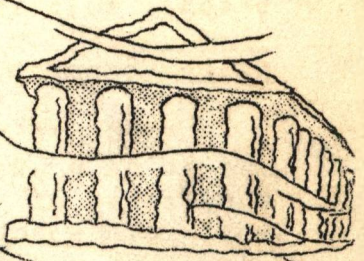


#4

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14.

YHOS#4

is perpetrated by the Widners, Art, Ruth, & Pete, who, by the time you view this, will have moved to 87 Colonial Road, in North Weymouth, Massachusetts. We try to be in every mailing of the FAPA, of which this is the Autumn 1942 one. The cover was done by Virginia Combs Anderson. This is a BBodacious Publication - and now to work. . . .

guesswhoguesswhoguesswhoguesswhoguesswhoguesswhoguesswhodo

"I don't want to be quoted on this stuff, but if you want to use it as ammunition for an article of your own, go ahead. It's the sort of material that might annoy a lot of readers; it's a sort of speculation, therefore, I'd rather not do "officially." With that understood---"

The above & following paragraphs are from a - er - "correspondent" of mine, who has good reason to remain anonymous. I decline to use it as ammunition for an article of my own, because I am not one to let someone else do my thinking for me, even tho I agree with him pretty much -- yhos.

"Man runs the planet at the present time because, as a race, he is the most utterly and irresistably vicious, inescapably deadly, ruthlessly savage exterminator of opposing life-forms evolution has been able to develop in two billion years of trying. Man is enormously and incomparably deadly on every level of organization, from the submicroscopic filterable virus, up thru micro-organisms' life-scale to the macro scale of animal life. He's a powerful and deadly fighter on his own, unaided by tools, who has to fear, even in the naked state, not more than half a dozen animals on Earth. In the micro scale, his inherent combative powers are decidedly of a high order - men normally survive everything that the micro-organisms can throw at him for 40 to 90 years.

"Man rules the roost because, for two billion years, life has been evolving more and more deadly fighters - organisms that can annihilate every form of opposition other life-forms, nature, or the laws of physics and chemistry try to impose.

"We have a proud heritage of two billion years of descent from the most unstoppably vicious fighters the planet has been able to produce. If you think lions or tigers are deadly and vicious fighters, remember who puts who in cages. So the men use tools; so what? That tool is an offshoot of the brain as surely as the tiger's claws are offshoots from his toes.

"We've spent two billion years learning one lesson, and learning it - in a literal sense - in every cell of our bodies. If something tries to stop you, kill it - it may taste good, anyway.

"As an example of Man's inherent and unparalleled savagery as a fighting animal, consider one unique characteristic of Man. Of all carnivorous or omnivorous animals, man alone attacks carnivorous animals for food. African natives attack and kill lions, crocodiles, and a number of other carnivorous species. Normal carnivores don't attack other carnivores, even if smaller, because carnivores always have weapons designed to do sudden and severe damage, and, even tho a tiger could certainly kill a leopard, the leopard would do sever damage that might cause the tiger permanent crippling.

"We've been fighters so long, that it is inevitable that we will continue to have powerful combative instincts. In civilization, recognizing that other men are also the same order of enormously deadly fighters, we've sublimed the direct combat into secondary channels to a large extent - a fight for wealth, not simply as a livelihood, but as a chase, a battle for the elusive symbol of victory over others.

"Americans have long been known - and disparaged - as 'dollar chasers'. So they are. And the Japs were absolutely convinced, apparently, that we wouldn't and couldn't fight. Their mistake was that they didn't recognize that dollar chase as a chase in the sense of a hunt, an effort to outwit and entrap the dollar. Also, our soft living - every home a nest of gadgets - was misunderstood - not visualized as a game to defy the time-stealing laws of nature that bring work to housekeeping.

"Remember Ron Hubbard said that the Japs no longer go into the jungles to bring back American pilots whose planes have been forced down because it's too deadly a game? Game is right; the American pilot throws the same American joy into devising man-traps and booby-killers for Japs, that in peacetime is devoted to making a radio station automatic, and making radio receivers tune themselves. Americans have specialized in a highly symbolic form of combat - and a highly advantageous one. We like to lick natural law.

"The fighting drive that got Man where he is, is absolutely necessary to his advancement - or, even, his maintenance at the present level. A proper civilization would work out a means of maintaining that drive in the race as the sublimed urge to excel in inventiveness, or some similar useful, non-destructive accomplishment. To date, such a civilization has never been developed. So far, physical clashes have been the only means of assuring that combativeness shall win out over lethargy as a race characteristic. China, the lethargic, had been sitting on its figurative can for some 1000 years, while the rest of the world went ahead. Japan has recently been doing an excellent job of bringing active, positivistic combativeness to the fore. China will probably be the holy terror of Asia fifty years from now. There'll be a New Order for East Asia, all right - run from Chungking.

