

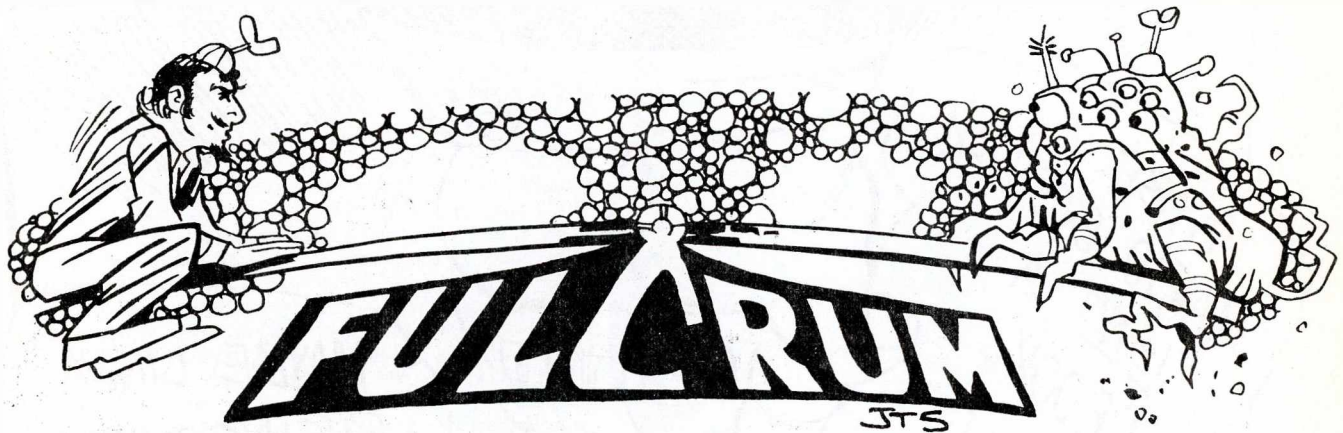
beardmutterings



SPECIAL "MAYBE-NOT" ISSUE

beardmuttering No. 2 (in New Jersey, V5N3) is a journal of fannish opinion mostly written and entirely edited and published by rich brown (410 - 61st St., Apt. D4, Brooklyn, NY 11220). Art Editor: Joe Staton. Honorary Editors: Ted White and Andy Main. *beardmutterings* is distributed through FAPA and is available otherwise for trade, letter of comment, or love — but not for money. *bm* is published for Response: If I don't get it, you don't get it. One free copy is available to anyone anywhere in the world, but what happens after that depends mightily on what the recipient does. Mailing labels courtesy Brian Burley. June 10, 1972.

If you took all the fanzines ever published and piled them one on top of the other,
they would fall over. — Lee Hoffman



I know I run the risk of offending a lot of people — yet that's never bothered me before, why should it now? — when I offer up this contention:

Maybe artists are stupid.

Some of my best friends — Steve Stiles, Joe Staton, both of whom chose me to be their best man at their respective weddings — as well as a number of people I consider to be in the good friend to nice-person-I-could-get-to-like category (Mike Hinge, Jack Gaughan, Bjo, Bill Rotsler, etc.) are artists. None of them have particularly impressed me as being lacking in mental calibre. In fact, I consider most of them to be brighter than I am — and I am pure slant, through and through, every bit as smart as Al Ashley, I assure you. A genius, it is true.

But when I cast my curious eye upon this world of fandom and of science fiction and observe what goes on here in respect to them, I begin to wonder whether they're really quite With It Up There (index finger tapping side of head).

It's well known, of course, that fan artists are monstrously treated here in sf fandom. Their contributions are seldom acknowledged by fan editors who'd find it unthinkable not to drop at least a pocsarced of thanks to someone who's contributed written material — even I, I must admit, have been among these. LoC writers acknowledge, by

and large, only the most outstanding artwork — and that acknowledgement is seldom more than "it's nice."

In fact, why the hell artists bother going to sf conventions, particularly the worldcon, is a bit beyond me. The worldcon is put on, after all, by the World Science Fiction Society, which defines itself in its bi-laws as a "literary society" — totally ignoring art, despite the fact that the sale of artwork at auctions, Project Art Show and elsewhere provides the convention committee with a tidy sum of money. One cannot help but wonder by what right this "literary society" feels it can award Hugos for "best artist" in professional and amateur categories.

The comics fan world, while offering the professional and amateur artist a bit more in the way of egoboo, is nonetheless every bit as exploitive as is sf fandom — just as the professional comics world exploits its artists to the same extent that the professional sf world does. The comics fan conventions also thrive on the sale of original art, with little (and more often, none) of the money going to the artist for the same reason that this is so at sf-conventions: Much of the original professional art is never returned to the artist. Although the artwork changes hands at conventions at fantastic prices, the artist seldom sees much of this. He often sees none of this.

How many panel discussions have we sf fans heard about the plight of the poor sf writer and the Evil Treatment he or she receives at the hands of the tight-fisted sf publishers? Quite a few. Goddam right.

Greg Benford, in an otherwise excellent article in *ALGOL* 17 (Andy Porter, 55 Pineapple St., Brooklyn, NY 11201; 75 cents per copy) illuminating why writing is the short end of the sf stick, commits the same error made by omission in these panel discussions when he says that writers' advances and royalties in 1971 "were delayed by as much as six months, while the editors and artists and other staff were paid."

Well, if by "artists and other staff" Greg means art directors and the like, his argument holds water; if he means free-lance artists, he's all wet. Free-lance artists were indeed left holding the stick in the 1971 crisis, when sales of all kinds (but of books and other non-essentials in particular) were really lagging and some rather severe measures were taken. A lot of writers and artists were left waiting for checks.

Mostly, though, I'm not finding fault with what Greg said. His points are quite valid; his errors are of omission, not commission, and I'm using the article as a model to show where I think parallels exist for sf artists. They are, I contend, holding the same end of the stick as other sf creators, and they may even be a little further down that short end.

Consider it. The average price paid by a publisher for a sf novel by someone not already a Big Name Author is in the neighborhood of \$1500. As Greg points out, if that someone is also trying to be a craftsman, i.e., limited to writing (at most) four books a year,

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he can expect to make a "salary" (assuming all four works sell) of \$6000 a year, without any fringe benefits like insurance or even pre-deducted income tax — "the salary of a rather dull-witted bank clerk, without even the chance to swipe a few quarters for himself," as Greg puts it. Good point.

Now consider the price paid by the same publisher for a cover, \$200. (True, the top price in the sf field is \$1,000 — yet that is more to be compared to the \$10,000 advance Greg mentions for writers — an exception rather than the rule.) Our "average" writer, above, is taking three months to write his books, and of course it doesn't take an artist that long to do a cover. At least, we should hope to hell not. Not being an artist myself, I am the first to admit that I'm not qualified to say whether or not creating a single cover takes as much, or more, or less, artistic energy than writing the book does. But it seems obvious that the industry has determined, by the prices they pay, that creating the cover entitles the artist to roughly a seventh the recompense.

But wait. The writer, as Greg acknowledges, can still make more money from his work: Specific rights are contracted for and sold, and the writer retains control over the future use of his work. It can be sold in England or translated and sold to other markets overseas. It can be serialized in a magazine. It can be reissued at a later time by the same, or another, publisher. It can even — though admittedly there's slight chance of this — be picked up by the movies or TV. In all of these instances, the original publishers rake off part of these profits, a practice I won't comment upon here, but even with that there's no denying that his work can go on to earn more money for him. His work is copyrighted, in his name, and the copyright remains his — which means that he has a valuable property that can be used again and again to his benefit. The more and better he writes, of course, the more

he has out there working for him and the better the chances that is works will continue to bear fruit, to bloom from Spring to Spring as it were.

And the sf-comics artists? They sell their work once and only once, and often it is not copyrighted. While there's a distinction made in Europe between selling reproduction and fine arts rights, there is apparently no such distinction here. Most sf-comics publishers retain the original works they commissioned for reproduction purposes only, usually in some musty old warehouse where it can never be seen again — although if some editor or clerk takes a fancy to it, it may well end up on his wall, gratis. When the warehouses are full to overflowing and the publishers in question happen to feel they need a public relations coup with the fans, these works may occasionally be given away to a convention, club or individual to be auctioned off — sometimes at prices higher than were paid for them originally by the publishers, seldom with any of the money going to the artists. When this is not the case, and the warehouses begin to bulge, the works are simply thrown away.

There are only a handful of publishers who return original works of art to the artists, and the majority of those do so only at the request of the artist.

Being specific about it, if Greg Benford's *DEEPER THAN THE DARKNESS* goes into a new print run, Greg will be paid something for it; but even if it is adorned by the same cover, the artists will not. And a good cover, despite that age-old warning about judging books, has more to do with the sale of a book than its contents and perhaps as much to do with it as the name of the author.

Most working writers deal through agents. The reason this is so is that, by doing this, they earn more money — an agent has to earn his commission by selling the author's manuscripts to as many markets as possible and by displaying good business sense, a commodity which neither artists nor writers have been trained to use. Artists in our field generally do not work through agents, and so they have to be both businessman and artist, hawking their own wares, trying to get a fair price for them while generally not being in any position to negotiate from strength.

It's small wonder, then, that artists get fucked over, that they often don't know what they're selling — i.e., a service (the right to reproduce) or a commodity (a work of art) — that they sometimes end up practically giving their works away, and that once sold they have no control over what is to be done with their creations at any time in the future.

Maybe artists are stupid.

Greg's article cites Bob Silverberg as one who can make a decent living as a writer off sf alone — because Bob can (and did, for quite a while) write a dozen novels a year and still remain a craftsman. Maintaining that there are indeed parallels between writers and artists, I would cite for you Jack Gaughan, who manages to make a pretty good living off sf alone by turning out huge quantities of artwork — and yet, like Silverberg, remains a craftsman. Both Bob and Jack have had to turn out a little dreck in there, too, because of the tremendous pressures involved in turning out such a great quantity of work — so I think the parallel a pretty tight one.

Silverberg remarked, in *FAPA* several years ago, upon the occasion of this 100th book — and that, I must infer, did not include (except possibly as anthologies) any of the short stories he had written in the late 1950s and early 1960s when he and Randy Garrett were writing just about everything in the sf magazines that wasn't written by Harlan Ellison. Reportedly, Silverberg's not writing at anywhere near that pace now, because his works have earned him enough that he doesn't have to stay on that schedule. He has more time to devote to what he feels like writing — and I'm the first to say more power to him.

Still, I would venture to guess that Bob's total output is nearer to 150 books now, and perhaps it's on its way to 200. Of all those titles, there are no doubt a number doomed to extinction; but if that number even reaches half, that means Bob still has 75 to 100 works that can be and have been reprinted again and again, can still be sold to other markets, can still earn him money. And I am not, for Foo's sake, saying this is a bad thing, or begrudging Bob his hard worked-for and deserved success.

But if you'll continue to entertain the Silverberg-Gaughan parallel with me for another moment, consider it fully: Jack has turned out work at a pace every bit as hectic as Bob's was five or even 10 years ago. When Jack was doing practically all the sf covers for Ace a few years back, he was doing three times the work that was obvious because Ace wanted three works to choose from (and Jack used to complain, at Fanoclast meetings, that he could always tell in advance

which one they'd choose — the one he considered to be the worst). And I understand via the grapevine that, now that he's working for a salary for GALAXY and IF, he's under contract not to do any work for anyone else, which certainly limits him; yet, unless my eyes deceive me, he is not slowing down his pace for all of that.

I hate to make comparisons of Real People and bring in something really personal — the amount of money they make — to make the point, but here we are up against it. Jack is certainly far above the poverty line, and Bob is not yet a millionaire, but the difference is noticeable there. Bob, by turning out a steady stream of craftsmanship over the years, can now easily afford to slow down the pace — I daresay he wouldn't starve if he never sat before a typer again. Foo forbid — while Jack, by turning out a steady stream of craftsmanship over the years, is churning out the same quantity now just to stay where he is.

What causes these disparities to exist? From my own limited knowledge as an observer, and not as a participant, I would say that it is at least partly in the system and partly in the artist's general lack of business sense (and his inability at current rates to afford a middleman who has some) and because a combination of the first two factors has left him with no secondary rights to sell.

There's another factor, too: Artists by and large do not communicate enough among themselves to give them any leverage over the publishers. They have no organization to give them any muscle — and while fans might complain if they hear about a writer (who tends to be more vocal) getting messed over, the sf artist seems to be expected to live by the Suffering Builds Character credo.

Before the advent of the Science Fiction Writers of America, both fans and pros expressed anger when Ace Books published THE LORD OF THE RINGS, although Ace was legally entitled to do so since the work was published in this country with only the British copyright and

hence was in public domain. After Poul Anderson (and perhaps others I don't recall) declared he would forego the pleasure of having Ace publish any more of his works because of that action, and after quite a bit of hullabaloo had been made in the fan press, Ace announced that they had, all along, intended to pay Tolkien an honorarium. And perhaps this was indeed the case.

I don't know a great deal about the accomplishments of the SFWA — some members have described it as the pro's N3F, but that's obviously too harsh if you've heard anything at all about the SFWA's accomplishments. I know, for example, that several authors received payment for reprints of their work in Sol Cohen's reprint magazines — although, again, Sol was legally within his rights not to make payment, since the authors sold all magazine rights to AMAZING. I know the SFWA has expanded the market for written sf and that it has promoted such things as speaking engagements and college course-lectures by sf writing professionals.

And probably other things we haven't heard of, either.

The point, anyway, is not so much what the SFWA has done as what it is capable of doing. An agent, after all, for all his worth to a working writer, can stand up for his client's rights only up to a certain point: He can work to get the best price for a property, he can make sure that only certain rights are sold, and he can hawk the others. But he can't force a publisher to pay an honorarium for a work in public domain or for rights which have been sold "unintentionally". In such an instance, the individual agent is every bit as vulnerable as the individual writer or artist; he has more than one client to worry about, and if he rocks the boat too harshly, he can find his clients, and himself, being totally ignored.

The SFWA is not a writers union, still. It has writer-editors who, in their editorial capacity at least, must represent the side of the





publishers however much they may disagree with that side as writers. Cornicdom's answer to the SFWA — the Academy of Comic Book Arts — is, I understand second-hand, in much the same situation. They are both imprecise, and sometimes downright inadequate, tools — but they are tools nonetheless, and they can be used quite effectively. Both were formed with the knowledge that a union which can enforce a boycott cannot be ignored.

Artists in the sf and comics field do not have a group which represents them, and them alone, and through which they can speak. If they did, publishers might be forced to pay a standard price for a standard piece of work. They might be forced to copyright the artists' work and either return the original to him or pay him for both the right to reproduce it and the right to use it as Art.

They might even make the World Science Fiction Society recognize them in their bi-laws.

There's no guaranty that all, or even any, of these things could be accomplished by such a group. Chances are, in fact, that the results obtained by such an affiliation would be mixed, at best, if the SFWA and the ACBA are anything to judge by.

But, anyway, we'll probably never know what sort of results such an organization would be able to obtain for artists. Because artists are among the last of the true individualists, the non-joiners, non-conformists and iconoclasts. The idea of forming a group of them for effective collective bargaining must surely seem, to such individuals, repugnant in the extreme. It simply does not fit their Image — either of themselves, or of the one held of them by most people. If they had wanted to be a member of a collective bargaining entity, a union, they could have, after all, been plumbers.

No, I think they'd really rather starve. I'm pretty sure of that, because that's what an awful lot of them — including some of the most successful among them — are doing. They're starving.

Like I said at the beginning, meyer. Maybe artists are stupid.

TAFF TERROR TOPICS

I've been told by at least a couple of people whose opinions I usually respect that my brand of fannish critique can be more than a little overwhelming. One person even told me that, while he agreed wholeheartedly with just about everything I'd said last issue, he rather fervently wished that I had said it all a little more, ah, tactfully.

"rich," he said, "I agree wholeheartedly with just about everything you said last issue, but I rather fervently wish you had said it all a little

more, ah, tactfully," is about the way he put it.

I was not — still am not — in any position to argue. I am, and have been for years, well aware of most of my in-print foibles. Still, the comment reminded me, rather painfully, of what Shelby Vick once said of me.

