of recognizing the fact that theory represents our efforts to explain nature, we develop a blind faith in existing theory. We begin to believe firmly that our theory governs, rather than interprets, nature. We thus creep into the rut that began in the Dark Ages and has persisted well into our own day."

If s-f has a mission, surely it's to fight against dogma? So what a frustrating thing it is when editors show this tendency to align themselves with the enemy. Heaven knows that sf (of the kind that attempts to say something) is tough enough in itself to write, without trying to write it in handcuffs. :: Oh, well... Here in Britain we've all been worked up to a kind of martial fervor over the Yemen cutting off our soldiers' heads and exhibiting them on poles... At least, that was the "reliable report." But now it appears it was only fantasy, after all. :: And now your medicos are telling us that every kiss shortens our lives by 3 minutes (no more, no less). Science is wonderful -- in more senses than one. (7, Elm Rd, Wembley, Middx. England)

TOM PERRY: Willis's comments on his hobby were interesting chiefly because of their source: that is, because they come from the one fan who could have been in Frederik Pohl's place if he had so chosen, or who could have, if he had cared to work at it, become not simply a stefnal hack, but one of the finest mundane writers of our time. Walt could easily have combined the wit of Joyce and the sense of Shaw to found a new literary movement. Perhaps he will yet. But I find it hard to imagine -- surely he must have one of the greatest emotional investments in fandom of any fan today. :: Willis on Bloch was highly humorous. Now I wish he might be persuaded to do the serious analysis of that enigma: Robert Bloch, who writes so well, seriously and humorously, in fandom, and who has devoted his professional career to writing advertising copy, hack SF and murder stories, and now abominable horror films. This paradox assumes strange depths when one reads such things as his "Worst Foot Forward," which analyzed the harm horror and stefnal films do to magazine and book SF and fantasy. Certainly no one begrudges him the dough he's making (Hollywood would pay some prostitute that salary if he refused it) but I fail to see why he feels he cannot make it another way. His humor is certainly the equal of H. Allen Smith's, for instance, and his serious stuff could well rank with that of our most highly paid literary Thinkers. :: Baxter on Bond much enjoyed. I wish though he had mentioned the factual errors Fleming's novels contain. In "Goldfinger" for instance he has the villain murder a naked girl by painting her all over with gold paint, thus closing off her pores and suffocating her. I admit I've never experimented in this direction, never having had enough naked girls nor gold to make such frivolous disposal of these valuable commodities thinkable, but the superstition that human beings need to breath through their pores has been adequately debunked by my favorite debunker, Bergen Evans. He points out that long-distance swimmers are coated all over with heavy grease, which would have the same effect. :: Breen on dolphins is good reading and one of the strongest arguments I know against the conspiratorial doings of Boondoggle Bill and his friends. With such articles to his name, the Berkeley boys cannot claim to be acting in the spirit of Laney ousting Degler; unlike Degler, Breen is obviously a valuable fan.

SETH JOHNSON: Just as a concessicn to your readers why not throw a Wrhn party once a year or so where your readers could at least see you in person even if you might not have time to converse with them. Charge admission and keep for bheer or TAFF or your favorite charity or whatever. (New Jersey)

JOHN BAXTER: Have at you, Jim Blish: Agreed, I may have been less than fair in blaming authors for the practice of disguising juvenile sf as adult work, but Jim is equally unfair in blaming the publishers completely. Part of the blame must attach to the writers, if only because they continue to write juveniles knowing the publisher's attitude to be as it is. No, I'm not suggesting they should abandon juveniles because they disagree with the practice of dressing mutton as lamb; only that they should admit the money makes it too lucrative a field to ignore. :: I didn't "distort the series... to wield the flaming sword more effectively". The stories were listed in the order in which they were published (though I may be wrong about the position of "They Shall Have Stars") and for no other reason but to place them in the readers' minds. My plot summary surely proved that I knew where "Life For The Stars" belonged, as did my reference to the eventual fate of Crispin deFord. :: As for my dissatisfaction with Amalfi in Life, we must agree to differ. I see Jim's point about this man being a younger, less experienced version of his namesake in "Earthman Come Home", and yet the two seem so astonishingly different that I can't help thinking of them as separate entities. I doubt that any man could change as much as Jim suggests, even allowing for a few centuries of hard knocks. :: In his comments on de Ford, Jim leaves me behind completely. Dammit, if the idea of Life was to show why "deFord in embryo...is not a great success as the city's first manager", what is the point of all this brouhaha about education that dominates the book? Is he trying to say that education of this kind is a failure in training men for practical tasks? Hardly. To be coherent, the underlying function of the book (which I take to be the glorification of education, a point that Jim does not refute) and the character of the protagonist must be in tune. One can hardly question a man's worth and glorify his standards in the same breath without appearing ridiculous. :: Obviously he has me dead to rights when he cites those two cases of misreading on my part. I admit it; I skim a lot, especially when reading sf, and occasionally I miss a detail. Jim is right: the old astronomer is only shown going to sleep on one occasion, and deFord did learn his astronomy by himself, and not from his father. But so what? The astronomer is still ridiculous -- or made to appear so -- even if he goes to sleep only once, and no matter where deFord got his knowledge from, the fact remains that he has it. This is the point -- that he is ambitious to gain an education, so much so that he has been working at it for years. All the hair-splitting in the World can't change the fact that the dice in this case are well loaded. :: I can only throw up my hands at Jim's final point. So the juveniles are really only "juveniles"; serious adult novels disguised as kid stuff. But what about the "rules" for juvenile sf, stated originally by Jim in an earlier Wrhn and supplemented by me in my review of "Life For The Stars"? If these books are aimed at an adult readership, why no profanity, no overt sex etc etc? My main criticism of Life's message was that it could not, being directed as it was at unreceptive ears, be successful, but if I am to believe that it was directed not at my children but at me, then I must say I find Jim's estimate of my intelligence a little insulting.