"France was decadent all right - a second-rate world power making noises like a first-rate power with an internal organization that wasn't as active and forceful as a good third-rater. France has been put in its place; when it evolves a decent degree of inherent combativeness, willingness to change tactics - scientific, economic, or military - with the speed a first-rate, high-survival culture must, it can regain its place.

"War is valuable in this immature stage of our civilization; it weeds out the unfit cultures. It even weeds out the contra-survival elements within a culture. A culture that, too long, places too much emphasis on stability, the status quo, conservatism (and I don't mean conservatism of the not-politically-liberal kind, but of the don't-change-anything-if-it-works-as-it-is-type) needs a kick in the pants.

"Well, this war has kicked the pants clean off of France, kicked England's rugged tweeds down to a pair of khaki shorts, and is hard at work toughening up the south end of the US's britches. What this country damned well needed to learn can be phrased in

three sentences. We don't live on the North American Continent; we live on Sol III . . . The Earth, and what happens on the Earth happens to us. We think in terms of combating nature, and outwitting the economic system - but get it out of your head that other people elsewhere see the Great Fight in those terms; they want rifles, and you'd better, always and ever, turn some of your inventiveness to having better rifles. If you want something done the way you like it, you'd better do it yourself - and if you don't like the way the world is run, don't like people forever starting shootin' wars - you know what to do about it, even if you don't believe in imperialism.

"So far, this war has killed at least 5 low-survival-value cultures. It will kill at least three more before it finishes up. It's killed the cultures of France, England, China, Scandinavia, and the Balkans. It has lopped off several appendages of the U.S. culture - notably the isolationist and appeasement appendages. Teddy Roosevelt said "Walk softly - but carry a big stick." Maybe we'll learn now that 'Carry the biggest, toughest, nastiest stick in the world - and carry it in your fist, not strapped to your back.' is only a sane and sensible policy.

"Before the war is over, the Nazi-Fascist, Japanese, and Russian cultures will be killed. The Russian culture is already half-dead - with Russia the stronger for it. The end of the war will force a further change; for the first time, the Russian population has been given some picture of the actual wealth of the U.S., for instance.

"War cleans the world of the unfit cultures, as individual combat eliminated unfit individuals."

So (yhos writing) there is a case for my theory promulgated in YHOS #2, and a better statement of same. War is valuable in this immature stage of our civilization." That was what I was trying to say, but I lacked the ability to express it clearly, or to build any sort of support for it. I await rebuttals with glee, confident that with the big guns of my "correspondent" and an occasional surprise barrage by myself, there will be at least a good, grade-A battle before it is cleared up.

I particularly wonder what Chauvenet, Speer, and Milty will say.

Anybody Wanna Argue? Dept. I claim that as a story, "Beyond This Horizon" was lousy. Most of Heinlein's stories are little more than vehicles for putting across his many interesting ideas, which I greatly enjoy, but BTH went overboard in that direction. It was a disjointed collection of miscellaneous opinions, hypotheses, and dispensations of accurate scientific information. Bob really applies the old Gernsback theory of "sugar-coated education" with a vengeance, & up to now, it has been practically 100% pleasing, & not very obvious, except for the discourse on racketeering and politics given in "The Devil Makes the Law." Just the same, if RAH is losing his magic touch for fictionizing, he'd better switch to plain essays or articles. BTH would have been swell as a series of thot-provoking articles written in informal style. As IRC (Ithink) said, Bob could write a wow of a textbook.

volumenumberonfanzinesisjustabouttopsierrananegrovyhabits/phocce

milty's message

Dear jerks of the FAPA:

I was going to have a stupendous issue of Milty's Mag this month. I was going to argue the ears off of everybody, because there was so much stimulating material in the last mailing. Doc Lowndes, for instance: Is every person who prefers to work in a factory or laboratory a fascist? Poof. And Speer: Shame on you for shooting off your mouth about Lew Martin's anti-semitic remark. Don't you know that an orthodox jew would no more marry a gentile than you would marry a Hottentot? Those things work both ways. And Morojc: For the ideal of unrestrained free speech, would you open the country to the mercy of any half-baked gangster who discovered a new color for a shirt? Don't forget that you are part of this country, too, and you can't stand aloof and say: we must have freedom of expression, and all ideologies must have an equal chance. You must make up your mind that certain ideologies are dangerous to your life and you must slap them down before they start arising. If that had been done ten years ago this war would not be. But, of course, those who were in a position to do the slapping down did not want to do so. That is the sad part of the business. D.B.Thompson: You can sit on the pivot of the see-saw if you want to and be philosophically objective, but I get much more fun out of life by taking sides and making as much noise as I can. Do you mind?