"rich," Shelby said, "is the sort of person who will rush right on in, where even Angels are afraid to tread." I must have been exceptionally dense — moreso than is usual for me — because I went around for a couple of days wondering why there had been this twinkle in Shelby's eye when he made his testimony to my fearless manner of going about things. But eventually the meaning sank home.

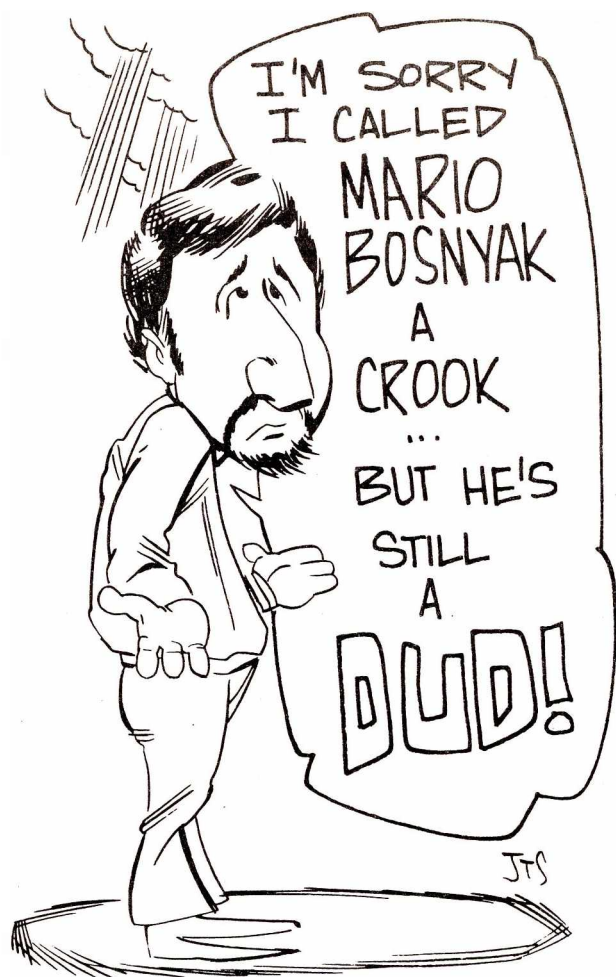
Shelby made the above-quoted remark almost 10 years ago. And though I have Striven Mightily to Change My Ways, to moderate my opinions, to put iron-fisted comment into silken gloves by at least sprinkling them with qualifiers, I have most times failed. It simply does not seem to be in my nature to change.

The result of years of behaving in this uncouth manner has done naught to enhance my fannish reputation — except to get me on Bruce Pelz's list of the Twelve Nasty Opinionated Bastards of Fandom. (Since Bruce is on the list himself, I'm sure he doesn't mean it as an insult. However, considering that Bruce is on the list himself, maybe it is supposed to be an insult. A perplexing problem, but one I won't deal with here.)

Yet curiously, there are plenty of fen who say the same things I say, but just in conversation rather than in print — and who thus, for reasons I cannot quite understand, are able to maintain Mr. Nice Guy reputations. My trouble, if indeed it is a trouble, seems to be that I commit these same opinions to the printed page, where my adversaries can see my comments and have at me if what I say seems wrong to them.

If I can't change, at least I can see that there are still possible defects in my going away full tilt at things which and people who annoy me. An example of my worse almost appeared right in this very spot, as a result of my article last issue about TAFF.

I stand by the opinions I expressed at that time, while acknowledging a couple of factual errors — e.g., Eddie Jones remains a TAFF administrator, and Pete Weston's fanzine has been nominated for the Hugo not three but five times. The major thrust of my disillusion with the result of the last TAFF race, however, remains unchanged. As I said then, when TAFF produces a dud, it may be talked about. But seldom in print. I was then, and am now, tactless enough to question whether Mario Bosnyak was Worth It.



Mario won on the basis of an exceptionally large number of German and Italian votes, receiving only a third as many U.S. votes as Weston; it seemed a shame that a person who had been to a convention in this country as recently as St. Louis (and who had not made too great a hit, at that) had won over someone who will not stand for TAFF again — and not as a result of the hosts' choice.

A European correspondent, in responding to that column, almost set me off into a new, less responsible round. It was charged that Mario spent more money than he received from TAFF in travelling around Europe directly soliciting TAFF votes for himself; it was even darkly hinted that Mario had "bought" the last TAFF election.

I sat down and immediately wrote four angry pages for this issue of *bm* on the subject. But the issue was delayed — for a variety of reasons that I'm sure would bore you all to tears — and as time went by and I found myself unable to contain myself, I mentioned these charges in personal correspondence and at a couple of Fanoclast meetings.

Everyone I mentioned it to was properly shocked. As I noted in the article last issue, it had once been charged that a candidate — but not a winner — had once attempted to buy votes, and that was one of the most bitter charges hurled during or after a TAFF campaign, before or since.

Since it was a very serious charge, Steve Stiles, a former TAFF winner and administrator, had no difficulty in convincing me that I should have this documented as much as possible before going into print with it. After all, as he pointed out, it could have been just someone who didn't like Mario, spreading lies.

So thereafter *bm* — again, fortunately for me — was delayed, not for a variety of boring reasons but because I was taking the time to investigate the charge. My European correspondent didn't want to be quoted because he had received his reports second or third hand; he was happy, however, to supply me with the suppliers of his information, so I took it from there. Since it turned out that the charge of actually buying TAFF votes was not true, at least as far as I am now able to determine, there will be no expose here — rather, an attempt to

undo what damage I might have done, and a strong tongue-lashing for myself for being quite so willing to believe the worst of someone I'm already predisposed not to care for a great deal.

From the information I've been able to uncover, it appears that Mario "bought" TAFF in the same way Charlie Brown "bought" a Hugo for LOCUS — in neither case was there a citable instance of either gentleman presenting another fan with \$\$ and saying, "Here, you vote for me (my fanzine) for TAFF (the Hugo)." Mario may have bought his TAFF victory with expensive trips to the fan centers of Europe where he could hand out ballots and tell all & sundry that they should vote for him to represent them at Boston, just as Charlie bought a Hugo with sample copies of LOCUS sent to the worldcon membership list — both practices may be thoroughly contemptible, perhaps even unethical, but in any event out-and-out bribery does not seem to have played a part in either happening. (It goes without saying, of course, that if there is a citable instance, in either of the above cases, I would still like to hear about it.)

Some of the reactions I got, in my attempts to discover what had actually happened in the last TAFF race, were strangely curious. I got the distinct impression, from almost all the responses I got, that they felt that, by merely asking these questions, I was more interested in muck-raking and name-calling than in getting at the truth. Most of the replies I got were not for quotation or print, all of them said that they had no direct knowledge nor had they even so much as heard rumors of vote-buying; the only other common theme seemed to be "Even if this turns out to be true, do you think it will help TAFF if you bring it out?" So in answer to those queries let me say that I doubt very much if, had the charges been true, TAFF would have been helped but, then again, I tend to doubt whether, if the charges had been true, TAFF would have been worth helping.

Fortunately, Waldemar Kumming — who is reputed to like Mario like Ted White likes Dick Eney — did not mind being quoted and apparently had most of the facts. His letter leads off the letter section in this issue. At this point I must assume that if Herr Kumming does not know of any instances of Mario buying votes, such instances must not in fact exist.

I refer you, then, to Waldemar's letter. You may, as I do, still find Mario's tactics distasteful. You may, as I do, still feel that Mario was a dud and that TAFF would be immeasurably improved if the voting system were set up to give the hosts a stronger voice. But you need not, as I must, tender an apology to Mario for having given credence to what now seems to be a gross libel.

Will I learn? Has this taught me to restrain myself?

Probably not.

I still rush in where even Angels fear to tread. Bear with me.

THE CREATIVE FANACRONIST

Arnie "Who?" Katz, a person who has been a subject of this column before, came up with a thoroughly delightful idea in the pages of his wife's fanzine, POTLATCH (Joyce Katz, 59 Livingston St., Apt. 6, Brooklyn, NY 11201; sample copy, 35 cents and well worth it).

The idea was the Society for Creative Fanacronisms.

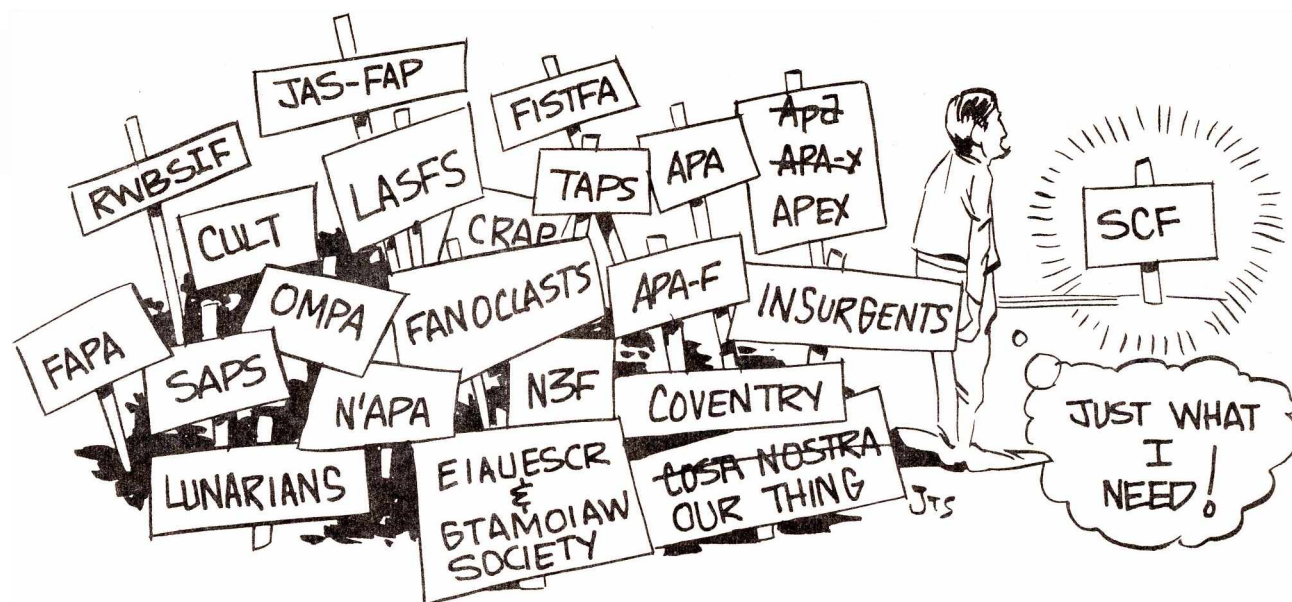
"Why just read about the Good Days when fanzines were fanmags and a duper was most likely to be a hektograph?" Arnie asked himself. Taking the germ of the idea from the Society of Creative Anacronisms, whose members parade around at various cons in medieval dress and speak in class-B movie imitations of Olde Englishe, Arnie, a very fannish type indeed, simply applied the concept to fandom.

Thus was SCF born.

"Currently," he goes on, "most of the members (of SCF) are pan-fanacronists, meaning that they embrace all of fandom's past, rather than just one era. One day may find them hard at work on a fan mag in support of the 'WAW With the Crew in '52' fund, and the next laboring over an earnest letter to Hugo Gernsback telling him to keep up those scientifiction stories he's been printing lately in SCIENCE & INVENTION."

Arnie goes on in this vein, in delightful fashion, for two pages. If POTLATCH had nothing else to recommend it — which I assure you, is not the case — the piece alone would have made the fanzine.

I mention it here because, while I consider myself primarily a fanzine fan, I am also a compulsive club joiner, and I wanted very much to belong to SCF. I am, or have been, a member of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, the Spector Amateur Press Society, the Off-trail Magazine Publishers Association, The Cult (twice), the Fanoclasts, the Lunarians, the Eating in an Upper East Side Chinese Restaurant and Going to a Movie Every Once in a While Society, and



was twice — both times when I should have known better — a member of the National Fantasy Fan Federation

The first club I ever joined was the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, from which, as Laney tells us, death will not release you, and to which Ernie Wheatley, the famed doormouse of the LASFS once added, "Even if you die!"

I was a charter member of the Terrean Amateur Press Society, APA-F, Secret APA and the Richard Wayne Brown Science Illustory Fandation.

In my younger days, I co-founded with the unremembered John W. Thiel the Junior International Science-Fantasy Club and the Junior Amateur Science-Fantasy Association of Publishers; JAS-FAP, as the latter was known, was immortalized in Carl Brandon's "The Catcher of the Rye," although I don't believe it ever saw a mailing. And with Paul Stanbery, I co-founded Coventry, which fostered its own group and kind of Wide-Eyed Fanatics who dismayed much of the LASFS in the late 1950s and early 1960s and which is probably the predecessor of the SCA in many ways both subtle and profound.

Mike McInerney and Earl Evers founded the Fannish Insurgent Scientifiction Association, but Mike and I hosted most of the FISTFA meetings, and the first two Eastercons which were "sponsored" by the FISTFA were, in fact, sponsored by Mike and myself. I founded one APA, Our Thing, and one local fan club, the Insurgents, which now meets at Arnie's & Joyce's.

And while I was not a founder nor quite a charter member of the Carbon Reproduced Amateur Press, I was instrumental in turning CRAP into a real Apa (although there are those who will tell you I did the reverse), which in turn would eventually prove to be the spawning ground for the first real secret, or private, apa, APA-X which was also referred to as APEX.

So I am, or have been, a member of many diverse and inscrutable fan groups; it would not, you might think, therefore be hard for me to apply for membership in Arnie's SCF.

That impressive background of earlier club memberships is overshadowed, however, by one factor.

There was a time — as hard as present-day fen may find this to believe — when Arnie Katz was a neofan. Straight out of monster fandom he came, with his side-kick Len Bailes, publishing EX-CALIBER — a fanzine which contained, often as not, Arnie's own amateur sf efforts. Because they were promising neofen and fanzine publishers to boot, they were both invited to attend, and eventually to join, the Fanoclasts.

I've spoken about some of my compulsions already in this column. Speaking my own mind. Rushing in where angels fear to tread. Publishing fanzines. Joining clubs. One I have not mentioned is that, like most everyone else, I guess, I like to put people on — only, when I do it, I can go overboard.

I used to put on both Arnie and Len unmercifully.

I once had Len convinced that the entire Breen-Donaho feud was something I had masterminded as a smoke screen to allow the Big Name Fans of the day to get away from the dreary, serconish, neofannish non-talents in the fanworld that was. My model for the put-on was Ayn Rand's ATLAS SHRUGGED. Len felt pretty foolish afterwards, but he was no fool: I worked very hard on that put-on, three full hours in Ted White's basement during a Fanoclast meeting, completely deadpan, never once hinting that I was skulling it, playing on most every fan's tendency to paranoia. I was thoroughly ashamed of myself, afterward. But the put-on, I repeat, is compulsive with me — and I'm really quite good at it, if I do say so myself.

With Arnie, I had a different schtick, which he has even lately alluded to in his own writings. In some ways, this put-on was more cruel than the put-on of Len had been; Len's, after all, only lasted a short while in comparison to the months I spent telling Arnie about the SIA, the Secret Invitational Apa.

This apa, I told him, was considering him for membership under my sponsorship. Among its members, I told him, were Willis (not too active, but still more than general fandom was seeing from him), Burbee (who was writing fabulous, outlandish tales about Laney), Tucker (doing more, and better, stuff for SIA than for FAPA), Bloch (strictly minac, but priceless) — in short, a dazzling array, the leading lights of other days (yes, Bob Shaw, too), a list that would make a fansman drool and would be all the more irresistible to a relatively new fan just weaning himself on old fanzines.

Oh, it was cruel, yes. With Arnie I was not as deadpan as I had been with Len, so I'm sure he suspected quite often that it was just a goof. But I was deadpan often enough that he could never quite be sure.

There were procedural delays about his proposed membership, I told him; it would take at least half a year (two quarterly mailings) to get voting started. Should anyone voice an objection, it would be necessary for Arnie to face a stand-off — in secret balloting, the membership would decide by majority vote whether they preferred to have Arnie as a member, or the person who had voiced the objection: thus did I, in hoaxing Arnie, invent the "put," the method by which Lil' Apa chooses its members. Of course, I told Arnie, he was not to mention this to anyone — the Apa was secret, and I was violating its rules by telling him that I had proposed him for membership.