RICHARD KYLE: John Baxter is an interesting and moderately baffling man. On the one hand, he can quote Fellini as saying of "La Dolce Vita": "I wanted to tell the adventures -- private and professional -- of a journalist who carries around with him his sense of melancholy, his frustrations, his fears, his attitudes toward good and evil through a series of contradictory and disturbing encounters which are the signs of a society without passions obliged to live from day to day" -- and then remark himself that this "endless theorizing" by critics "about an infinitesimal part of our everyday life seems to be idle." And then on the other hand, he can write a long and apparently serious article on the James Bond series, which tells of a series of contradictory and disturbing encounters which are the signs of a society without passions obliged to live from day to day. He can write of the series' devotion to sexual grotesqueries (which read like the case-history fantasies of the near-impotent, rather than the actions of the completely virile), and of dumbfounding and stomach-wrenching sadisms, and then remark (with apparent seriousness): "These are arguments generally

considered beneath the reviewer in search of literary quality, accounting as they do for the popularity and nothing more." (The italics are mine.) :: "Drop in the artistic bucket," or not, I think maybe I'll take Fellini. He seems, evidently (as I've said, I haven't seen the picture), to be a critical observer of the "society without passions obliged to live from day to day," rather than one of the enthusiastic participants. :: But maybe Baxter was just putting me on and I was too square to realize it. (Calif)

RICK NORWOOD: Walter Breen has obviously put a lot of work into his sharply science fiction slanted analysis of an idea, but, perhaps as a sacrifice to his admirable organization, he has ignored several vital aspects of the problem entirely. One of the most important points made in "You Shall Know Them" is that while sapience may be a matter for scientific verification, humanity and the gift of human rights are things bestowed, in Vercor's case by the British Courts, not intrinsic qualities. :: We give human rights to a race of beings largely because we are able to empathise with them, and we do not base our feelings on intelligence alone. It is practically impossible to empathise with a being which is hopelessly your intellectual inferior but this is not a clear cut matter. In modern times it is extended to all humans, and also to dogs and cats, while not to the more intelligent pigs. We like porpoises, and so if they turn out to have human intelligence, they will be given human rights. If rats turned out to have human intelligence they would be all the more bitterly exterminated. For mankind to feel obligated to recognise the rights of an alien race, that race must not merely be intelligent, it must have a personality at least compatible with man's. :: It is an axiom which I cannot justify but gladly accept that physical form should not be vital in the judgement of another being. I would also suggest that intelligence as such should not be the deciding factor. Intelligence is only important in as much as it allows a member of a race to become an individual, to partake of personality. In Daniel Keyes' "Flowers for Algernon", Charlie Gordon is the same personality throughout, and so we feel as strongly for him when his IQ is practically subhuman as we do when he is at his peak. Some races or tribes of humans may have a chronically low IQ, but as the film "The Sky Above, The Mud Below" so beautifully showed, they have the same human personal traits that a genius has. :: If empathy is the reason we grant human rights, and if empathy should be felt only with those who can appreciate it and return it, it is only reasonable that we feel empathy toward, and hence grant the humanity of, a race whose members have the capacity for empathy themselves. If the possession of a personality is the first step toward sapience, then perhaps the capacity to feel empathy, the capacity to project oneself into the personality and situation of another, is the basic requirement for humanity. Even in the case of clearly unintelligent pets, we accord them rights largely because we see them as affectionate. Thus a fan can advocate the forced sterilization of large numbers of impersonal Chinese as an answer to the population problem, and at the same time be genuinely horrified at the thought of spaying a cat. :: How much our sympathies may be misplaced is not the question here. The use of totems, suggested by Vercors, may be the external manifestation of the ability to project. In any case, it is best to settle first on what qualities we are seeking, mere intelligence or something more.