I was gonna give Speer a hell of an argument about my why-I-came-to-Philadelphia essay, but it all means nothing now, because I am not going to be here much longer. For my part they can tear the entire city down and I wouldn't miss it.

Oh yes, I guess you guys are wondering why in hell you are reading me here and not in Milty's Mag. At the moment I don't know exactly what you are reading. As soon as I knew I wasn't going to have Milty's Mag this time or next time, I sent this letter to Art Widner, asking whether he or Chauvenet would let me have a page in one of their publications. So thank to one of them if they let me have it. If not, to hell with them.

To make a long story short (to coin a phrase): I have went and joined the army. I did it mainly to avoid the rush and bother of being drafted. I hate crowds, you know. Any sentimental or patriotic ideas of helping to win the war are not to be mentioned. 'Twould be slanderous to the patriots.

Altho Milty is dead, you have not yet heard the end of me. Mayhap some kind soul will give me a page in the next mailing.

Milton A. Rothman

(Soon to be) private

(Lt? Capt? Col?) U.S.A.

if all goes well that both ends Milty's Messages will appear in YHQS4 the duration

Yhos perureth ye mailynge

sardonyx

Very interesting issue. The most interesting thing is that Russell has apparently achieved time travel. He sends us this sixth issue of Sardonyx from one hundred years in the future, 2042. At least, that's the way I translate ~~MMXLII~~ from the contents page. (1)

The second paragraph on page two is as good as anything Walt Whitman ever wrote. And Walt Whitman was as good a philosopher as any.

Since Russell appears to think more than somewhat of Archibald MacLeish, I would like it if an explanation of "The Fall of the City" were to appear in a future issue of Sardonyx.

Just who is going to "catch them young" and teach the World Patrol members "before they become indoctrinated with nationalism"? Unqualified teachers who are not "nationalized", are scarcer than snowfalls on the sunny side of Mercury. That's asking too much for a while yet. Prof. Dazzlepants' ideas are the better for humanity's present state of mental and emotional development.

Mengarini's poem was good, but "Frustration" is the kind of a poem I like. It is a unit, complete within itself, with no frayed edges, no loose strings leading off into the depths of the labyrinth that is the mind of another. It does not soar to achingly beautiful heights (which ofttimes are achingly bare to the reader) or abound with stupendous ideas or philosophies expressed in every line. It expresses an idea that we all understand, but more clearly than it has ever been expressed before. I much prefer the sparkle and clarity of this little gem, to a great mud-covered hunk of something that may have more ultimate value.

I don't contend that poetry should consist of mere harmonious jingles, but I do think poets should come down from their collective high horse - and make a bigger effort to render themselves intelligible to the non-poetic mentality. Methinks poets are often in love with the words they say things with, than with the things they seek to say.

milty's mag

Van Vogt is getting tangled up in his style. And so am I. At least I did while reading "Recruiting Station". It got in the way of the story so much that it was far more of a difficulty than a pleasure to wade thru it. Dunno why I finished it, it wasn't much of a story anyway.

Suggestion for arbitration with the "purists", whose ranks so far seem to consist mainly of Koenig: When you feel like discussing or talking about something in your mag, and it doesn't connect very well with fantasy or stff, just say, "I am now going to talk about so&so. Those not interested in this subject may skip it." (Heh. I see I have not followed that advice as yet, myself. Pardon. I will endeavor to do so from now on. Or make marginal notes. That's a good idea, too.)

the wide part of the Nin Jin on the covers should be diagonal instead of vertical

scientific

There is no doubt but that FAPA mags could be bigger and better, and that editors of subscription fanzines ought to give the FAPA a better break. But size isn't everything, Joe. That is amply illustrated by comparing "Censored" with "Sardonyx", "Milt's Mag", or "Suspro". If everybody put out a minimum of four neatly done pages each mailing, containing something of real worth or interest, little more could be asked.

Incidentally, pages 3,4,5,6,9, & 10 of "Scientifan" would never have been stapled into an issue of YFOS, or any publication of mine, but thrown away as trial sheets. Illegible. This fact shows that your beef is somewhat insincere. Rather than campaigning for higher standards in the FAPA, you are merely making excuses for your own poor showing. It isn't necessary to practice what one preaches, but if one would influence others to heed his preachings, setting a good example is a helluva big help.

nycon review

Fairly interesting, and I learned a thing or two, but the reproduction is very inferior, and I'm glad I didn't get stuck fifty cents for it.