Most often I made up the details as I went along; these consisted of the above framework and a few anecdotes about what Willis had said to Burbee or Tucker had said to Raeburn. When and if Arnie hinted, as he did more than once, that he didn't believe some part, or even all, of my meanderings, I never denied that I was putting him on. "Perhaps it's best that you believe that, Arnie," I would say. "That way, if you're rejected, you won't feel so bad. I probably shouldn't have told you anything about SIA anyway."

I don't say this convinced him. But it did keep him guessing.

At one point I even told him that the apa was a hoax, a put-on, which

he accepted with relief. Then I tried to convince him of its existence: Tucker, I explained, had voted against him and he stood no chance in a stand-off, so I'd decided to take the easy way out. But now Tucker had removed his objection. "You don't have to believe in it, Arnie," I added. "In fact, with voting still ahead, maybe it would be best, for the good of your own psyche, if you didn't."

Don't ask me to explain why I inflicted these barbarous cruelties on these two neofen. I'm at a loss to explain it myself. I liked Len well enough (although I never really got to know him; shortly after he attended his first Fanoclast meeting, he moved to Southern California to attend college), and Arnie and I became fast friends. If needs be, I am willing to accept the lowest possible motive upon myself: Perhaps I was envious of their accelerating rate of progress, fanwise, and therefore used this mean device to lower them in my eyes and build myself up, comparatively, in theirs. I don't think that was the case, but 20 years of intensive psychoanalysis might eventually reveal it to be so.

But these events are long past, dimmed over with the haze of antiquity. Arnie has long since realized that the put-on was a put-on. (If truth be known, Arnie, you were actually rejected. Ahahaha!) Seriously, if he were the type to hold a grudge, we'd have never done the things we subsequently did together — coedit FOCAL POINT, publish THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR, co-chair the successful BoSh Fund.

Right?

Maybe.

Or, as Calvin Demmon has so often been quoted as saying, "Maybe Not."

The world has changed, and indeed the people in it; the play is set upon another stage, and the table that was once turned one way may now be turned another: When I played my little prank on Arnie, he was still a neofan, and I was one who, though surely not a BNF, was at least wise in the ways of fandom and could tell tales of fandom's splendid past, and thus was someone for him to look up to. The days of Arnie's acolytism are long over now, however: He knows as much (and in some instances, more) about fandom's past as I do. If I am any judge — and I think I am — both the quality and quantity of his fanac are now superior to mine.

I could see myself approaching the matter casually.

"Say, Arnie," I would say casually, "how do I go about joining SCF?"

"Well," he would reply, the hint of a smile playing a tap-dance on his lips, "it's strange you should ask, rich. I've proposed you for membership, but of course first it has to pass the membership committee, then a vote of the members. And although of course I would like you to be a member, I can't be too sure they'll agree with me. Tell you what — I'll keep you informed about your progress. What do you say, rich?"

What do I say to that? No. No is what I say; no a thousand times, a million, a no to equal every star in the sky. No until I turn into the jellybean that shouted love at the repenting harlequin in the maidenform tick-tockman bra.

No, I'm not about to take a chance like that. It might be my just desserts, it might even be precisely what I deserve for those inflicted cruelties. But I refuse to submit myself to the chance of it. I'll be happy to go on record right here and now as being entirely in favor of Justice in this world — just as long as it doesn't have to apply to me.

After taking this overshadowing factor into consideration, it occurred to me that the only way to escape this fate and still join SCF would be to start a fanachronistic project of my own, to prove to the membership, and the world at large, that I deserve to be One Of Them.

While Arnie's article said nothing about how one might join up, it seems reasonable enough to assume that SCF would be open to anyone who could come up with a good idea in which one could indulge fanachronistically which no one has used to date. After some hours spent studying Arnie's article, and the replies it engendered, I was fortunately able to come up with an SCF project which has thus far been overlooked.

Forthwith, and immediately henceforth, I intend to revive Proxyboo, Ltd.

For those who've either not been in fandom since 1953 or have not been able to read fanzines of that period, I should explain that Proxyboo, Ltd., was a service provided by Walt Willis and Lee Hoffman. For an intemperate fee, the service would completely take over your fanac — write fabulous letters, articles and stories and send out superlative illos under your name, publish for you a fanzine of such excellence that it would immediately become the FOCAL POINT (excuse me) focal point of fandom. Your Proxyboo, Ltd., fanzine would have material by all the BNFs of the time — not just Willis and

HAVE SOME MORE
BALONEY, ARN...



Hoffman, but Bloch, Tucker, Vick, McCain, Calkins, etc., since they were all (according to the advertisements) merely "house" names of Proxyboo, Ltd., anyway.

Now I realize straight off that this will not be an easy task. In recreating this service for fandom, I must first acknowledge two difficulties which are, in fact, almost insurmountable. But only "almost," for reasons which I shall explain for you.

The first difficulty should be obvious. It is simply this: I am not now, nor am I likely to be at any time in the near future, half as good a writer as either Walt or Lee were when they began their profitable venture. Foo knows that would be totally insurmountable, were it not for the second difficulty which, fortunately, partially ameliorates the first: Fandom has changed since the days of Willis and Hoffman. It therefore stands to reason that what would be desired of such a service would, presumably, not be the same.

The revised and revived Proxyboo, Ltd., then, will, for a mere \$30,000 a year, completely take over your fanac, just as the original Proxyboo, Ltd., offered to do. For this small, insignificant, hardly-worth-mentioning fee (payable in full in advance), however, we here at Proxy2 will write the best articles and letters of which we are capable, and impress into service the best artists we know in fandom to illustrate under your name. (This last may be particularly appealing to fans like Arnie, who have good cartoon ideas but can't draw and have always wanted to be artists. In Arnie's case, however, I may have to refer the matter to the Proxyboo, Ltd., membership committee, which could take a few months.)

While this service may not be quite as satisfactory as that offered by Proxy1, we feel that the publication of your fanzine — keeping to the letter if not precisely the spirit of the original Proxyboo, Ltd. — will more than make up for any deficiency.

For one thing, in this increasingly visually-oriented hobby of ours, it will have illustrations by all the best artists and cartoonists fandom has to offer — Alicia Austin, George Barr, Ross Chamberlain, Jay Kinney, Joe Staton, Steve Stiles, bjob Stewart, ATom, Eddie Jones, Richard Bergeron, William Rotsler, Bjo, Mike Gilbert, Vaughn Bode, Jeff Jones, etc., &c. — some even employing two- or three-color mimeography. All, however, to fit present-day standards of acceptability, will, in the grand and glorious manner we've all come to love and admire in the pages of LOCUS and other fanzines, be rendered in totally indecipherable electrostencil smudges.

There will also, of course, be a long book review column (although no single review will run more than three paragraphs in length) to keep your readers up to date on all the spiffy new releases coming out from Belmont, conducted by none other than those Hugo "best fan writer" nominees Richard Delap and Ted Pauls.

Your Proxyboo, Ltd., fanzine will have its own pro-in-residence, although we can make no guarantees about how well-known, liked or admired a pro he may be. (You pays your money and you takes your chances.) However, the Proxyboo, Ltd., customer may rest assured that his or her pro-in-residence will write a column in each issue of the Proxyboo, Ltd., fanzine which will contain 1) progress reports on his latest half-dozen books, 2) at least one swipe at some better-established pro he doesn't like, 3) a section in which he Tells All The Dirty Truth About Those Rotten Publishing Bastards In New York You Wanted To Know About But Were Afraid To Ask, and 4) at least one snippet to indicate his condescension towards the people who are reading this column. The words will be different in each installment, of course; but the content of each will not be significantly different.

While we're at it, we here at Proxy2 will do all in our power to get a few of the bigger name pros to go at each other tooth & nail, hammer & tongs, with as much name-calling and as little real food for thought as possible, to prove once again that the dividing line between pros and fans, like that between insanity and genius, is indeed a thin one — if indeed it exists at all. To add emphasis to this philosophy, the fanzine will have two special departments. In one, fans will tell the SFWA how to conduct their business. In the other, pros will tell fen what's wrong with fandom and how it can be improved for the betterment of stf.

Then, for the grand finale, the piece de resistance, there will be your editorial. Hand-crafted in the word shops of Proxyboo, Ltd., combining the Dick Geiss' alter ego "style" of writing, the content of an achromatic Charlie Brown trip report, the modesty of a Bill Bowers talking about one of his own efforts, and the critical acumen of a Dan Goodman review of APA-L, it will be guaranteed to bring your readers to an absolute nadir of delight and enthusiasm.

As I'm sure you can easily see, we here at the revived and revised Proxyboo, Ltd., have spent a great deal of time doing market research

into what makes today's popular and successful fanzines. A zine of grace and humor, a well-written, engaging and memorable fanzine with contributions by the likes of Willis, Hoffman, Bloch, Tucker, et. al., would, as you'll all surely agree, be totally out of place in fandom as we know it today.

It is for that reason that we can now sit back, confidently, and wait for your service fees to start pouring in.

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS TODAY

As the last issue of *bm* went to press, the first installment of Jerry Lapidus' excellent critical fanzine review column appeared in the 18th issue of *BEABOHEMA* (50 cents or the usual from Frank Lunney, Box 394, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa. 18015). The column is called "I Fell Into An Avalanche" for reasons that may be known only to Jerry; it might, however, more properly be called "All Our Yesterdays Today" because, while Jerry has consciously attempted to write the long, critical review which Ted White, Greg Benford, the late Kent Moomaw and Arnie Katz have done before him, he has also unconsciously, perhaps — patterned himself after Harry Warner's famed column.

By this I mean that Jerry's 'reviews' are not of a particular issue of a fanzine, but of the total fanzine. This is an excellent way to review fanzines — one gets a perspective of their high and low points — and it's also what Warner does. The fanzines Harry talks about in his column tend to be long defunct, since the purpose of "All Our Yesterdays" is to give one some historical perspective. Jerry's intent is to give a better over-all picture of what a particular fanzine is like, a fanzine that is current. The result is still somewhat like getting an "All Our Yesterdays" written about a fanzine of today. I like it.

In the 19th issue of *BAB* Jerry did this with just one fanzine, *BEABOHEMA* (although he was not, as he thought, the first fanzine reviewer to do this; Arnie Katz, I think, reviewed *ODD* in the pages of *ODD*); in the 18th and 20th, he does this by contrasting two similar-purpose fanzines — *FOCAL POINT* and *LOCUS*, and *ENERGUMEN* with *GRANFALLOON*, respectively.

He does this all very well, and in the process writes one of the most provoking, thoughtful and enjoyable columns I've read in a fanzine in some time. Mind you, I'm not voting for Lapidus as best fanzine writer this year. But I'm keeping the whole matter under advisement.

I want to dwell for a few moments — perhaps quite a few moments — on the first installment, in which *FOCAL POINT* and *LOCUS* are considered.

But first I should say that this is not in any sense a refutation of any of Jerry's criticisms. For one thing, I'm far too pleasantly egoboosted with Jerry's overall opinion of *FP*. For another, the criticisms — even the harshest of them — are perfectly justified.

No, it's merely that Jerry's review allows me to focus on a couple of subject I happen to feel like talking about — the first being *FP*, the second being fannish newszine publishing in general.

Lapidus quotes this statement from the first issue of the revived *FOCAL POINT*: "The whole fan world, for all we know, may simultaneously reach orgasm every time 'SMOF No. 1' goes into his egotripping song and dance. We don't.", then goes on to say, "The whole idea (of publishing *FP*) was to present the news more interestingly and more entertainingly than *LOCUS* had been doing."

Which is only partly true. The quote is intact, and it was the only reason Arnie and I gave for reviving *FP* from its near five-year slumber. But actually, there were at least two other major reasons, one of which Jerry partly guesses later on in his review: We felt that someone should show that publishing a fanzine did not necessarily have to be confined to getting professional writers and editors to squabble with one another, empty-ump pages of plonking book reviews or lists of books coming out in Ballantine's adult fantasy series next Spring.

Good fan writing, as Jerry defines it in his review, is writing that you can enjoy reading as much or more the second time — and a good fanzine, I would add, follows the same rule. Neither Arnie nor I much enjoyed those say-nothing book reviews the first time we read them.

So it was our immodest hope that we could revive fannishness, and good writing, again. We recognized, I think, that there were scores of fans perhaps better qualified for this undertaking, but we also saw that they had seemingly either confined themselves to the apas or had gaffiated.

The really fannish, i.e., lazy, thing to have done would have been to leave it, still, for someone else to do. I tend to think we probably would have left it for someone else to do if it had not been for the other reason we had for reviving *FOCAL POINT*.



The second, and the truly major, reason for reviving FP was the Bob Shaw Fund.

You see, Eddie Jones won the TAFF contest over Bob Shaw. I did not feel the same bitterness over this that I did later when Mario Bosnyak won over Pete Weston, and I know of no one else who did: Eddie was a good candidate, a fine TAFFman who proved to be an excellent TAFF administrator (but for one detail, of which more later), and though I had myself supported and voted for Bob, there was simply no denying that he had lost to a Good Man in the Dean Grennellian sense of those two words.

But.

But, as I pointed out at a Fanoclast meeting after the results were in, fans in this country had voiced a preference for Bob; Eddie had won by coming close to Bob's total here and topping him with ballots cast from England. Perhaps, I said, we New York fans should get behind a special fund to bring Bob to a worldcon. The sage heads (we were really not into Strange Mixtures, regardless of how that may sound) at the Fanoclasts — Ted White, Arnie, Steve Stiles, Andy Porter and others — agreed that this would be a fine idea, and Ted (I believe) pointed out that it was almost time for TAFF to take its traditional rest, so perhaps that would be a good time to start it. Steve, who was then TAFF administrator, said he thought that would probably be after TAFF sent another man to Europe, although to be sure we'd have to get that straightened out with Eddie.

Fine, I said.

And there the matter rested. For a while.

When Eddie came to the U.S., he came to Brooklyn to visit Steve Stiles. The Bob Shaw Fund idea had been left on the back burners, waiting for Eddie's arrival here, but when he came — since I wasn't going to St. Louiscon — I made a point of visiting Steve and Eddie to try to get it all straightened out.

In that meeting I explained to Eddie the thinking that had gone into the idea of the Bob Shaw Fund, and how we hoped there would not be a TAFF race following the next one to Europe because then we wouldn't have to go to the bother of explaining to those who'd never witnessed it how special funds and TAFF have often been conducted together without interfering with each other. While Eddie wondered aloud if BoSh would go for the fund idea, it seemed to me at the time that he thought the idea a basically sound one and agreed that it was about time for TAFF to take its traditional rest. It also seems to me that both Eddie and I had, at this point, had a fair amount to drink: I don't, however, really believe that either of us were drunk. I mention it here only because it becomes a consideration later on.

But I'm getting ahead of myself.

I had even (I confided to Eddie) decided who was going to do all the work on the fund: Richard Bergeron. All I had to do, I explained, was convince Bergeron. And I chuckled conspiratorially. Ahahahaha! (As it turned out, I probably could have convinced Bergeron to take on the task; as a member of the BoSh Fund Committee, his efforts alone were responsible for several hundred dollars churning into the Fund. But for reasons I'll explain further on, I did not try to convince him.)

From my vantage point, then, it looked as if the BoSh Fund was on the road. There remained only the matter of contacting Bob about the idea and, if he approved, getting the necessary backing. The "backing" would have to include the publisher of some good, regular fanzine, to serve as the locus (or the focal point) of the fund. No successful 'special' fund has ever succeeded without that sort of fanzine backing: CONFUSION brought Willis over the first time, AXE the second; CRY OF THE NAMELESS brought John Berry and Ella Parker.

This was the big reason I'd written myself off as the person to conduct the fund: When I started tossing the idea around, I was publishing POOR RICHARD'S ALMANACK, eight pages that came forth yearly to preserve me as a fossil of FAPA, which hardly qualified me for the post.

So it was either a matter of convincing Bergeron or, if he could not be convinced, Ted White and John Berry. Those seemed to be my alternatives.

As the next TAFF race began to get underway, however, I began to have some nagging doubts about the feasibility of the fund. Neither WARHOON nor EGOBOO lacked for quality, of course, but then neither were they highly regular (the former less so than the latter). And, as I continued to think about it, taking on a project such as the Shaw Fund involved a great deal of time-consuming effort. Was it within reason for me to just 'suggest' that someone take it on?