Like so much of sf, Ian Fleming's novels are essentially escape literature, and so I suppose John Baxter's subject matter is not simply a random author, but there are other extravagant mystery and detective heroes much more worthy of consideration. The Saint is a folk hero with far more of the qualities Baxter quotes in Bond's praise: zest, style, and knowledge, while managing to keep a much more wholesome outlook, even where sex and slaughter are concerned. :: A more likely excuse for James Bond's popularity is that he offers a simple solution, in an apparently knowledgeable manner, for the most complicated world problems. He gives the reader a vicarious chance to strike back at the bomb, the reds, and the criminally rich. This is why Bond does not always win, in fact, usually loses miserably most of the way through the book. Just as a child may have pleasurable fantasies about death and mutilation ("Then they'll

be sorry."), the reader can feel virtuous and noble by suffering-along-with-Bond. In fact, the average reader probably finds it much easier to imagine himself as a suffering rather than a conquering hero. :: It is this last dismaying attitude that makes me almost angry at Fleming's popularity. If these books are the true legends of our time, they reflect poorly on modern society. Better even the irresponsible, sadistic Mike Hammer than the self-righteous, put upon Bond. Both of these popular heroes are simply not worthy of comparison to the proud Achilles, the shrewd Odysseus, or even the savage, self-sufficient Tarzan. It speaks poorly for the British if they have traded King Arthur, who had the strength of will to channel might toward constructive ends, for James Bond, whose suffering is as the suffering of ten, because his heart is pure.

HARRY WARNER: Walter Breen may not have proved the parallels that he postulated at the outset of "The Fifth Column." But he did a remarkably complete job of analysis and speculation on a whole type of sf, one that hadn't been treated to itself in any previous criticism in my experience. Time after time while reading this I thought of a question or an observation and found the answer or confirmation to it in the next paragraph, a most uncanny experience. The essay is so thorough, in fact that I can think of little that might have been added: perhaps speculation on the possibility that freedom of the seas will end if these dolphins prove to be sapient enough to deserve title to their natural habitat, and the thought that ability to mate may be the unspoken factor in considering whether a doubtful species is part of humanity. At the risk of exposing my ignorance of what happens when humans fall into love with certain types of fauna, I'll not pursue this matter at all. :: The discussion of letters to the prozines has subsided in the letter column of Wrhn. But it has left enough ripples in this latest issue to remind me that I wanted to quote to you something apropos: "Nearly all of us editors are wondering why the letters from readers and fans, particularly, seem to be so scarce today. It's really appalling at times--in comparison to the fan mail Dr Sloane, Tremaine of Astounding and Hornig of Wonder used to receive, the letters just barely scratch our consciousness... Even when the Sloane Amazing was at its lowest ebb, it still received mail by the sack... (Perhaps) the fans are too busy writing letters to fanzines and articles for same, or putting out their own fanzines, to spare criticisms for such unimportant things as the pros." Sounds familiar? Lowndes wrote it, in an ancient fanzine named Eclipse, in the issue dated August, 1941. :: And I suspect that Johnny Michel is so out of touch with fandom that he believes SAPS to be the old Spectator Club founded by Lowndes that put out a dozen small mailings in the late 1940's. :: Out of respect to my extreme youth, which is even more extensive than Speer claims, I must emphasize that I won't survive Lovecraft for a while yet. He was born August 20, 1890, and died March 15, 1937. It was Tucker who died several times at the age of 40. (Maryland)

DICK LUPOFF: Now you ask, in Wrhn 18, and further discuss, in Wrhn 19, whether or not we (the readers) love you (the editor and/or the magazine). The answer, at least from me, must be that no, I do not love you. If the truth be known, I have a very hard time even liking you. :: I respect you. I respect you for the intellectual brilliance of your magazine's contents; I respect you for the high plane upon which you operate. But I detect little warmth (that from Willis); I do not think you love me. I think you regard me as an intellectual acquaintance; I think you regard me as an audience for your dazzling performance; I think you regard me, also, as someone to be titillated, tested and manipulated (as when you deliberately ask a question in emotional terms, in order secure an intellectualized reply). :: In brief, I do not think that you are levelling with me. :: I also do not like your magazine because it makes me aware of how stupid I am. When I read a statement like "As nearly as I can see it, the relationship between master and pet is somewhere between that of commensals and that of facultative symbionts," I am reminded that I hold only a B.A. and that I am looking forward eagerly to June 13 because my friend Chris Steinbrunner has invited me

to a screening of all 15 chapters of "The Iron Claw" that evening and that my favorite fiction authors are those who tell the best stories. :: I am afraid that Wrhn operates on a level where I am neither happy nor comfortable. :: Now I am not asking you to lower your standards toward mine. I recall with amusement the late Art Castillo's rage over the fact that the criterion for acceptance of material for XERO was that it should be interesting, rather than socially significant. I suspect that your criterion for Wrhn is the same as that which Pat and I applied to XERO. /Right! But that operates on a level where you are neither happy nor comfortable!? Hmm. --RB/ :: A question not discussed with Castillo was, interesting to whom, but the answer would surely have been, interesting to the editor(s) of the magazine, and thereby, hopefully to its readers, but if the latter should prove not to be the case, then it is for the uninterested readers to seek other publications rather than for the editor to alter the content of his periodical. This is, of course, a major difference between hobby and commercial publishing. Yes, if a hobby publisher can find no one interested in reading what he is publishing, the choice is between alteration of editorial policy and literary onanism. But such, obviously, is not the case with Wrhn. (Nor was it with XERO; au contraire the demand for copies invariably outstripped the supply no matter how we increased circulation.) (New York)