I protest against minimizing practically the only hit I ever got in a ball game. My "home run" was not a weak roller but a clean single to center, which I stretched to two bases on slow fielding, and thence proceeded on errors as described. Also, if memory serves me right, Sam hit an honest-to-goodness four-bagger.

sci-fic variety

I guess I'm just stupid. Jane Rice and Tucker think "Turn of the Screw" is excellent, and it wouldn't be reprinted in a Pocket Book if it wasn't rather popular - but I fell asleep over the archaic style four times. Blah! It's the biggest bore I was ever unfortunate enuf to wade thru.

Incidentally, in the same book, with several other short stories by Steinbeck and other top-notchers, is "Address Unknown", by Kressman Taylor. This is a beauty of a psychorrorevenge tale. I once heard it read over the air by Raymond Massey, who did an excellent job. It consists solely of letters between two men.

The aforementioned "Fall of the City" is also contained in this book, and is a sort of fantasy. I recommend "The Pocket Reader" at most any druf or V&X store. It's worth more than two bits.

walt's wranblings

Hooray! What a break to find somebody else who has read and thinks the same as I of "The Undying Monster". Do you know if JDK has written any more stuff, Walt? I've never been able to find any.

rochester-american patriot

Gah! Who let this flag-waver in? I tho't we had seen the last of war-emotionalism when Miske left us. I don't mind discussing the war, but we get enuf prefabricated ideas fed to us thru every other channel every day, without bumping into it in the FAPA.

a tale of the revans

"Anonymous Amateur is a good idea. I hope it works.

And he is about right on what is wrong with fandom. They'd rather write than right. Allegedly future-minded, fans are lazy and short-sighted just as the rest of humanity. The paucity of candidates for the second NFFF election shows that. They are so Goddam lazy and incredibly short-sighted, that they won't even make

the little effort required to run for office in the NFFF, in order to keep it rolling smoothly and producing numerous benefits.

Chauvenet turned a neat and accurate simile when he compared the NFFF with one of Burroughs' "Monster Men". Remember? After ceaseless experiment and work, the scientist beholds his creation stir with "life." He helps it to its feet. It sways back and forth, glassy eyes staring vacantly. The scientist urges it on. It takes a shambling step. Two, three...then it crashes headlong.

So it is with the NFFF. Its existence is entirely artificial. LRC, myself, Milty, Evans, and the few others who were genuinely interested, did our best to create something under numerous difficulties. Russell has spent a great deal of time and money, (his own) fulfilling his duties as president faithfully, and performing many tasks not devolving upon him at all, in order to insure the new enterprise a flying start.

A year has gone by and it is time for elections again. Now we have let go, and the monster has so little life of its own that it isn't even interested in its own existence.

Well, the hell with it, say I. If it shows signs of self-support - well and good - I'm always ready to jump in with more than my share of the work, but I'll be a cock-eyed Martian mugwump if I'll again go to the trouble of rounding up a bunch of lukewarm jerks to run for office. I'm ready to heave on the line with anybody, but to hell with the hypos!

the reader & collector

Ah! Now for some fun! A particularly juicy collection this time, Heck, and also a couple of juicy ones on you . . .

#1. Page 4, Item 4: (Quoting Heck) "It would be just as effective to say 'You slimmy snake!'--and much more hissable." Well, well. Heck presents an innovation, "Slimmy", the multiple word. Step right up and take your choice, folks - slim, shimmy, skinny, or "slummy". If you don't care for any of those, roll your own.

#2. Page 11, end of 1st pg: "Much of the bilge now being printed would make a cat stick." Ah-ha, now I won't have to spend good money on fly paper. Just rip up my old mags and scatter the pieces around. If they'd make a cat stick, a plain old itty-bitty fly ain't got a chance.

On the serious side, I really don't see anything particularly bad about the Warner quote in "English as She is Wrote." I think he made the best of an involved situation. The idea was, that I, (having consideration for the amount of work he has to do, would not impose on him by asking for a column, but knowing the Warner nature is such that he couldn't refuse some new fan with a lot of brass) that why should I suffer for a noble motive? So I tie him up with an option, he doesn't have to take on the extra work unless he wants to, and I get the benefit of it if he does. Yeah, I know, Heck, who the hell cares? - but could you do any better in one sentence, or approximately the same number of words?

The point is - altho Harry gets tangled up with some weird and wonderful word-orders at times - this time I'm all for him.

Page 10, lines 36 & 37, just about sum up the worth of the articles you have printed by outsiders criticizing fandom: "This of course, is simply an uninformed and undocumented impression, derived from hasty reading of a few magazines." Admittedly a waste of space when addressing specialists on the subject.

Sorry Jack, ran out of space with just susoro left. Will do next time