Then, one evening, Arnie Katz and I fell to discussing the depressing state of fandom, as was our wont, while he was over for dinner. "Fandom is not what it used to be, meyer," either he or I said. Or

words to the same effect. We both agreed that somebody should Do Something to Save Fandom from its Perfidious Fate, and perhaps even secretly agreed that that someone should be us.

I don't remember just now which of us suggested that we revive FOCAL POINT, a newszine I had co-edited with Mike McInerney, nor which of us pointed out that it would make the ideal vehicle from which to conduct the BoSh Fund. I simply remember that it was the latter point which kept the evening's discussion from being just more fan-ish chitchatter.

So we contacted people for news, we prevailed on Ted White for a piece on the SFWA banquet, we invested money in stencils, paper and ink, and the very next week we published the first issue of the new FOCAL POINT.

What all this background is leading up to is something in the way of an explanation about one of Jerry's critical points about FP: "What wasn't quite so nice (about FOCAL POINT) was the controversy the Shaw Fund saw, controversy of the type that unfortunately followed FOCAL POINT through this whole period. From where I stand, I admit that much of it seems to have been the editors' own fault. From the very beginning, they had made a point of alienating Charlie Brown and LOCUS; go back and read that statement I quoted from the first issue editorial. This led directly to the unpleasantness over the BoSh fund that followed. Due to some apparent misunderstanding on both sides, tempers probably already on edge from this early name-calling flared openly. Both LOCUS and FOCAL POINT attacked each others' actions repeatedly, over the space of several issues, each claiming to be acting in the best interests of fandom as a whole. Both violently over-reacted, but with that overt name-calling in the first issue, FP seemed to strike the first blow."

I said that I was not going to refute any of Jerry's criticisms and I meant what I said. I would like to point out, for truth's sake, however, that although that 'first blow' he cites was written by Arnie, some pettiness on my part may have played an even more important role in the unpleasant controversy over the Shaw Fund.

Steve Stiles had early on pointed out what might be a slight wrinkle in the plans for the fund, namely that in the year we hoped to conduct it, he (Steve) would be a "lame duck" TAFF administrator, and the real decision of whether or not to conduct a race would be made by Eddie Jones and whomever won the Heincon TAFF trip.

But looking over the list of candidates — Rotsler, Charlie Brown and Elliott Shorter — and employing fourth dimensional mental crifanac, I was quickly able to deduce that William Rotsler would be the winner. Charlie and Elliott, my reasoning told me, would draw their votes from the same type of fan, thus splitting that element, while Bill would draw support from the more fannish types, plus the scores of people who had enjoyed his cartoons over 20-plus years of his fanning.

My reasoning, of course, was all wet. So Elliott Shorter scored what I considered a stunning victory, and became our representative to Heicon.

The dilemma could have been worse: Charlie could have won. Still, Elliott was a friend of Charlie's, involved more often than not in the production of LOCUS, which made it almost as bad, from my point of view. Y'see, we had scooped LOCUS on a number of events, LOCUS had likewise scooped us a number of times, and there's no big deal to be made about it because that's the name of the game. But, I didn't know Elliott very well, had no idea whether he could be trusted to keep the matter DNQ from Charlie until we published it and, in my pettiness, I was totally unwilling to take the chance that LOCUS would beat us with the announcement on what was, after all, our own story. The Fund, I point out again, had been the major reason we'd undertaken to revive FOCAL POINT in the first place.

So with a shrug of my shoulders, I decided we already had the word of the TAFF administrators. Elliott would, in the strictest interpretation of the rules, be a TAFF delegate until he returned to the U.S. So the FP announcement of the Shaw Fund was worded accordingly — for which I took and take full responsibility — and was ready to mail before I called Elliott to try to get his cooperation. He didn't deny that cooperation; he merely said that he was new at this TAFF administration business and would have to see Eddie and talk the matter over with him before reaching a decision. But he agreed to keep the DNQ from Charlie (which scarcely matter at this point, as FOCAL POINT 10 only needed to be dropped in the mail box — with the perfectly true, but still slightly misleading, statement that the Shaw Fund had "the endorsement of the TAFF administrators").

Elliott later charged that we — or I — would have crossed out that line on all the copies, if we (or I) had chosen to do so. Perfectly true. I took the easy way out instead and assumed that Eddie would set

Elliott straight: In the meantime, it seemed to be the best thing to get the show on the road.

So we didn't wait. And my reasoning was, once again, all wet. Eddie didn't set Elliott straight. In fact, I gathered from second hand sources that he denied any agreement had been reached at all — and I don't mind saying that, in the whole crazy affair, there was no other incident which so non-plussed me. I mean, I can understand other peoples' motivations for doing and saying what they did and said — not always with agreement for them, but I can understand them — but not so Eddie Jones. And my attempts to find out, in an angry letter at the time, more reasonably at Boston in person and in subsequent attempts at correspondence, have either been ignored or turned back with the statement that he doesn't want to have anything more to say about it.

So I'm left to speculate. There are several possibilities. One is that, since my meeting with Eddie was before he went on to the con, the details may have been blurred in his mind after attending it. (And don't tell me I should have written to him to confirm our agreement — I thought of it afterwards, but it didn't seem necessary at the time.) Another possibility, as I mentioned earlier, is that the small amount of alcohol we had consumed made one, or the other, or both of us drunk. Yet a third possibility is that either Eddie lied or I did; I can't imagine why Eddie should, and I know I didn't.

Well. Speculating serves no useful purpose. It was, at any rate, the root of the misunderstanding which led to the LOCUS-FOCAL POINT brannigan.

Strangely, however, it was this "controversy the Shaw Fund saw" which put the fund over the top. An anonymous fan, obviously as tired of the dispute as both we and Charlie were, arranged through Charlie to contribute \$300 to the fund if we could just agree to disagree and let the matter drop.

The argument had left a bad taste in the mouths of all parties involved. I'm sure, over what should have been an entirely joyous event. As I said jokingly to Dan Goodman over the phone one night, we had all been casting about for a way to bring it to an end when this lovely unnamed and unknown person came along and offered to bribe us in a good cause. Needless to say, we found ourselves perfectly willing to be bought.

So Arnie drafted our 'last word' on the subject, which he read to Charlie over the phone, and Charlie agreed that it seemed to fit the letter and spirit of what our anonymous donor wanted. By the time the check had cleared Charlie's bank, the fund had accumulated a bit more than \$700 — so with the aid of the \$300 'bribe,' the \$1,000 goal we had set for the fund was attained.

"A couple of similar quarrels arose in later issues," Jerry points out, citing what appeared to be — hell, what was — a series of attacks on Linda Bushyager following her questioning, in the harshest possible terms, the honesty of the then-just-completed EGOBOO POLL.

I think if Arnie and I had it all to do over again, we'd delete at least half, and maybe as much as 75 per cent, of the comments that went into the pages of FP on the subject of Linda and her statements about the Poll. Not, mind you, that I think we were wrong in what we said — just that we overdid it. (I remember distinctly the last time I was wrong; it was October, 1932, and Chas. Burbee turned to me and said, "Tell me, never should I invent sex or science fiction?" and I, pale youth of minus 10 Summers that I was, said, "Science fiction would be peachy!" But I digress...)

It was Arnie who came across Linda's comments in GRAN-FALLOON, and Arnie particularly who found them so disagreeable; when pressed, he explained to me how he had helped John Berry in tabulating the ballots and how they had laughed together over Linda's votes for GF and GF contributors — making both Linda's comment about 'people voting only for their friends' and doubting the honesty of those counting the ballots was doubly pernicious. So Arnie prevailed on Jay Kinney to write a refutation, and wrote a review of GF himself to cover the points he felt Jay had missed.

But here is where the left hand didn't know what the right hand was doing. I'd seen Jay's piece but not Arnie's; and Jay's, which was published first, drew comment from Linda which I chose to print in the next issue along with my own personal blast. Arnie's review appeared in the same issue, and Ted White also responded — it was his and John Berry's veracity which had been challenged — and he said quite strongly what he felt about the matter.

The result was that in two issues, both editors and two other people from Our Crowd, tromped down, hard, with hob-nailed boots, on Linda. Had she been some poison penster named Wetzell, some thieving Degler, she might well have deserved such treatment. But not for a paragraph of comment on a silly fan poll.

It's a testimony to Linda's good humor, I think, that she's now on

good enough terms with Arnie, Ted and Jay to get contributions from all three. And she certainly has an apology coming from me, which I tender here. Not, mind you, that I think I was wrong — I distinctly remember the last time I was wrong, in October, 1932, but I see I've already mentioned that.

If this was trying to refute points in Jerry's excellent article, I could mention at least two other instances in which we exercised restraint above and beyond the call of duty.

The first involved a rather tasteless piece of faaan-fiction by Earl Evers in ZEEN — taking seriously my casual remark to Dan Goodman about Arnie's and my willingness to be bribed in a good cause to do what we wanted to do anyway, treating it as some sort of inane expose.

It was easy to ignore. Evers first billed the piece as "satire" but when no one could figure out quite what he was satirizing he changed that by explaining that it was a "parody" of Arnie's style of fannish writing. The fact that only Earl could see it that way seems to me a sufficient refutation of that contention.

Then too, Earl has often been a critic of 'fannishness.' When you see his own attempts at it, it's simple enough to understand why. You can be pretty sure that when Earl labels something of his 'a rap' that it's going to be pretty fannish; and when he labels something 'fannish,' it's not going to be.

Bill Bowers was much harder to ignore when, in a flyer with OUTWORLDS, he told publishers of Special BoSh Fund fanzines (except FOCAL POINT, because its special issue had a half number (?) that they would either trade their special issues with him, just like any other fanzine they published, or he'd cut them off the OUTWORLDS mailing list.

Harsh words indeed for pipples, some of them just promising neofen, who had volunteered to forego the usual pleasures of egoboo (such issues, though better in most instances than regular ones, seldom get much in the way of comment, since the reader feels he's paid enough in Real Money) to publish cash-only issues of their fanzines to benefit the Fund.

Had the threat included FOCAL POINT, the solution would have been quite simple: A note to Bowers explaining in graphic detail which part of his anatomy those fat issues of OUTWORLDS could be stuffed up, along with the suggestion to cauterize the wound to keep them from falling back out.

But it didn't include FOCAL POINT. It only included some very nice young people who were already making quite enough sacrifices to help the Shaw Fund, and who did not deserve to be penalized more by being cut off the OUTWORLDS' mailing list — no matter how convincingly I might argue to them that that might be a blessing in disguise.

With the LOCUS-FOCAL POINT argument still going full-tilt, however, presentation of any such views in FP was simply not possible. So, instead, I paid for Bowers' copies of the special issues put out by those younger ten. And I hope the cheap schmuck enjoyed reading every word. I really do.

But I'm getting far afield — and revealing, perhaps, how much less restrained FP would have been without Arnie's cooler head.

There was still another reason for reviving FOCAL POINT, a reason which was strictly my own. You see, in a sense, FOCAL POINT had in its previous incarnation pointed the downward direction from which LOCUS was to come.

In 1957, the 'leading' news zine had been FANTASY TIMES. It was a news zine of the science fiction field — not of fandom — and a plonking target which in part inspired Terry Carr and Ron Ellik, out of sheer boredom, to publish the ne plus ultra of fannish newszines, FANAC. FANAC was a news fmz about fans and fandom and occasionally something of importance, if it really was important, about sf. (Strictly speaking, of course, FANAC was the successor to Jan Jansen's CONTACT.)

Since the day FANAC left the editorial hands of Terry Carr and Ron Ellik, fannish newszines have been in an almost constant state of decline. The descent has not always been straight down, to be sure, but the heights of the Carr-Ellik FANAC were never in danger of being touched again.

The quality of fannish newszines dropped quite a bit when FANAC went from the hands of Carr and Ellik to Walter Breen. This was only partly Walter's fault; his interests were so catholic that he often failed to edit out uninteresting items, and he wrote convention reports of such length that the publication of FANAC was sometimes delayed by several months. It lost not only the selectivity which had made it the ne plus ultra of fannish newszines, but its timeliness as well — and a newszine that is not timely is not a newszine.

Ron Ellik subsequently pushed the level of fannish newszine publishing back up a notch with STARSPINKLE. Like the Carr-Ellik

FANAC, it was a zine of news and chitterchatter, with a little more emphasis on the latter since 'chitterchatter' was Ron's stock-in-trade, a word he had elevated from a derogatory to a complimentary meaning. As enjoyable as STARSPINKLE sometimes was, however, it never reached FANAC's level.

FANAC was more than a mere newszine, it inspired and encouraged a number of well-known fans of the time to put out 'riders' that were very much a part of FANAC's aura and enjoyability. Berkley fan predominated in rider production, with Terry publishing a number of issues of HOBGOBLIN, Dave Rike a number of issues of RUR, and Pete Graham publishing enjoyably but under a title I can't recall. There was also FANAC's once-a-year lettercolumn, AN EGOBOO A DAY FROM ALL OVER. But fans outside the Berkeley area — Rio Ted Johnstone, Dean Grennell to name a few that come to mind — were also represented. And Bob Tucker revived LeZOMBIE for the occasion.

STARSPINKLE didn't inspire this same sort of reader participation, and though the chitterchatter was enjoyable enough, its emphasis over the news made it less a newszine when compared to the Carr-Elilik FANAC.

STARSPINKLE's successor, Bruce Pelz' RATATOSK, had its chitterchatter and had its news — and although the emphasis was turned back around to the latter over the former, it didn't quite reach the STARSPINKLE level. It was regular, it was reliable, it was accurate, it was reasonably well presented, it even had its fun moments.

However, I think if Lapidus turned his mind to a comparison of RATATOSK and the first incarnation of FOCAL POINT, FP would have suffered in comparison just as much as LOCUS suffered in the comparison with FP2. Moreso, maybe. FP1 had chitterchatter, news and a few Fun Moments — but none of the other characteristics described above. Among its deficiencies were quite frequent lateness (resulting in 20 'biweekly' issues in its first full year), on-stencil composition of news items, sloppy mimeography and even something I've oft criticized LOCUS for — the only difference being that Mike and I buried some of our more important news items under 'Newsgaggle' rather than 'Son of Notes.'

There was one other way in which FP1 contributed to the general decline of fannish newszines: We printed more of the less-interesting items about the sf field than any of the other newszines that followed FANAC. When we had a hole to fill, we found it easier to do so with a publisher's list of upcoming books than to find out what was happening in the fan centers of the world.

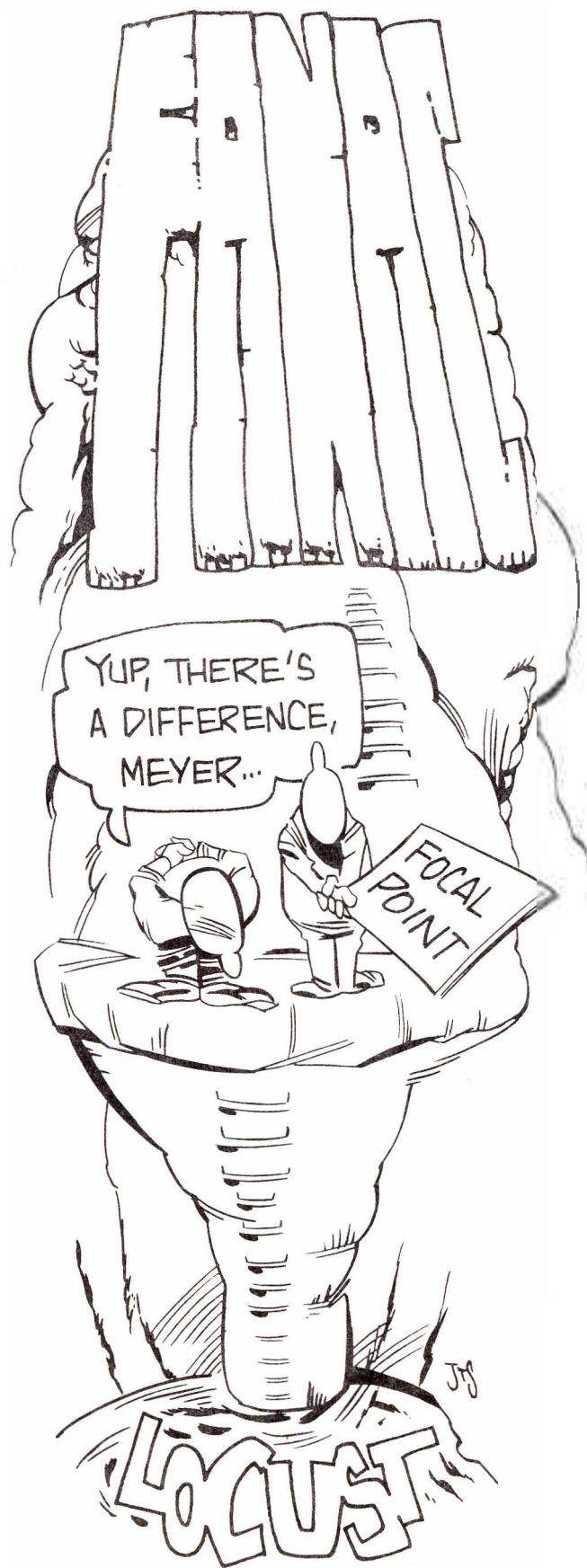
SF WEEKLY was the next newszine on the scene. But Andy Porter's publication was not even trying to fit the same mold as the newszines that had preceded it: It served the FANTASY TIMES reason d'être while attempting the FANAC style. That is, it was a science fiction newszine edited fannishly. When it printed chitterchatter, it was to fill up holes that could not be filled with news about what was happening in the sf field or books that were to be published.