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 BLACKBEARD: *The last example listed in this sentence has been greatly altered from that given in the original QAR text; as the result of additional information subsequently obtained, it was learned the Boondoggle falsehood was much more irresponsible and invalid than my initial data indicated.

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 AUFGEKNOPFT -- conclusion: libretto along with it. And I find other places where scenes, entirely valid in a stage play, just do not "work" as opera. (Could Verdi have made it work? Someone with Verdi's sense of movement and compression, to ask a better question. Such a person, in my opinion, wouldn't have set the play as it stands, but would have had it revised and condensed for the needs of operatic values.)

On the other hand, I find no such fault with "Salome" or "Elektra", both of which are top drawer in the libretto department, as well as being superbly realised in the music.

To summarize: I think that opera, in order to be effective and valid, needs some of the essential values of Greek tragedy, the swift relentless inevitability, the simple (yet complex) emotional catharsis -- and this is no less true of "Falstaff" than "Otello". ("Antigone", for example, in no way suffers as a tremendous artistic experience from the fact that it's silly, by our standards, to make such a fuss over burying a corpse. Or at least for the reasons Antigone gives, none of which had anything to do with sanitation, as I recall.) -- Robert A. W. Lowndes.

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 ACCIDENTAL AND NOMICS -- Post-Pittcon note: Isaac Asimov, Damon Knight, Lester del Rey and others have pointed out that my analysis, while perhaps true as far as it goes, fails to account for the success of a novel like "Day of the Triffids". This I grant readily; the pure adventure story obviously has an appeal all its own. But there is no way to prescribe for it; it's either well done or it isn't -- an appropriate mixture of technique and gusto is always a reliable product, whether it's ostensibly s-f, seafaring or intrigue. -- James Blish.

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 JUST ROOM ENOUGH to confess an error in last issue: Thanks for permission to reprint John Baxter's article on James Bond should go to Bob Smith not John Foyster. Mea culpa.

DISSONANT DISCOURSE

Mailing Comments

THE FANTASY AMATEUR: The FAPA constitution is a way of life. I've just noticed that the petitions circulated in the last mailing were inaccurate in one small respect. Redd's was entitled 32 SIGNATURES -- AND YOURS and Pelz wrote "33 affirmative votes are necessary for passage of a Special Rule." Not so. The constitution merely states that special rules may be adopted at any time "a majority of the members endorse a copy of the proposal" and FAPA has 65 members only in those rare quarters when members do not drop out. Membership ends in the fourth quarterly mailing and begins in the next mailing. Thus, less than 65 members are usually available to vote on any question. Mailing 106, for example, had 7 drop outs. A petition for reinstatement following that mailing might have had to be entitled 29 SIGNATURES -- AND YOURS. :: The Vice-President has boasted in the past that he has read the FAPA constitution and yet here we find in his report a tabulation of votes cast under the blackball provision. The constitution states that "The Vice-President informs the Secretary-Treasurer of the results of this portion of the poll and does not tabulate it as part of the egoboo poll." It does not say that the Vice-President informs the membership through his personal report. It does not say that the Vice-President informs the President so he can write a statement in advance of being appealed to. Though Vice-President Busby informed us in FANTASY AMATEUR 106 that his "discretionary powers are the following, and only the following" and summarized section 6.12 of the constitution, once again we see him exercising section 6.4 ("In the absence of a formal controversy, each officer may decide for himself doubtful points concerning his duties.") The constitution leaves no doubt about who he is supposed to inform but apparently there was some doubt about who else he could inform. Which leads us to another bit of business excluded from his report for reasons unknown: In SERCON'S BANE Busby mentions that "Redd Boggs and John Trimble have protested the anonymity of the voting under Section 9.2 of the Constitution. No rule is perfect, and most derive from the circumstances that brought them about..." Buz must be referring to his own rule as Vice-President because there is no rule in the FAPA constitution requiring anonymity of voting under section 9.2. (Section 6.4 comes in handy at times, doesn't it?) But Busby's whims don't go that far. He might offer to turn private DNQ correspondence over to the Pacificon committee but he isn't going to go so far as to unmask blackballers -- especially not when he agrees with them! After all, as he says, no rule is perfect. :: I don't quite know what place sarcasm has in President Calkins report, after all the Presidency is supposedly a function performed for all the members (even those you happen to disagree with) but if sarcasm we must have then it might as well be punctured: Substantiate the remark that "apparently those people who wrote the most in terms of length and passion concerning Martin were interested not nearly so much in his reinstatement or the moral principles involved" as they were in producing "page-count for their own membership requirements." The members who wrote the most "in terms of length and passion", to the best of my knowledge, were Boggs, Warner, Hansen, White, and Clarke. None of who needed to devote wordage to Martin to make up their "own membership requirements". So who were that legion who wrote the most "in terms of length and passion"? :: I don't see why the failure of the last petition for Martin should do "much towards easing the consciences of the honest people within FAPA who have been plagued with second thoughts and self-doubt about whether or not Martin was treated illegally in the first place." After all, nine people voted for Martin and 33 members weren't heard from at all. If you're going to assume that they all are not interested in seeing Martin reinstated or in seeing the FAPA constitution upheld then you can assume anything -- like, for instance, that they also have no interest in the continued appearance of the FAPA egoboo poll itself since they didn't vote in it. All I'm willing to assume is that this reaction is typical of the apathetic nonengagement I described in

"The Sick Sixties" (Part 1) in the last SERENADE. It's not too unlikely that all of them would feel differently if their own contributions were denied activity credit as reprints and it was never indicated what they were reprinted from. And I don't find the 14 votes against Martin as decisive as you seem to. Breen had 14 votes in that same poll too, "out of a grand total of 25 ballots cast", remember? :: The constitution says that the President of FAPA has "general direction of the FAPA's affairs" but I can't figure out what direction is indicated by President Calkins statement that discussion would produce "undoubtedly the same lack of results in the case of Breen as the supporters of Martin afforded him." At any rate, it seems incredibly out of touch with the sentiment of the fapate for one who has charge of its general direction. THE WALTER BREEN BLACKBALL -- Silverberg: Beautiful. :: Those FAPA members who rationalized thier opposition to Walter's membership on the basis of protecting their security clearances now find themselves in an interesting position. If they suspected Breen of being too "hot" to be admitted, where does that leave them now that he is in? Their security clearances were so precious that they could deprive someone else of membership to protect it but I wonder if security clearance is so precious that they will now deprive themselves of membership in order to protect it? I hope not. SPINNAKER REACH -- Chauvenet: Thank you for the comments on Wrhn. It was a pleasant surprise to find them here.

THE TATTOOED DRAGON AND HIS ELECTRIC WHING-A-DING -- Rotsler: I didn't think that the very first mailing of my new membership would provide ample justification for a tenacious four year wait (or was it forty?), but here it is. And more than ample, too. Why doesn't PLAYBOY print this fine stuff? :: "The Strange Mind of William Rotsler" is like a photography annual. Each evocation bursts in our minds like turned pages containing pictures by Penn, or Stern, or Sokolsky. In fact, if anyone else but Bill Rotsler had written this piece I might have suspected it was a prose rendering of just such an annual after passages like "the bare functionality of an old alley, the skeletal bareness of a fire escape, the bright red of a stop light at evening's fall." Every photography book must contain a picture of "the bright red of a stop light at evening's fall." So much of this article reveals the photographer in Rotsler, but oddly not the photographer Rotsler we know -- the Rotsler of the badly lit nude isn't the Rotsler with the poetic eye revealed by this article. Or is this article just an attempt to save a great deal of color film by capturing these images with words instead of film? If so, it's remarkably effective. Also present in the article is Rotsler-the-wire-sculptur: seeing beauty "in the pagan calligraphy of an insect's death on a high-speed window." :: The concept of beauty in handmade signs or art created for use by human love or, at the least, intimate human involvement has been haunting me recently. There are glimpses of such beauty remaining at Coney Island. Not every display is a chromium plated production of the ideal that perfection is irresistibly enticing. Clearly most of the proprietors subscribe to that conviction but some of them just can't afford it and their signs and artistic attempts at enticement have the beauty that comes when the purpose of a work is other than beauty. Other displays are hold overs from an earlier time when their owners were so intimately involved in matters of showmanship and display that their booths became an expression of themselves. There are some marvelously direct and horribly beautiful pieces of work that have been around Coney Island for years. These are the small pyramids of corn at the Hot Buttered Corn stands. With the most logical directness these pyrimids of corn are glued solid, placed on a tray and the whole thing painted BRIGHT yellow. The ends of the ears drip with bonus painted lusciousness. This is so direct and unassuming that it becomes beautiful. Much more of beauty than the imitations of such art by Oldenburg who makes giant sandwiches and stands of stagnant pies under glass, which are sold for hundreds of dollars in another section of New York. Of course, Oldenburg's work is a comment (his work is vividly monstrous seen in a gallery but millions of Americans sit in front of the authentic items in seedy fly specked luncheonettes and find them completely unremarkable). Those rolls of film I mentioned