Then we came to LOCUS. Well now, doesn't everyone already know what rich brown thinks of LOCUS?

Perhaps not. Perhaps my opinions have mellowed, perhaps I'm backing off from what I've published previously, but let me say this: A comparison of LOCUS and FANAC, to me is ludicrous — and though I prob'ly shouldn't have, I laughed out loud when in a subsequent BEABOHEMA Jerry Kaufman, commenting on the Lapidus FP-LOCUS review, said that "LOCUS (according to Charlie) started out as an imitation FANAC." I should not have laughed, of course, because in all honesty I have not seen the earliest issues of LOCUS and, no matter how far-fetched the idea may seem to me, because I have not read them I cannot say certainly that LOCUS failed in that attempt.

However, considering what LOCUS has become (according to Kaufman reporting Charlie's own view) — a "service" fanzine — the real comparison would have to be, in this instance, between LOCUS and FANTASY (SCIENCE FICTION) TIMES. And in such a comparison, I think I can say without fear of contradiction that LOCUS wins hands-down: There is just no way, not for reading or organization or graphics or presentation that FT (or SFT) was ever a superior fanzine to LOCUS.

In other words, most of the criticism I've heaped on LOCUS has been justified from one point of view but not from another. Those criticisms were based on Charlie's original aspirations for LOCUS, not for what it is or what it has become. Might as well curse an apple because it's not an orange. LOCUS is a good apple, too — not as good as it could be, perhaps, but certainly superior to most any other apple we've had, its bad-apple machinations to win a Hugo notwithstanding. I think it even got better in terms of writing and organization as Arnie and I, and



perhaps a half dozen others, let fly with a few brickbats.

But I'm talking about oranges. And with LOCUS, at least the later issues that I did see, the process of moving away from the FANAC-style fannish newszine was taken a good three rungs down the ladder.

As Arnie and I began planning the sort of zine we wanted the revived FP to be, it seemed that the next newszine could either go right straight on down to the FANTASY TIMES sub-basement, or try to change the course of things.

"From the very beginning," Jerry writes, "FP featured additional material besides straight news. The first issue includes a 'guest' report on the SFWA Banquet from Ted White. The very next issue included a page-long fannish tale from Arnie, the fourth continued Steve Stiles' TAFF report, and by the fifth issue Harry Warner's 'All Our Yesterdays' column had finally taken root. This whole trend toward fanzine rather than newszine continued as more and more writers began contributing columns... the process was obvious with the publication of FOCAL POINT 12.5, a special genzine produced for the BoSh Fund, and was completed with FOCAL POINT 31's metamorphosis into a full-fledge fannish fanzine."

Jerry sees it as a mushrooming trend, and his perceptions must have been shared by other readers. I'm sure — but the extra material in FP was more consciously planned an effect than that: FANAC inspired riders, FOCAL POINT some of the better fannish writers to contribute either columns or individual contributions.

Jerry writes: "Name your list of favorite current writers who have written or might write in what might be called a fannish style. Write it down. Got it? Okay. Now check out these names: Terry Carr, Harry Warner, Steve Stiles, Greg Benford, Arnie Katz, Ted White, Bob Shaw, rich brown, John D. Berry, Rosemary Uilyot. I venture to guess most of your favorites are on the list — and everyone here either had a regular column in FP, or else had a number of individual pieces in these thirty issues."

Certainly it was FANAC emulation to a degree — but in another sense it was also our attempt to send the quality spiral higher, to be better than even FANAC had been, to break out of the mold entirely. We wanted something of the same flavor without doing exactly the same thing; we also hoped to have some influence, to effect some changes, on general fanzine fandom. Whether we succeeded in reaching, or even breaking through, the quality level of FANAC is something I'm simply not objective enough to have an opinion on; but I know we pushed things in the right direction, upward, and that we managed to get some of the changes we wanted in general fanzine fandom. (Lapidus' column, for example, would probably not have been published in BEABOHEMA as that fanzine existed prior to some FOCAL POINT prodding. To give Frank Lunney his due, however, BAB was already leaning that way — towards changing the type of fanzine he was publishing, that is — before we had said Word One. But he has acknowledged FP as an influence.)

The Shaw Fund achieved its \$1,000 goal and more. The work neared completion of THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR. And, thumbing through our back files of FP, Arnie and I both realized that we had done as well as we had hoped to do and that it was time to go on to other things.

We were also on the verge of things darkly hinted-at by Arnie elsewhere, the breakup of the 'unity' of the Fanoclasts, in which he would end up on one side of the universe and I on the other, both (I should hope) just as glad to stay where we were. This made co-editing a fanzine of any kind a pain-in-the-ass. When I dropped out from lack of further interest, Arnie changed FP (with my blessing, if he needed it) into a full-fledge fannish zine. And I'm over here publishing bm, if you hadn't noticed.

So where does that leave us?

Well, from where I'm sitting, the flames of fannishness have never burned brighter. At the same time, there's this dark empty space out there waiting to be filled with light and whimsy — fandom still needs a good fannish newszine. Those who think that LOCUS fills that void — for all the fact that it may be an admirable 'service' fanzine — need not apply.

FOCAL POINT, in its second newszine incarnation, was a fine fanzine, if I do say so myself (and I do) — but whoever is yet to come along with a zine to take its place should surely see that there's still plenty of room for improvement, and that the upward spiral need not be broken. For one thing, the news could be printed with still a little more zing, with a little lighter touch. There's room for more news commentary, too, and I always regretted that FP seldom seemed to have room for some short pithy fmz reviews to acknowledge that there were other good fanzines being published.

It seems to me that this next fannish newszine, whatever its name

and whomever decides to edit it, could do all the things FP did well at least as well, and at the same time not make some of the monumental blunders we made.

It would be a Good Thing if the editor of this as-yet-unpublished newszine could spell peoples names; I misspelled them more often than Arnie did, but both of us made errors in this line.

This next fannish newszine, by whatever name and by whomever edited, will have the added advantage of being published in a sympathetic environment, or at least more sympathetic than the one Arnie and I faced when the revived FOCAL POINT first thundered off the press.

The audience is there, waiting, and as egotistical as I am about FP's real accomplishments, I don't think they'll be too hard to top. I don't know who's going to do it, but I'm pretty sure it's going to be done. Soon. Watch for it.

It certainly will be a wonderful thing.

WIELD AIR

(with apologies to Willis for lifting an idea or two)

It was a day much like any other day but perhaps, at the same time, a day in which history was in the making, a day in which Potential would flower into Actuality. But the fact that it seemed not much unlike any other day was not in itself unusual: It was a Saturday, hence a day of leisure, and Saturdays are almost always a day of leisure here at the center of the known universe.

It was therefore at a leisurely pace that I strolled down four flights of stairs to search the mailbox for what is near and dear to the hearts of all trufen — in my case, a letter of comment on one of the 300-plus copies of beardmutterings I had but so recently posted.

Since the posting, at this point in time, had been so recent, the response at this same point in time had been less than overwhelming. I had altogether forgotten the slowness of third-class mail, which means had been used to mail bm. When Arnie and I had co-edited FP, he received most of the mail, and FP had been sent out first class as well.

It was small wonder, then, that I had begun to paraphrase Don Marquis when muttering to myself: "Publishing a fanzine" I muttered from time to time, "is like dropping a rose petal down the grand canyon and waiting for the echo."

There was only one letter in the mailbox.

But it was an important one, I could see, because it was addressed to rich brown, editor, beardmutterings. My first LoC on my new venture! Hot damn. The sight of it there, lonely as it was and without even reading it, made me want to run right out and 'pub another ish,' as we Fanoclasts constantly refer to our fanzine-publishing activities.

Instead, I plucked the letter from the box, opened it and began to read as I walked back toward the stairway. Quickly scanning the trivia that led off the missive, I came to the crux in the final paragraph: "I want you to know that I agree with you completely, think you are a brilliant fellow..." it concluded.

Unfortunately, this day, this day among days, was a Saturday. I was practically alone. Colleen, my wife, was off shopping with Joe and Hilarie Staton. There was only our four-year-old little girl, Alicia, and our feline, Fafhrd W. "Biff" Kat, at home with me.

Nonetheless, I took the stairs going up two- and three-at-a-time to get back to the apartment, waving the letter over my head.

"andy offutt agrees with me completely and thinks I'm a brilliant fellow," I informed Alicia.

"You play with me?" she replied.

"This offutt fellow," I explained to Biff, taking another tack, "he's convinced I'm brilliant and he agrees with me completely."

Despite my improved delivery, Biff seemed even less impressed than Alicia.

At that point it all came crashing in on me, the sudden realization of the futility of it all. Here I was, on this history-making day among days, after years of toil over a hot typer, having finally obtained ideal grace and recognition from the pen of one whose opinions carried such enormous weight among those who mattered — and there was no one about with whom I could share this incomparable moment of glory. The irony was almost too much for me to bear.

"But," I said aloud to myself, "a brilliant person such as yourself, Mr. brown, who has only the type of ideas and opinion which one can agree with completely, should surely be able to figure a way out of this seeming impasse."

So impressed was I with the brilliance of this statement that I could not help but agree with it completely, and so I stood a while in uffish thought, oblivious to my surroundings. Sifting possibilities. Shifting probabilities. Straining at gnats and putting camels through the eye of

a needle until, at last, a pure and bright idea began to form.

I picked up the phone and dialed the area code for Washington, D.C. "I would like to speak to the President of the United States," I told the operator. Of course, at first she thought I must be kidding her, but when I explained that Andy Offutt thought I was a brilliant fellow and that he had agreed with me completely, she put me right through.

"Mr. President," I said. "I will be brief. There is a lot of senseless killing going on in Vietnam, destroying our moral fiber and our standing as a nation as well as killing blameless peasants. This plainly has to stop and we have got to pull our troops out. Our national economy is shot to hell in a handbasket, there are poor people starving right here in the richest nation on earth and people are suffering under repressive and anti-democratic laws. Something must be done. The big companies are screwing over the ecology, injustices are committed daily in the name of righteousness and the whole world is threatened with Atomic Doom. You have got to get together with the other leaders and politicians of the world and clear this thing up once and for all. YOU PEOPLE HAVE GOT TO STOP FUCKING UP!"

"Let me make one thing perfectly clear," the President said angrily. "I don't know who you are nor why I should listen to you."

I pulled myself up to my full five feet seven and one-half inches before replying importantly, "My name is rich brown but, more important, I am someone andy offutt considers a brilliant fellow and agrees with me completely!"

"Oh," he bleated fearfully, and I could detect the reverent awe in his voice, "you mean the well-known Author who has been so badly treated by science fiction fans?"

"The very same," I assured him affirmatively.

"In that case," he promised significantly, "I will do what I can."

And that was the end of our conversation, totally.

No doubt you've all heard about the expanded troop reductions in Vietnam at about that time, the trip to Peking, the New Economic Policy and all of that. Even with the more recent expanded fighting in Vietnam, I anticipate progress in the other areas I mentioned. He has perhaps forgotten some of the things I said to him, but I will take care of that, and assure progress in those other areas, the next time I speak to him.

I was on the verge of calling Robert A. Heinlein to reprimand him for the idiocy in just about all of his more recent novels when Colleen returned with Joe and Hilarie.

"andy offutt," I announced as they came through the door, "agrees with me completely and thinks I am a brilliant fellow!" Hilarie dropped a package. Joe could say nothing, but his mouth was open. Colleen dropped immediately to one knee and looked up at me imploringly.

"Do not react that way," I said to them all. "Things are still as they were; you may still approach me. After all, I am a brilliant fellow to be agreed with, as Mr. offutt so rightly observes, so surely you must agree. Does it now follow, as surely as a bridge, Colleen, that you must be a paragon among women, to be chosen as my lifemate? And you," I continued, indicating Joe and Hilarie with a broad sweep of my majestic hand, "inasmuch as you are friends of mine, must also be wonderful people."

They were all three impressed with the brilliance of my logic and of course agreed with me completely. Having established that rapport and entreated them to treat me as they would any other minor God, I swore them to secrecy, knowing in my heart of hearts that it would not be right to stand revealed so soon.

I went to bed that night with thoughts of my future super-human and divine activities dancing in my head like so many sugar plums on Christmas Eve. It was my intention to meet the combined forces of Evil head-on, very soon, and defeat them brilliantly. I would wield the elements — earth, air, fire, water and body, the five forms of Deindorfian humor — and everyone would agree with me completely.

My euphoria continued through the next day and the following night. In a moment of pure, naked egoism, I envisioned the next Fanoclast meeting: I saw myself sitting back, quietly, allowing everyone to trot out their little accomplishments, one by one, nodding my approval.

Bill Kunkel and Charlene Komar would, no doubt, have another brilliant issue of RATS! ready to roll; Arnie & Joyce might have FOCAL POINT and POTLATCH and, who knows?, maybe even the 1970 EGOBOO POLL or the Terry Carr volume ready to print; Steve Stiles may have done another eight-pager for Al Schuster and Jay Kinney might have sold more underground comic strips; Joe Staton might be doing another book for Charlton; Mike Hinge might have sold another cover to TIME.

The others, too, might have great deeds either done or in the planning. I would sit back, a slight smile playing over my lips, as they

ANDY OFFUTT
THINKS I AM
BRILLIANT!



GOO!

spoke modestly of their accomplishments. Then, in the first conversational lull, I would lean forward and, to the surprise of everyone in the room but Colleen, Joe and Hilarie, deliver my trump, my bombshell: "andy offutt," I would say, "agrees with me completely and thinks I am a brilliant fellow."

If that didn't send them sprawling on the floor -- and I could scarcely see how it could fail -- I could hit them with my favorite old TV commercial: "Compare Pall Mall with a shorter cigarette: Pall Mall is longer."

I woke that Monday morning a mere mortal and it was not until breakfast that I remembered the shining words of andy offutt and regained my godhood. Over toast, marmelade and coffee, I debated with myself as to whether I should teleport myself to the office or take the subway along with human kind. I was only diverted to the latter by the remembrance that the mailbox was down stairs; I might as well walk that short distance, at least.

The mail, that morning, included a copy of YANDRO in which Buck Coulson reviewed beardmutterings and compared my logic to John J. Pierce's.

There's no stopping me now.

CONTRIBUTORS. WHEREFORE ART THIEF?

With the exception of the lettercolumn following, this issue is again entirely editor-written. I am, if anything, more long-winded in this issue than in the last and if you have persevered to this point you are to be commended.

This is not entirely my fault. Oh, the long-windedness is, to be sure, but the lack of outside contributors is not. Or not entirely.

Will Straw is someone who has impressed me since the first time I saw one of his LoCs in a fanzine. He's been accused of being a hoax because, although relatively new on the scene, he has read fanzines of the late fifties and early sixties and can speak of them. I don't think Will is a hoax; I think he's one of the best new fans on the current scene. So when he wrote commenting on this issue, I replied by asking him to contribute a fanzine review column. He wrote one, and it was a column I'd have been proud to print. Unfortunately, I tucked it into my pocket while about more mundane affairs and discovered, upon returning from them, that they were no longer there. He took the news very well, but had to beg off attempting to reconstruct the column because of the press of studies. It's my hope that the column will get under way with the very next issue.