losing in Europe in the last SERENADE contained quite a record of such handmade art for use. Many of the restaurants in the countryside of Europe have signs outside them which were obviously painted by the local Da Vinci. This art will be lost too, like my record of it, as Europe becomes more and more a group of united states and some manufacturer plasters Europe with his product on ready made signs for restaurants. Like Coca Cola has done here. Bill, you must go to Europe before it vanishes. BETE NOIRE -- Boggs: Not every magazine in the mailing will be commented on in this column for the simple reason that no matter how much an item may have been enjoyed it doesn't always inspire me to say anything. A case at hand is BETE NOIRE, which, except for some fascinating material by Boggs and a continually enchanting heading by Bjo, contains not a thing to comment on. A PROPOS DE RIEN -- Caughran: Your mention of the Broadway use of the "Sex is the friendliest..." line reminds me of a poster which appeared in the subway stations here. The title of the movie escapes me but it depicted the heroine bending over in front of the hero with her backside pressed against his front pelvic region. He had his hands on her hips, if memory serves. She looked as though she was enjoying it, but that's no excuse for letting them attend the Pacificon. The bold headline on the poster was "Sooner or later every girl gets..." Gets what, I wonder? Gets It dog fashion, to judge from the illustration. (New York subway posters are incredible.) SCATALOG -- Wilson: Yes, it is possible to get recordings of old radio programs. Bill Thailing (Box 352, Station D, Cleveland 27, Ohio) has quite a collection recorded on tape which he sells for prices ranging from \$4 for something like 10 minutes of excerpts from 2 Gene Autry cowboy dramas of the 40's to 82 minutes of Baby Snooks from the early 40's for \$20. His last list announced that he had an option to buy the masters of Flash Gordon episodes number 1 through 22 and needed subscribers at \$50 to \$75 the set.

DAY*STAR -- Bradley: I don't think a lack of interest in whether or not Deckinger's hair is combed is necessarily evidence that fandom acts "as a hiding place for people who fear interpersonal relations based on the sort of friendly contacts one gets in the real world." Frankly, I don't care whether or not someone's hair is combed in the real world and am certainly not in fandom to find out things that don't interest me in actual interpersonal relationships. In a telephone conversation it never occurs to me to ask if a person's hair is combed, what side it's parted on, or what they're wearing and I can't see why I should care about something in fandom that would bore me to distraction over the telephone. Why it is or isn't combed is another matter but it's a matter of criticism while the bald announcement of fact is merely reviewing. Let's have more criticism -- less reviewing. Breen: It seems much too long since I last saw mailing comments by you. I missed them. :: What is "an antifan acquaintance"? At any rate, I loved that remark about not believing him when he called to tell you about the Kennedy assassination until he turned up his FM radio -- "after which doubt was no longer possible." Does FM broadcast only the truth? :: What is "Roma Amor"? :: What did you have published in HYPHEN? Having something published there has been a fannish ambition of mine for years but I've never felt I could meet the standard and could never think of anything to write for it. Most of my fannish ambitions have been realized and it's a dangerous condition. I've published people like Willis, Boggs, Blish, and Lowndes, whom I've admired for as long as I've been in fandom but there are other ambitions which should keep me around a bit longer; like publishing stuff by Terry Carr, Ted White, Bill Blackbeard. HORIZONS -- Warner: Picasso has done numerous paintings based on photographs or other paintings -- and the man is gifted with a phenomenal visual memory. :: The other thing that catches my eye in this issue is the compliment for two such "good people" as Bruce and Dian Pelz. All such judgements based, as I assume yours is, on fanzine evidence are so subject to revision as new information comes in as to be almost not worth making. Bruce is one of the 14 who tried to save FAPA last mailing and I note the quote from you in MINAC that "the effort to keep Walter from FAPA is obviously actuated by nothing but sheer hate." But perhaps that doesn't invalidate your earlier

judgement. Contemporary values seem to be changing so radically that it won't be long before Aunt Hatti can witness an axe murder through her telescope, not make a move to phone the police and still be thought of as a "good" person. ALIF -- Anderson: It's nice to see Pacificon parliamentarian, Anthony Boucher, putting down the attempt to bar Walter from FAPA. Well done, Karen. A FANZINE FOR NOW! -- Lewis: I'm glad someone else spotted Busby's "Red-Herrings" (GMCarr, William Lance, and Ted Johnstone). Or is everyone just so tired of this sort of thing that no one bothered to point it out? What did he expect to gain by citing them as examples to whom constitutional "redress" could be tendered? And especially in an official report, at that. (It will be ironic if Mrs Carr now uses this as public evidence that her claims of being railroaded out of FAPA are so well founded that even the present Vice-President cites her case as one that could be given redress.) If redress needs tendering, then by all means lets tender it, but lets not discourage redress with examples that have been advanced as deserving redress by no rational person.