Arnie Katz kindly offered to write something original for bm; I thanked him for the offer but told him that, before that, I would very much like to reprint his "Berry, Berry" piece, which appeared in Dave Burton's special BoSh issue of INFINITUM, because it had received only limited circulation. Arnie agreed. And I find I've misplaced my copy of that INFINITUM.

John Berry offered to write me a history of the Peloponnesian wars, or perhaps only about his trip to France. I was stoned when I told him I'd be glad to print it -- regardless of which one it is, and I tend to suspect the former since part of the latter has already been published in EGOBOO -- and so maybe he didn't believe me. Believe me, John.

Ted White, the other editor of EGOBOO, promised to write something; I suggested a piece at least loosely tied to the plans that he, I and andy main bern had had to publish a fanzine called beardmutterings, many moons ago. It might help explain why I list them as honorary editors of this publication. But Ted promised that article only a short while ago.

I have both fumetti and fumeghetti rights to every piece of faaan-fiction, original and parody. Terry Carr has ever written, as he himself will be the second to tell you. (I'm the first, you idiots.) The offset medium is needed to exercise the fumetti rights -- I'm not sure that I know, or care to know, what the fumeghetti rights require -- and I have Steve and Gale Stiles, Joe and Hilarie Staton and Colleen and myself as potential models, plus a semi-professional photographer. But I've been so busy putting this long-winded editorial together that I haven't had time to translate any of the stories into working "scripts." But all of you watch this space -- except Ed Cox, of course, who need only doodle in it.

Colleen Brown, my wife, even promised me to revive for bm her FOCAL POINT column, "Column A," which simultaneously won her esteem and discredited her tastes ("How could a person of your wit get mixed up with rich brown?"). But working a full day -- how else could I afford to publish an offset fanzine? -- in addition to housework, caring for me and our little girl and going to college has left her with little time to get writing done.

Mike Hinge was going to write me an article on the plight of artists in science fiction and science fiction fandom, but he so infused me with resentment on their behalf that I wrote one for this issue of bm myself. I know Mike has a lot to say on the subject, and consider the article I have written here only a teaser. So the article from Mike may yet be forthcoming.

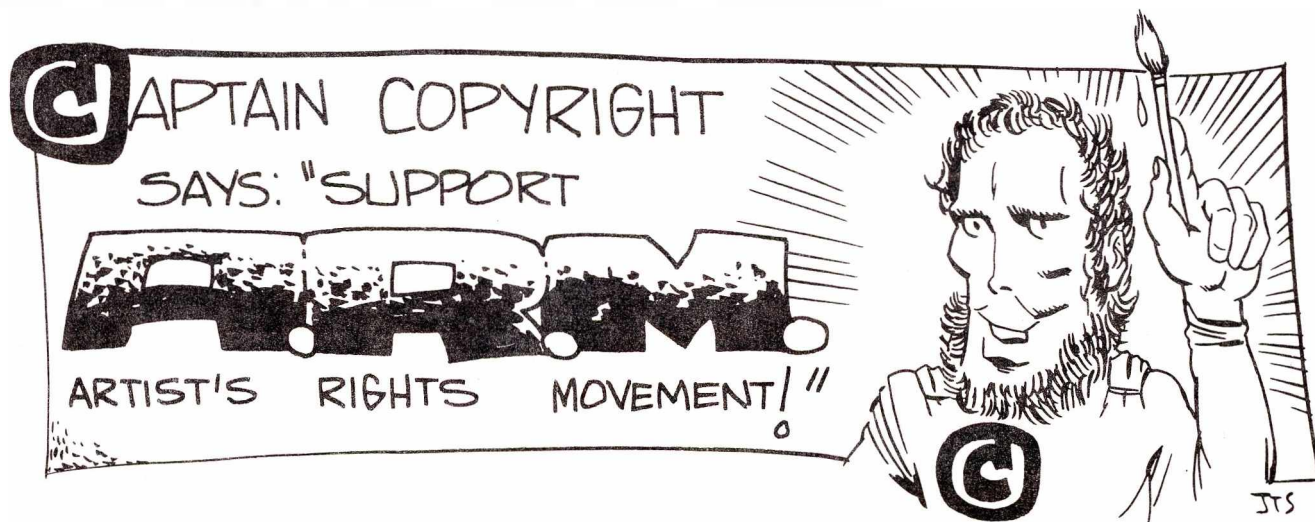
A number of good people have submitted art, including the inimitable bhob stewart; as good as some of this art has been, I'm confining the art in the pages of bm to Joe Staton and Steve Stiles, since they are both close enough to me to draw the type of art that compliments what I write, while at the same time remaining free enough to work with their own ideas. (Joe does his cartoons, and the cover, after reading my editorial, but the ideas for them are his.)

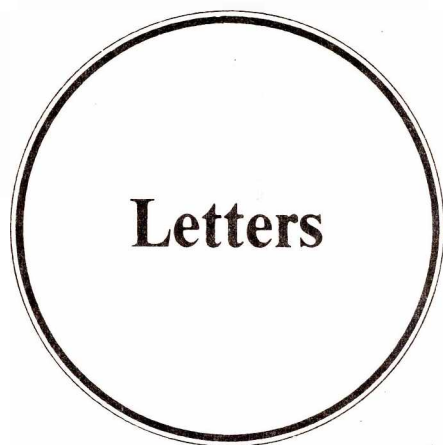
So this issue, with the exception of the letter column, is just me writing and Joe and Steve drawing. Will Straw, Arnie Katz, John Berry, Ted White, Terry Carr, Colleen Brown, Mike Hinge and bhob stewart almost made it an all-star issue.

Maybe next time.

THE AXE

The following people must respond in some way to this issue of beardmutterings if they wish to receive the next one: Lee Agnew, John Andrews, Greg Bear, Jacob Bloom, Lawrence Breed, Daniel Fast, Stephen Gregg, Chuck Holst, Mike Horvat, George Inzer, Barry Malzberg, Tom Manown, Lynn McMullen, Michael Padwee, Joseph Perry, Maurice Sykes and anyone with an 'S' (for 'Sample') on their mailing label.





WALDEMAR KUMMING

**D 8 Muenchen 2, Herzogspitalstr. 5,
W. Germany**

Your article about TAFF in *bm 1* was indeed quite interesting to me. In fact yours was the second copy I got — just a few days earlier another copy was passed on to me, because of my known interest in TAFF matters, and I was going to offer some comments on your article in any case. Let me get this out of the way first, as it has some bearing on my reply to your letter.

You do make out some case for giving TAFF votes in the host country more weight. However, just as good a case can be made out for the opposite view, especially when you consider the situation of fandom in non-English-speaking countries. This was not of any practical importance when TAFF started, but it certainly merits discussion now and will become more important in the future. Such a country will by no means be cut off from Anglo-American SF — in fact it frequently seems to be cheaper to buy translation rights and get a hurried low-cost translation done, than to pay decent money to an indigeneous author. Sooner or later some sort of fandom will arise, possibly because somebody became aware of the existence of fandom elsewhere and wanted to start something like that in his own country, or possibly even due to the efforts of a foreign fan temporarily in this country. This can go through more than one stage. German fandom got started largely through the combined efforts of an English fan and a German writer-editor. Now a Turkish fan, who began his fannish career as a member of a German SF club, is trying to organize a fandom in Turkey.

But for all this the average fan will be only vaguely aware of fandom outside his country. Only a minority will know English and the number of fans with foreign contacts will be even less. Some events are needed to break down this isolation, and an excellent event of this sort is the emergence of a TAFF candidate from this country. Of course you can expect a sudden dramatic jump in the number of TAFF votes from that country, and of course almost all of them will vote for this national candidate.

You may take this as a point further strengthening your position, but I think this would be a narrow view, focusing on the immediate but neglecting long-term effects. Those fans will feel that they are sending some sort of ambassador to international fandom. If their candidate wins, they will also feel that their votes do count, that they have been accepted. To give them only what amounts to half votes might mean to strangle the whole thing off at the start, and to deter those fans from voting in future TAFF elections where there is no longer a candidate from their own country.

Even when this special situation does not apply, it still seems wrong to me that, for instance, English fans should have only half a vote in deciding which English fan will represent them in the U.S. But my main argument remains that TAFF has the important side effect of making fandom more international, and we should

not make any changes which might be detrimental to this.

Now let me consider the events of the last TAFF election in Germany and Italy. As you know this was beset by difficulties due to postal strikes and other communication breakdowns. As a result no platform statements for the candidates were available. Finally I reprinted, with some German explanations added, and distributed within Germany and Austria Eddie Jones' Emergency Voting Form, and I wrote my own platform for Pete Weston (I was one of his nominators) and published it in my own fanzine *MUNICH ROUND UP*. I also got it published in *ANDROMEDA*, the fanzine of the national German SF club (SFCD). Among other things I stressed that TAFF should go to a worthy fan who was unable to undertake the journey across the Atlantic on his own resources. A platform for Mario Bosnyak was written by Berlin fans, and also published in *ANDROMEDA*. This followed my example pretty closely and pointed out that Mario could not afford the trip either, because he was just in the process of looking for a new job. The fact that he had already visited a stateside worldcon on his own was conveniently not mentioned. As a clincher it was intimated that Mario was trying to organize a convention that would take place entirely aboard a ship cruising on the Mediterranean. Going to the Worldcon would help him promote this. Now such a convention might be a good idea, if possibly limited in appeal to fans with plenty of money to spend. But I fail to see what this could possibly have to do with TAFF.

Thus, in Germany the TAFF race was for all intents and purposes between Mario and Pete. In England the race was between Pete and Terry Jeeves. In Italy, his original home country, Mario ran practically unopposed. Since Italy was in effect a newcomer as far as TAFF was concerned, my remarks above apply, and I think that has to be tolerated. It has been said that the Italian vote came about because the Italian SF club CCSF put its weight behind Mario, in return for a lot of help he had given for the forthcoming first European Convention in Trieste. I have no means of verifying this but I consider it to be a point of minor importance — he seems to have done Italian fandom a genuine service, so why should they not express thanks with their votes? But possibly this might be the basis for the rumors about 'paid votes.'

In Germany, a large block of votes for Mario came from Berlin, which has the biggest local fan group. I have talked to the fan who was primarily active in soliciting votes for Mario there. This fan occupies a vastly more important position in German fandom than Mario, and it is difficult to see what possible gain he could expect from a shady deal. I have no doubt that his efforts were sincere and entirely above board. I do think that some of his reasons for supporting Mario were misguided, and that he accepted Mario's interpretations too uncritically. That, of course, is my opinion — not a hard fact.

The largest block of German votes for Pete Weston came from the south of Germany, as a result of my efforts on his behalf. However, there were also some votes from other parts of Germany, most from fans who read English language SF and/or fanzines and who had voted in TAFF before, though some from this group voted for Mario.

A comparison of some figures from the 1970 and 1971 elections gives quite interesting results. Both England and Germany returned about double the number of votes in '71. Italy jumped from one vote to 46. But Mario would have won even without the Italian votes, if only by a very small majority. Pete probably could have won if there had been no second English candidate.

As far as I know, there does not seem to be any substance to rumors of buying votes, or soliciting votes by Mario himself. In fact, the rumor about buying is one I had not heard previously. I had heard the one about soliciting, but that seems to boil down to various fannish trips within Germany and to Italy, and a somewhat aggressive manner in telling all and sundry, and especially fans with some influence, about being a TAFF candidate. These trips quite likely cost about as much as the TAFF trip. It has to be said at this point that the money for these trips, as for the visit to St. Louis, did not come from Mario's funds but

HE'S SO FANNISH!

Steve Stiles



was paid by another fan, who was at the time employing Mario as a personal secretary. For various reasons involving the personal relationships of the people concerned (and I do not wish to go into that here) I consider the bit about the trips not being financed by Mario himself to be true in a strictly technical sense only.

I still believe that Mario should have saved the 'advertising budget' and used the money to make the trip to Boston under his own steam, thus letting some other fan have a chance with TAFF. I do not want to say that Mario should never have been considered as a candidate. But last year appears to have been a particularly inappropriate time for it. As matters stand, TAFF is in danger of degenerating into an egoboo poll. If this trend continues, either the contributions from the voters should be dropped, everything being financed by the candidates just for the glory, or alternatively some rather stiff rules for the candidates will have to be drawn up.

Pete Weston would have had a splendid opportunity at the '71 British Easter Convention at Worcester to milk some TAFF dividends from his excellent organizing of the con. He preferred to lean over backwards to avoid even the semblance of doing so. On the other hand, Mario may have approached the line of the just barely permissible too closely for comfort. If you feel bitter about the way TAFF turned out this time you can be assured that I share your sentiments. However, there seems to be nothing but to grin and bear it. It appears unlikely that any fresh facts could be brought to light by, for instance, an appeal in German fan-zines. This, however, would have at least some of the effects of a smear campaign. It might even be successful as such, considering that Mario's gift of making a lot of friends but also some instant enemies has been at work here, too. Consequently, I do not wish to be a party in any such undertaking.

Finally, a note on a distantly related topic, mentioned by you on page 6 of **bm 1**. Elliot Shorter was definitely a good representative of American fandom and was well liked by German fans. He did nothing like bellowing at Brunner, or any other pro, and I agree with your opinion that he would have done so only for good and sufficient reason. Furthermore, John Brunner has survived considerably worse without being turned sour on fandom, as witness the flying glass incident at the '70 London SCICON. I doubt very much that a mere bellow, even from somebody with Elliot's impressive build, would serve to intimidate John.

GARY HUBBARD

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Well, I've been watching quite a few Mighty Mouse cartoons lately, and I've noticed an interesting thing; Mighty Mouse is reeking with sex. Take, for example, the cartoon called "Karakatoa." In this one there is this female mouse with big tits and clad in a beach towel; she does a highly erotic dance to the tune of "Karakatoa Katie, she ain't no lady when she starts to shake her sarong." In another cartoon, which I cannot remember the title of, Mighty Mouse saves Little Nell from the villain Oil Can Harry; as he carries her off an unseen chorus is singing "All Thru The Night." And in "Arabia", we see an immensely fat rat sultan surrounded by sexy mouse Harem girls. Finally, in "Pandora", the female lead finds several occasions to bend over so that we get ample opportunity to see her mousey butt, and lace-trimmed pink panties.

The puzzling thing is, "Why all this emphasis on mouse-fucking?" Who, actually, is really concerned about a thing like that? I never heard any kid say he wanted to be like Mighty Mouse when he grew up and screw a rat.

I just don't understand.

It is a perplexing problem, I must admit. A part, no doubt, of the Sino-Soviet pinko kommunist plot to pervert the minds of America's Youth. Speaking as a sociologist, and a well-known political authority, I would have to note that this is not the first such attempt, as those who will remember the Mickey Mouse Club will have to admit. In those programs, it was Annette Funicello's big tits that were the center of attention, but the kiddies at home were invited to sing along with her as she crooned, "M-i-c, k-e-y, M-o-u-s-e!" -- a solemn hymn to a foul, disease-bearing rodent. No doubt the kommie pinkos felt that America's Youth had been softened up by that approach, and felt free in this era of libertarianism and lechery to move straight on to mouse-fucking, never realizing that many fine young American lads remember Barry Goldwater's immortal words, "The price of virtue is one dollar a bushel (or 25 cents a peck)!" Any young boy who feels a violent urge to run out and rape a mouse would do well to keep those words in mind.

Cold showers are also recommended.

ROBERT BLOCH

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beardmutterings No. 1 is a mistake — you have set such a high standard for yourself, I can't imagine how you'll maintain it.

The fan-pro thing has been going on ever since I can remember — and my memory goes back to the days before Tucker was on Geritol. Pros have denounced fans and fans have denounced pros, and both groups have their reasons. My problem has always been that I have empathy for both, which makes me sound wishy-washy because I have no one to curse at. Actually, my real secret is that I have no moral standards at all, so how can I tell who's right or wrong? That's what one gets for hanging around editors.

TERRY HUGHES

407 College Ave., Columbia, Mo. 65201

Thank you very much for **beardmutterings** No. 1. It certainly looks great. . . BUT isn't it going to be expensive to do, and on a bi-monthly schedule? I don't know what you do for a living, perhaps you work in an office or for a printer so that you can get multilith and photo typesetting cheaply. I'm just mentioning this because I'd hate to see this zine become a financial burden which you might stop publishing. 'Cause, y'see, I enjoy it.

It's good to see a lot of Joe Staton artwork again. He's been appearing in zines all too infrequently to suit my tastes. Having an artist like him right there in the neighborhood makes it great for you: You can have illos that were drawn to fit the text, as you used them so well this time. Steve Stiles' bacover was really good also. Steve is really great at doing cartoons based in part on old movies, like this time he used the Dwight Frye part from Dracula ("Nice big juicy spiders'") and switched it into a fannish humor bit on Staton.

As for the text, I see you are still your same old quiet, reserved, unemotional self. Seriously, it is obvious that you care a good deal about fandom and that you will vigorously criticize fuggheadedness and the faults of today's fandom, trying to bring about its improvement, and so you let the H-bombs fall where they may. You did this in FOCAL POINT also. And by criticizing others, you open yourself for attacks from them — but I feel you aren't really worried about that. Besides, it's hard to criticize someone who makes as many valid points as you do (I didn't and don't agree with all you said, but a lot of what you said concerning fandom coincided with thoughts in my head). It brought to mind the recent semi-feud between Ted Pauls and friends against New York fannish fandom — Ted Pauls taking on the Katzes, Jay Kinney, Ted White, etc. reminded me of the O.K. Corral Gunfight where the bad guys foolishly took on the Earp brothers and Doc Holiday. To get back to my point, I don't think

Andy Offutt, Charlie Brown and Mario Bosnyak are going to like **bm**. I've had several interesting enjoyable talks with Andy and Jody Offutt at conventions, but I don't enjoy Andy's four or five (or more!) articles on Let There Be License. I find these pieces much inferior to **ccpc** that he wrote for TRUMPET when he was andy offutt who wrote only in lower case letters (and the first person I read who did this which added to my enjoyment, I guess). And I was not pleased with how most of the Hugos came out.

I've just recently read QUIP so I'm not really in a position to judge your comments on it. It is still in my memory, and I did enjoy it quite a bit.

Is Colleen going to be writing some of her delightful stuff for **bm** as well?

DAVE HULVEY

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beardmutterings is a damn find faanish fanzine. I liked it as much, if not more, than the very fine copies of EGOBOO I recently received.

The cartoons are the essence of the kind of comic art a faanish zine should have. Good thoughts humorously expressed adds much weight of opinion to such thoughts. I hope andy awifuck and Charlie Brown find them as amusing.

How many drafts did the material by you go through? It's all very well written, even for the high level of faanish work coming from the pens of the likes of Joyce and Arnie Katz, Rick Stoker, Charlene Komar and Bill Kunkel, not to mention all those other struggling young faanish converts across the land. I enjoyed it all.

Come now, is there any profit in it if Funny Farm, Kentucks own P\$R\$O behaves like a human bean? Of course not. The gross porn the man writes is not something I'd be too proud of — as a human being. However, he brags about the long list of shit he can turn out in an afternoon with the kids yelping, the wife listening to Country Music, etc. Well, this is a source of pride for him — as he can go to all those wunderfull cons and awe all us dwarf-like creatures. Not only that, he can slur writers with a hell of a lot more talent, simply because he can turn out all those rotten books — see, you can get comfy if you prostitute your work to the green pollution, but if you write Art or do something Meaningful, or even Good, then you end up like Alexei Panshin or Ted White. Is there no justice in the Universe? Somewhere far away a cash register jingles: "No."

rich, you bemoan the victory of LOCUS in the Hugo balloting, but what is to stop a recurrence of that year after year until Brown finally retires an undefeated champ? Nothing really. Bill Kunkel says in RATS! that faanish zines are today leading to a new Golden Age of faanish fanac. Ok, and Jerry Lapidus, in a review of FP in BAB, sees an assured Hugo nomination for FP. All this false optimism rather bothers me. How can any zine, no matter how good, with a circulation of 200 hope to compete fairly with a zine of 800 assured circulation? Besides, faanish fanzines are done, not out of consideration for a Hugo, but as a labor of love by the editor(s). How can such a concept, which includes personal rapping, sharing with friends, light humorous material and a completely non-commercial approach to fandom ever win? The Hugos just aren't oriented to reward that kind of achievement.

So, instead of raising false expectations, Bill and Jerry should stop this kind of loose talk about Hugos and either forget the whole concept by ignoring it, or think of a fannish way to win a Hugo. If indeed there is such a way. Personally, I think the fan Hugos are going to continue to decline until it'll be the Egoboo Poll which will be looked upon as the true indicator of what's what in fandom. The Hugo can stand only so much prostitution "to the smartest huckster, the craftiest politician, or the dirtiest trickster." As a matter of fact after Terry Carr's defeat for fanwriter by Geis, I'm certain I won't ever bother to cast a ballot in that category again. However, though LOCUS won the Hugo, I

may vote for ENERGUMEN in future years in a vain hope that at least the zine that put Canadian fandom on the map should be recognized for its contribution.

Winter, 1959: ANABASIS was really neat. Indeed. The ending really crushed me. Damn, I identified solidly with the struggling fan on his Long March to the Gates of Trufandom. He was my vicarious justification for doing all these meaningless things I do as a fan. Gad, and you had to callously let him fail by a cruel twist of fate. Alack, fout on thee, rich brown! I'll never be able to read another LASFS report again — not that I ever have. I'll never read another sterling mind-fuck idea-trip from Tom Digby. I'll never write another three-page loc to the BUTLER'S PET MOLE. And the ultimate denial, I'll never burn another dull, shitty Westercon report as long as I live, or may I contract Twonk's Disease — and live.

ROBERT BRYANT

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Ok, rich, I'll tell ya what I'll do. I'll dutifully write letters to get my copies of *bm*, and carefully refrain from mentioning the suspicious familiarity of your title, if you on your part will begin to use proper postage. These are not the good old days when you were part of FOCAL POINT; inflation has run rampant and 6 cents will no longer send two ounces worth of fanzine. It takes 8 cents these days, no more, no less. Now although I am unemployed, after the fine old tradition of penniless trufen, I am not so devastatingly poor that I refuse to cough up 2 cents postage due for the support of my neighborhood fanac pusher to get a good fanzine. And yours IS a good fanzine. But only once, by ghod, only once.

I will confess some curiosity. Are all the teaming hordes on your mailing list writing you irate paragraphs, or was I an isolated mistake? Six cent and 8 cent flag stamps do, after all, look a lot alike. At least with the Eisenhowers they had the sense to change the color, but how do you change the color of the flag? (You have me there. But why is a raven like a writing desk?)

I freely admit that I cannot remember QUIP. In fact, I can't remember a single think about Arnie prior to the arrival of an issue of FP you two jokers sent me a few months ago. Of course, this lends itself to the digression that it has only been a bit more than two years since fandom came along and interrupted me at my labor of reading All The Great Works Of Science Fiction Ever Written Anywhere At Any Time. All ten of them. Sorry, Arnie. . . Your TAFF suggestion has some merits, but also has some millstones about its neck. Chief of these is the matter of host countries who don't have many fans. Like Torcon. There will surely be more Americans than Canfans there, because it's accessible. But only Canfans get extra weight? Or worse, when the Worldcon goes back to Europe, almost any country's nationals will be outnumbered by the other Europeans, added together. If anything, this extra weight business should be in terms of a wider area. But how do you regulate who's in the area? The problems might make it more unbalanced than it is now.

MICHAEL D. GLYER

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Beardmutterings — what can I say. Do you need a ride from the Airport to the LACON hotel to pick up your fanwriter Hugo?

Of course that's a tech of hyperbole (I don't own a car — but will share cab), but for this voice out of the distant past, this cast of fate, this recollection of old (wha, year-old?) memories to come freely to my mailbox encourages me to plod on in spite of missing the LASFS poker game last Thursday.

I like it. But then I've always enjoyed writers who don't take themselves overly seriously (myself excluded, naturally, through you'll see from PREHENSILE in which respects).

Don't think your TAFF propositions stand a chance, don't think

they make sense. (Now how did we get here?) Can't argue with your conjectural portrait of the TAFF votership, but your arguments as a whole contradict one another. You say that to exclude one set of voters (those not in the host country) would shrivel the contributions, but certainly so would this "UN Reform" arrangements whereby certain parties are favored simply because they live in the con country. I think the way it stands currently is eminently reasonable. The "one-fan-one-vote" routine gives all strategies a chance. The host country as well as the groups supporting the candidate-guests may freely politic for their man regardless of where they're from; if one group really wants someone to come over, or another group prefers Joe Fan as their representative, then let them elicit and solicit more votes; if the majority of the money comes from them, then why shouldn't their man come over or go hither? While large contributors, leftover con funds and holdover funds provide a percentage of the fund total, if statistics show that the voters provide most of it then the current system defends itself. (If you have contradictory information then you should take your argument and repair it accordingly.) Hope that makes sense.

DARRELL SCHWEITZER

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I think your grotch against TAFF and Mario Bosnyak is totally uncalled for. You must come to realize that American-British-Canadian-Australian fandom is no longer all there is. You can't disclaim the voting because *your* part of fandom was outvoted by the Italians and the Germans. Remember you're talking about a *world* con and it would seem that North America just wasn't the majority in this election. The Europeans have the same voting rights as we do, remember.

Your suggestion that the host country have votes counted for twice as much is interesting, but consider this situation: The worldcon is in France. TAFF candidates are several prominent Americans and Australians and Canadians and on Brazilian. The Brazilian is not at all known in the US because he doesn't read or speak English and not enough Americans & Canadians can read Portuguese. However, his French is quite good and he has written for most of the leading French fanzines and has become quite popular among French fandom. Now all the US, Canadian and Australians vote for their candidates, but since the French can vote out of proportion to their numbers (and the Brazilian is well known in Germany and Italy) the Brazilian wins. American-based fandom has simply been outvoted, as it apparently was with Bosnyak. Whatever the arrangement of the rules, the majority will decide, and if the majority is Them rather than Us, that's just too bad.

One fact you got wrong, concerning great fanwriters being pros. Willis had a fanzine column in NEBULA (I don't know about any in NEW WORLDS) that lasted for many years and besides that he appeared in IF in 1960 with a short story in collaboration with Bob Shaw and wrote a book on Ireland under a pseudonym. That seems professional to me. The book, by the way, was called THE IMPROBABLE IRISH and was pubbed by Ace.

MARK MUMPER

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You may have been a little harsh on Andy Offutt. Sure, he made a mistake — a rather stupid one, at that — in condemning fandom and then turning around and embracing it, but he should be forgiven. If he doesn't learn his lesson, he can always be ignored. He just gets carried away at times, and that's certainly not unusual in fandom.

I really get frustrated when talk about reforming the Hugo system comes up, because it always seems so hopeless. I believe the solution lies at the source — the voters. If the Hugos are as ghodawfully important as most fans claim, then why don't they

take them into greater consideration when it comes time to nominate and vote? All too often fans vote for their friends or for the last book they read, or (worse yet) a **name**, not the quality of the work. And when you get down to it, that's what it's all about. The Hugos are awarded for excellence, which translates into quality. Chances are if a certain pro I may consider a schmuck has a book up for best novel, that novel will reflect his schmuckness, but this is not always so. Some of the world's biggest assholes have written fantastically great books, and if a schmucky sf pro writes a great book, I'll just have to forget that he's a prick for the moment and give him due credit.

If we all would use our heads a little more when it comes time for the Hugos, there might not be any more problems. But I at least have a chance of that.

I'm not sure I agree with you on TAFF voting. Surely the host country should choose (or at least have a better chance at getting) the candidate they'd most like to meet, but almost the same argument can be applied to the country sending the delegate. But I do believe voters should know what they're getting themselves into. Why not include an "objective" (very tricky, that) evaluation of TAFF candidates along with the subjective supporting statements by the sponsors? For example, the "objective" descriptions of the candidates could mention that Bosnyak had attended St. Louiscon while Weston has never been to a U.S. con. Here the objectivity could be accused of altering by some people, but the information **was** relevant to the situation, and I daresay the idea is just as fair as giving more voting power to the host country. Ideally, of course, everyone would have such information, and would act upon it as they saw fit, but this is hardly ever the case, especially where fans are concerned. Perhaps the best solution would be to have the voting decided by money — a voter's TAFF contribution would go to the candidate of his choice, and the one with the largest amount of contributions would be the winner. This has obvious disadvantages, but is not so different as the situation now existing. Each voter sends in a contribution, and that money is used whether his choice wins or not. As usual, making people pay for their votes might keep them honest. I really don't know. Kick your idea around and see what comes up.

RUTH BERMAN

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Thanks for sending **beardmutterings** 1. Staton's cover is charming, also funny. Ditto his interior illos. (Ditto his interiors? Isn't offset good enough?)

The piece on the forgettable Arnie Katz is funny, but I hope he's not seriously surprised that QUIP is forgotten. It was a pleasant zine, with material I much enjoyed reading — but it takes (a) the accident of "historical" importance (any newszine tends to be memorable, simply because we have so few handy records of the fannish past), or (b) superlative material, and usually both, to be memorable. Chamberlain's Quivers were superlative (or close to it, anyway), and of some "historical" interest for their satire of prominent fans and for their unusual format. He should be grateful anything he published is remembered, even if it was something borrowed from VOID.

And, anyway, no fan ever gets as much egoboo as he thinks he ought to.

STEPHEN FRITTER

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Asking a neofan whose sole published LoC is an inane 22-word selection to write a decent LoC just so he can receive **beardmutterings** is cruel. You seem to have the same attitude as a junior college teaching friend of mine who gets so few reactions from his students that he isn't sure they are alive. Well, I'm alive.

If what I've read by fans is indicative of the intelligence and general sanity of fandom, I think Andy Offutt is off his nut. There's

a certain amount of ranting and raving, but such is usually the case when people are making an attempt to be honest. As far as I'm concerned, fandom (be it active or inactive) is what science fiction is all about. Most people who read SF read a lot, so the writers are pretty much dependent on a closed market. Unlike mainstream fiction, the writer is a part of the microcosm for which he writes. Offutt had better understand that if he thinks fans are idiots then his readership is made up mostly of idiots. It wouldn't help my ego to know that my books were being written for idiots. I long ago stopped trying to figure out why SF is the only literature I can read for any other reasons besides grades. I would imagine fandom is the same story.

I'm not sure that Hugo voting is a useful thing. But it does seem an accurate indication of the quality of works in the field. There are very few dud Hugos given out. Last year I voted only in the pro category because I knew so little about fandom that it would have been insane to express my opinion. The idea of going to a convention scares hell out of me. I can't even walk around the local college campus without going totally crackers from the presence of so many people. And the price they want for a non-attending membership is pretty high. But I suppose that the Hugo winner ought to be important enough that I should be willing to go to a convention to see that my opinions are expressed.

In order to be legitimate, the Hugo awards must be voted on by people who give a damn. I believe that is a good part of the reason why writers developed the Nebula awards. They felt that they were the only people who knew enough to vote on the best SF. I only hope that if I do vote this year, none of my votes will be as much at variance with everybody else's. None of my favorites ended higher than third in the voting. I attribute that to my superior taste, of course.

JERRY LAPIDUS

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The overall tone of the magazine bothers me a bit; I don't know you personally, rich, so I can't really say anything conclusive or meaningful about this. But to me, you seem to be writing this in such a way that if the people who read it agree with your opinions, fine—if they don't, the magazine leaves the impression that you have no further cause for discussion. As it happens, I tend to agree with you more often than not. But you discuss some important issues in our little microcosm here, and you have some very valid things to say about them; it only seems that you'd be able to get more people to accept your arguments if they weren't presented in such a totally iconoclastic manner, if you see what I'm trying to get at.

Anyway, the Staton cartoons are simply marvelous, from the cover through every article. You know I'm something of a nut on the visual appearance, and I particularly get excited when people go to a lot of trouble to get artwork which complements the text. I think everything I've said is demonstrated beautifully here, with Joe's cartoons providing a whole additional dimension to each piece of written material. However you managed to get all of it out of him—nice, very, very nice.