DAMBALLA -- Hansen: The worst casualties, aside from the victim, in this Breen affair are saintly people like Chuck Hansen who see people they've admired and liked presenting crude examples of the blackball mentality. :: Your summation of the termination of Martin's membership indicates you don't know what you are defending. You say "The constitution plainly states that if a substantial part of ones publication does not represent original work or one in which a major revision etc represents substantial work on the part of the member one is ineligible for renewal. Trimble believed this to be the case and dropped him." Not so. Trimble dropped him on the grounds that his material was "reprinted" though he had no conclusive evidence that it was. Bill Evans, then Vice-President, stated that had Martin "appealed to me, or, I imagine, even to the S-T, requesting proof of the grounds cited, he would almost certainly have been reinstated." In a word, Martin was evicted on a hunch. I maintain that section 6.4 enables officers to perform their implied duty to protect the rights of the membership even in the absence of a formal controversy. :: "Defending people not actions and attacking actions and not people" is an interesting concept though it sounds like an extremely delicate thread to walk over Niagara Falls on. How do you attack a deliberate lie and not the liar? How do you condemn the theft but not the thief? GETTING OFF, PLEASE -- Davidson: Enjoyed for the evidence that the English language is so malleable a thing and admired as a forceful statement of position.

HURRAH FOR OUR SIDE -- Boggs: And hurrah for a good job brilliantly executed. :: There are wonderful comic opera aspects to the presentation of the front page: ("THEY SIGNED", "HISTORY IS MADE", "MORE INSIDE!" and the title itself) that inspire visions of becloaked blackballers slinking off into the shadow with a knashing of teeth and a muttering of "curses". But they are just slinking off into the shadow for the blackball remains -- the FAPA concept of fairness that it takes a majority of members to undo the work of ten remains. :: Redd mentioned in a letter during the reinstatement campaign that FMBusby had said that there was a vast reservoir of anti-Breen sentiment (at the time the blackballing was undertaken). I replied "I can't imagine that there is a 'vast reservoir of anti-Breen sentiment'. Breen has been the most inoffensive big name fan of recent time. Offhand I can't think of a single instance where he has used his deserved eminence against anyone in a vendictive way in order to make a point or win an argument." Part of my reply to an airmailed copy of HURRAH FOR OUR SIDE reads: "Was pleased to see how the statement from Breen bore out my remark last letter about him being the 'most inoffensive big name fan of recent time'. Not the slightest tinge of vindictiveness to mar his ebullience. And I'm reminded of his gentlemanly reply to Moskowitz's branding him a liar in Wrhn." CELEPHAIS -- Evans: Of course the constitution doesn't say anything about the Secretary-Treasurer citing source of reprint, but in so important a matter as dismissing a person from membership on these grounds he should be able to. Your remark that Martin "has never denied the charge" makes me wonder if you were also one of those who thought

failure to deny the charge was sufficient to incriminate anyone attacked by McCarthy? As far as I'm concerned a person is innocent until I'm shown otherwise and I (and FAPA) have yet to be shown that Martin did, in fact, reprint. The burden of proof is on the accuser, you know.

OH, FLOODY HELL -- Eney: No, I don't think that people who disagree with me on the Breen matter have thereby "demonstrated their utter abandonment to the Snares of the Devil". But I do wish they would stop acting as though they had. For instance, while I admire your intention to do anything "that violates the usages of Fan Feudism as it seems to be practiced some places" I deplore your proclamation that "with the exception of two or three odd fish, I'm going to consider that the people who disagree with me on the current issue are intelligent fans and reasonably civilized." In another context your latter statement has been rendered: "Some of the people who disagree with me are communists", thereby casting suspicion on everyone who disagrees. That's the way feudism is practiced in "some places" and I'm sorry you've abandoned yourself to that particular snare of the devil. :: I'm glad you're not going to "tag the opposition as fraidy cats" but am surprised to see you using considerably stronger language like "unreformed child-molester". So surprised that I wrote you a letter about it on 10 June 64 which was followed up with another letter on 23 June 64 accompanied with a self addressed postcard. Since, I am still interested in a reply I will reprint part of the first letter here and hope it finally reaches you: "Just received your disclaimer and was wondering about a few things. For instance about 'an unreformed child-molester has no place in our society'. You don't name anyone there. Who were you talking about? And what proof do you have that he is 'unreformed'? What proof do you have that he is a 'child-molester'. If this is the same case Jack Speer was talking about in the last mailing, I should note that he says 'We don't have the facts yet'. I trust you have some facts that weren't available to Mr Speer. If so, I'd like to hear them and I'm surprised at you for not listing them in your postmailing. They would surely have strengthened your position." I await your reply, Dick. I would hate to be left with the impression that you would use words like that without being able to back them up. TARGET: FAPA -- Eney: The fable of the Weasel and the Beaver leaves much to be desired inasmuch as it continues a coy tendency to avoid the use of names in your discussion of this matter. If, indeed, it is the matter I think you're talking about. One passage makes me think it might not be: "the Committee's charges" are "backed up by eyewitness testimony from the parents of the children concerned". The written statements I've seen from the parents involved hardly back up the Pacificon committee's charges so I wonder what you're referring to. The Clintons and M. Frendel have both written that they "do not believe Walter Breen to be guilty on the charges made by the Pacificon II committee and implied in the document 'The Great Breen Boondoggle'." Ellington has written that Breen's actions were "certainly completely harmless and I did not attempt to stop him or interfere with him." Rogers' statements, by his own admission, (see editorial in this issue) do not back up the committee's (his own!) charges. Where does that leave you, Dick Eney?

ANKUS -- Pelz: Your contention "I see no basis whatsoever for an attitude that proclaims someone unacceptable in one facet of society -- the In Person facet -- and perfectly all right in another facet, the Correspondence Club facet -- the amateur presses" insulates you from a considerable body of art. For instance you might find the sexual activities of a Michaelangelo or a Da Vinci unacceptable to you on an in person basis but does that mean you would attempt to prevent reproductions of their work from being mailed into your home or would refuse a gift of the Mona Lisa? Does this mean that you refuse to read work by Wilde, Genet, Chessman, Nehru, Villon, O'Henry, etc, etc, because they were found to be so unacceptable in an in person facet that they were sent to jail? Or do you suddenly find untenable the error of confusing art and morality? Frankly, such an attitude would make a person unacceptable on an inperson basis with me but I don't think that's any reason why I shouldn't read his material in FAPA or elsewhere.

SYNAPSE -- Speer: Your remark "I might go for a special rule reinstating Walter, but this is too soon for such a thing" indicates you had prior knowledge that the blackball was successful. Who told you? :: Your reading on the subject must have been extremely narrow. Most discussion did distinguish between attendance at a convention and membership in FAPA. And wisely, I think. :: I fail to see how "the evidence is only an incidental concern" when it fails of supporting charges which are presented as facts. You yourself note "It is amazing what holes you find in an apparently complete story when you start asking questions" but seem disposed to wait to see if the holes can be patched up before speculating on what can be seen through them. A proper attitude. I found it quite shocking, on the other hand, that though you say "We don't have the facts yet" that you could base two pages of speculations on what to do about Breen if the charges are true. At the time I read the mailing this SYNAPSE disturbed me so that I wrote a letter of support to Breen denouncing as "hypocrisy" your extensive speculation in the face of inconclusive evidence and unasertained facts. I now think that may have been a badly chosen word but at the moment can't think what the term is to describe a judge who reads inflammatory material to the jury before the facts are ascertained. I'm disappointed, Jack.

SERCON'S BANE -- Busby: Your example of Breen's "artistry": that he can write what appears "to be a denial (or affirmation that he intended you to see in the text is actually no such thing at all... He does not make the false statement; he lets you read it between the lines" (???) (my emph) would be more convincing if you hadn' conveniently manufactured a quasi-quote to make the point you wanted to illustrate. If "you read him word-for-word literally, refusing to paraphrase or add any connotations whatsoever" (??) I believe you will be reading the meaning Breen intended to be read. I have stenciled many pages of his material and rarely found him imprecise in meaning and never recall him allowing his meaning to be communicated through paraphrases or connotations that depend on the reader. I cannot say the same for one FMBusby who not only attempts communication on this level but who, can read a paragraph of explicit Willis prose criticising Gibson and others and paraphrase it as "Willis made some good anti-Birch remarks" and who, admits that he finds it "difficult to get one-to-one correlation between the argument in the writer's mind and that which gets onto paper...a checkup does no good because the mind fills in the missing parts and there we are." There we are asked to credit an interpretation of a man's character by a person who not only misreads but who confesses difficulty in communicating as well. :: Evidently Breen's letters to Busby are no more incriminating than his remarks in TESSERACT (which cover an area of speculation that has aroused suspicion in the minds of suspicious people in the contexts of some unwieldy social behavior. Jack Speer notes, "It's hard to imagine what one of us would be like if the first sixteen years of his life were a blank."). I arrived at this assumption after reading Busby: (1) "On the whole, I did not object to Breen for anything in his past actions, at all, but because of his attitudes toward possible future actions." (my emph) (2) "The next question arises: just what else might he be keeping under wraps? To turn up next year or the year after. No, I do not have any Dark Clues; I just wonder, is all." (my emph) Taking these points into consideration and allowing (as Busby asks us to) "for a normal amount of error in paraphrase and some inevitable exaggeration as a result" and realizing from sad experience what "normal" is for Busby one is left with nothing to count against Breen. :: Bill Blackbeard's note of Walter's statements which seem "calculated to stand square hair on end" lead me to the observation that Walter is not a little bit of an anthropologist: it's not impossible that his correspondence with Busby was deliberately calculated to stand square hair on end -- after all, Busby is the perfect type to test for the limit of intellectual tolerance. As long ago as January 1963 (in listing the joys I would be depriving myself of if I folded Wrhm) I mentioned "the fine needle work in formulating an answer to FMBusby". It's always fascinating to see how much Busby can take before he starts frothing at the mouth.

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