About Mario Bosnyak, though, I can't help feeling exactly the same way you do. Not that I have anything at all against Mario, but quite frankly, I'm surprised he agreed to run at all. After all, the whole idea—**isn't it?**—is to bring some deserving fans, fans who otherwise might never have the chance to go, overseas? **Isn't it?** Seeing that Mario had already been over here less than a year ago when I'm sure his candidacy was first proposed, why did he agree to run? To come over a second time, and perhaps deprive someone else of a lifelong opportunity? I wonder; if this fact had been made a little bit clearer to American fandom, would the voting have gone differently? Guess I shouldn't complain—my last TAFF choices have all lost, and which should this be any different. Shaw, Rotsler, Weston. Damn.

At the same time, I don't really think the solution you propose

is the answer, although in my own turn I can't present an alternative. Your idea seems **logical** to me, but you know as well as I that logical plans are rarely adopted anywhere, no less in fandom. Basic problem is that your definition of the purpose of TAFF lies behind your suggestion. You feel the host country should gain a fan it wants to see, rather than the home country sending a fan it feels should go. But how do **we** vote, when we vote for TAFFmen to overseas conventions? **WE** vote for the people we'd most like to represent American fandom—and largely, I expect, for people we wish to honor. Obviously American fandom is not the dominating force in TAFF, as Mario's election proved, but it still is the largest single force there. I don't think enough people will agree with your philosophy of what TAFF should do to support this plan to give the host country a weighted vote; I really don't know if any workable plan can be devised.

I am surprised you took offutt's articles on fandom seriously, particularly to the point of this angry "answer." No one else did.

There's an idea about Hugo voting that I've had for quite a while, and you touch on it here in your discussion of Hugo voting. Certainly I agree with you that if we hope to have any sort of sensible awards at all, voting should be limited to certain people who have fulfilled at least minimal requirements. But the question is, is worldcon membership necessarily the best requirement? Consider this. Under the current rules, everyone who joins the convention gets the vote—whether he wants it or not, whether he has any interest in it or not. Anyone who wants to vote **must** join the convention—again whether he has any interest in the convention or not. And right now, convention prices are going up and up and up, with no end at all in sight. Is it going to be necessary to spend \$5, \$6, and more in the next few years, simply for the privilege of voting on the Hugos? Under the present system, there seems to be no choice.

My solution also involves a committee, but simply one to administer rather than choose the awards. Separate the awards from the convention committee entirely (this can be done by simply **voting** so at a business meeting), set up a standing committee of the WSFS to administer the Hugo. Set up a minimal monetary requirement, as with TAFF—\$1 seems a logical number to start out with. Voting on the Hugos means paying your dollar, period. No one would have to join a more and more expensive convention; no one would get to vote without being really interested. You'd have to go out of your way a bit to vote, and with the monetary requirement, I do feel you'd get a more representative sample of interested and responsible voters. What do you think, rich? As far as I can see, the biggest single problem would be choosing the membership of the committee, but even this shouldn't be particularly difficult—unlike the committee Leon suggest, this would only administer the awards. Where I certainly agree that fans could never settle on a committee to **pick** the awards, I think we could come together enough on fans people trust to administer them.

dan goodman

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One thing you may be overlooking: the pros you mention who get along well with fandom were in fandom for years before they became pros. Andy Offutt came into fandom, I believe, **after** starting to write & sell sf. It's a lot harder that way. The only pro I can think of who started as a pro and then successfully became a fan, rather than the other way round, is David Gerrold. (Gerrold has had his problems in fandom; but so have the people you mention favorably.)

Also; the majority of the people you mention move in the same circles you do. Which means that you don't know what reputations they have as fans in other fannish circles.

On fanzine Hugos: As the rules are now set up, it's more than possible for the best fanzine published to be ineligible. Period. Eligible zines have to be "generally available." According to

Jerry Lapidus, this does not rule out zines which are not readily available for all of "the Usual." (I questioned EGOBOO's eligibility, since it's priced to discourage people from sending in mere money; and YANDRO, since the Coulsons don't give issues for locs. Jerry says they do give issues for **published** locs; I seem to recall Buck Coulson saying otherwise in an editorial comment, but no matter.) It does rule out apazines.

Now, some of the best book reviews I've seen have been Fred Patten's in APA L and the ones Dick Lupoff used to do in APA F. And a lot of other good material has appeared in apazines; I suspect there've been periods when fans put their best material into apas and crud into genzines.

andrew j. offutt

Funny Farm, Haldeman, Ky. 40329

Thank you for sending me **beardmutterings** 1. The Joe Staton art is just lovely, and I appreciate the cartoons and even more I appreciate the nice something he said about my Jodie.

I have read your clever attack on me, and I do thank you for spelling my name right nearly every time. It seems to me that I was describing specific persons with those nasty phrases, but since you have quotation marks around them and there is an 's' after every phrase, I must misremember. The two pips do indicate direct quotes.

I want you to know that I agree with you completely, think you are a brilliant fellow, and only wish I had had the good sense to confer with you and your unbiased advisors before I made such an ass of myself in print.

HANK DAVIS, Box 154, Loyall, Ky. 40854

Actually, I enjoyed **beardmutterings**, and was glad that you sent it to me. (Whether you are glad that you sent it to me, or will remain so, is another matter .). Thanks. I'm always amazed when I get an unsolicited fanzine, particularly a fannish zine. In this case, I am at least **five** times as amazed as usual, since that is apparently the the number of **bm's** I will receive even if I don't Do Something. (Is it pronounced "BEM," by the way?)

I doubt that there breathes a single fannish fan, at least in New York, who harbours the slightest doubt about his writing ability (including some who ought to be so busy harbouring that they have no time to write), so praise for your writing is likely to be as superfluous as smuggling Dixie cups full of water to the Atlantic. Still, I did enjoy the writing. I'm not likely to consider you for the fanwriter Hugo, but I enjoyed it. It's surprising how much your writing resembles that of Arnie Katz, whose fanwriting I usually don't find congenial. It's hard for me to spot the difference. You manage to come up with slightly better yoks, for one thing, and you don't visibly strain reaching for them, which can be a strain on this reader, too.

Damn shame that you had to insert the stuff about andy offutt and Charlie Brown. Attacks on offutt and LOCUS seemed to be almost obligatory for fannish fans for a time, and I was relieved to see them apparently diminishing, and the fannish zines mellowing. There's nothing so boring as a fannish zine crusading for the One True Way, and being as obsessively life-and-death serious about the matter as the most rabid SFR feeder. And this sudden flurry of attacks on andy offutt (and, in RATS!, put-downs of Jodie Offutt, as well; Joe Staton has avoided that, at least, in his cartoon) has a curious timing: all following a Terry Carr speech, and the reiteration of the contents of that speech in his FOCAL POINT column. It's enough to make me wonder if the piece that Arnie Katz did about Terry Carr's hypnotic eyes was wholly fictional. Of course, New York fans get upset when outsiders refer to them as some BNF's yes-men. Maybe if they didn't **act** like yes-men.

Besides, your reasoning is murky. It does not make sense to attack offutt because he (supposedly) demands special status in fandom, being a pro, being a professional writer, then state that

he is a "second rate pro," apparently implying that this has something to do with the status of the argument. And when you list the terms that Andy applies to fandom, then state, ad hominem, that he writes "third-rate prose," performs "Shecky Greene antics," does not "behave like a human being," etc., then I hear the silent sound of gears failing to mesh. Logic fails again when you deduce, apparently on spontaneous generation, or by reading entrails, that Offutt "doesn't mind being sucked-up to so long as the suckee gives his books good reviews." ... "By implication one can only surmise" any such thing only if one has a very shaky grasp on formal logic; not to mention the English language. What one would surmise, if one is not more interested in playing bush-league Spiro Agnew, is that the sucking-up is more contemptible if combined with hypocrisy.

Besides, how "human" is Ted White, whom you cite as a good-guy pro? He may not pull rank on fans because of his pro status (which is not to say that Offutt does), but he pulls rank on newer fans — as he did with Linda Bushyager, in the pages of a fannish newszine. Ah, what was the name of that zine, now?

I must confess, though, that you face great difficulty in convincing me that Offutt is all that vile. I know Offutt, and he is worth knowing. I don't know you at all. Should I?

Agreed on the matter of the blue ribbon panel to select Hugo winners: the only person I would want representing me on such a panel is the one typing this letter. Hardly any agreement on your comment on LOCUS. I have difficulty in taking seriously these claims that Charlie Brown sent free copies of his zine to the worldcon membership, because two people I know who joined the con, and who were not already LOCUS subscribers, did not receive free copies. Just who *did* receive all these reprehensible free copies, anyway? Nor do I agree that the con policy of making the membership list available to nominated zine eds necessarily would benefit only LOCUS. On the contrary: it obviously would provide an opportunity for an editor to cancel the advantage of LOCUS' big circulation which you were worrying about in the previous paragraph. And finally, you are accepting the usual argument that a neo or fringe fan or non-fan sf reader who wandered in off the street will vote for the one zine that he has seen. I did no such thing when I joined my first worldcon. And conversation with other such fen of greenish hue at subsequent cons has convinced me that others do the same — they are reluctant to vote in a category when unfamiliar with most of the nominees. Where's your proof that the reverse is true?

Mostly, I enjoyed Joe Staton's art, but the cartoon on page 7 is in piss poor taste. (Joe agrees with you, and thinks you are a Brilliant Fellow. But he insists on adding that since the subject of the cartoon, Charlie Brown, is so often in piss poor tastes himself, it logically follows that the cartoon should be, too.)

MIKE GLICKSOHN
32 Maynard Ave., Apt. 205
Toronto 156, Ontario, Canada

Thanks for including us on the mailing list of BM1. I found it an excellent and enjoyable fanzine. At least part of this comes from the fine appearance of the fanzine, high quality reproduction, simple but attractive layout, justified margins and the superb Staton illos complementing the text, but primarily it's the quality of the writing that impresses me. You express yourself clearly and well and even if I don't agree with you, I enjoy reading your thoughts.

Your piece on Arnie's anonymity was beautiful, one of the better pieces of fannish writing I've enjoyed lately. It's all fiction of course, since I myself remember, er ah, um Arnie's fanzine! with its Atom covers and green paper. Or was that HYPHEN? Yea, come to think of it, it was. But I used to like the way Arnie numbered each section within itself. wait a sec, that was IN-NUENDO, wasn't it? Well, the blue paper and the literate criticism were quite memorable. opps!, for Bergeron, I mean.

Yes, well er hmmm yes er

The idea of weighted TAFF ballots sounds logical, although it might produce similar results to those you're objecting to if a small group of fans in the host country worked especially hard to bring over their champion. But no system will be entirely free of such possibilities and your suggestion sounds reasonable to me. And I was neither excited nor disappointed to any great degree with Mario Bosnyak.

I haven't seen the particular piece by Offutt that you react to, but in my own dealings with Andy I've found him a fair and reasonable man. I've published two articles by him, the second one drawing grudging admiration even from those who openly stated that they were tired of his fan writing. Notwithstanding this, I admit that at least from the portions you have quoted (out of context, admittedly) of this particular Offutt piece, I'd disagree with Andy also. However, your blanket condemnation of the man and all he stands for seems a mite strong a reaction. (I can't help noticing that you take pains to capitalize Andy's name wherever it appears; in light of your own use of this affectation, I find this somewhat amusing.)

There are two basic schools of thought on fan Hugos, I think. One is that it is an award of merit that should be presented spontaneously by one's peers; the other is somewhat along the "If an award's worth having, it's worth fighting for" line. I'll admit that in my naive simplicity, I'd like to think of the fanzine Hugo in terms of the first concept. But in moments of realism, I realize that this is naive, and I really cannot fault those who look on it in the latter way. This means that I'll probably never win a Hugo, no matter how strongly I might feel I deserve one, since I can't afford to fight for one, nor do I want to. But there are a hell of a lot of important things in the world I disagree with, and that I can't change, so what the hell?

SETH McEVOY
Box 268, E. Lansing, Mich. 48823

I agree with you about balance of power in TAFF: I guess some people think of it as more of a contest to send a representative to a worldcon, but I like it better for the host country to do most of the voting. Then there is less commercialization.

Mostly, I find myself in agreement with what you say about Andy Offutt. He's just a hack, but evidently can't bear to hear fans say so.

My opinion on Hugos is different — the more I read, the more I think that fannish categories for the Hugo ought to be abolished. Except for the large-circulation fanzine, it is well nigh impossible to read the fanzines that might be nominated. With Worldcon attendance (and hence, voting) so large, only large-circulation things like prozines and stories have much meaning.

LEW WOLKOFF
1009 Olive St., Scranton, Pa. 18510

I assume that the number 3 on my address label meant write an loc. (As opposed to 8 which meant contribute artwork or 724¼ which meant vote the straight Whig ticket in the Pennsylvania primary.)

The issue of Hugo will be with us from some time. Should there be a category for records? Should fan art and fan cartoon be two separate awards? Should there be a special Worldcon membership allowing someone to just be able to Hugo-vote? For the answer to these and many other absorbing questions tune in to the next paragraph, same page, same letter.

1) Records with SF themes have not quite swamped the market, and a separate category might go several years with one or less candidates. Better to keep the single award to define "drama" as any SF presentation involving skills other than aesthetics or reading.

2) Fan art vs. fan cartoons? Ask somebody who knows. I don't. (Ego 1: Then why mention it? Ego 2: Why not? I'd say leave as is or we may have total category fragmentation, but I don't know

fan art well enough to prove it. Ego 1: Oh.)

3) A Hugo-category-only worldcon membership. No. What would you charge? Fifty cents. A dollar. Postage. How many of the people who were enough into SF to attend Noreascon were knowledgeable enough to vote in every category? I wasn't. I didn't vote in those areas I didn't know about, but I doubt that everybody else did. The answer isn't a panel of judges, though. It might be to investigate every nominee, but who could get a year's supply of five fanzines, two albums, movie and TV films, a year's supply of prozings, etc., on short (or even long) notice? Maybe we should try the intellectual honesty of not voting in ignorance. A group of people who get a panel of experts to choose for them because the group can't do the choosing itself better get a group of experts to assemble the panel of experts. How to get the group of experts? With a board of experts. **Ad nauseam.** By the same token, let there be no Hugo-only memberships. Besides, to put it bluntly, if we don't care enough to at least get a supporting membership, then we don't care to vote on any basis higher than the **Eeny-Meeny-Miney-Mo** Ticket. When it comes to the Hugos, we just can't take no **Mo**.

jim meadows, 3,

62 Hemlock St., Park Forest, Ill. 60466

Your GAK is weird, but I have a sick feeling that if you marketed it straight a la **NAKED CAME THE STRANGER**, it would make a respectable profit. I have some reservations on the movie tho, but still, how about Joe Namath for Elvis Presley, Donald Sutherland for Rick Nelson, Jane Fonda for Gina Lollobrigida (I've always felt that Jane was Hollywood's best whore portrayer), Lotte Lenya for Ingrid Bergman, and Dan Rowan for Paul Newman? Then have Jane cured of her illness, but the hero catches it and dies, and the girl runs off with the bad guy, who isn't really bad, only misunderstood; the father divorces his wife and marries the Older Woman, and everybody is sort of happy, no, make that Sadder But Wiser. Then turn it into a musical, stealing all the music from **THE THREEPENNY OPERA**, and put George Pal in charge of it all. Now that's a movie!

About Winter, 1959: **ANABASIS**; I think that this is best best piece of faanish writing I have read so far. I've read very little, so don't be too jubilant. I don't quite know if it should be funny or serious (I hope for the latter) but I do know that it is good.

Joe Staton is good to have around, particularly with that offutt cartoon; however, he did clash somewhat with the tone of that Winter, 1959 piece. Stiles is great and I think I see the beginning of a great feud here.

CY CHAUVIN

17829 Peters St., Roseville, Mich. 48066

Thanks for **BM** — when I first looked at the title, I thought it was **Breadmuttering**, which seemed quite appropriate when you consider the repro method used. **OFFSET**? That's expensive enough, but when couple with computer labels and professional typesetting, oh my ghod. (You sure this isn't "bread-mutterings"?)

Your comments on **TAFF** I agree with, but if anything is going to be done about it, it should be done soon. Two years from now everyone probably won't give a damn — you know how fast fandom changes. And anyway, perhaps Mario Bosnyak would agree with the changes in the **TAFF** rules you suggest — you never know unless you ask. It would all depend on how you presented your argument to Mario, of course.

Thank ghod someone else objected to Andy Offutt's nonsense in **CROSSROADS** besides me; I wrote in protesting about the article, but later decided it was no use. Strange, though, I do like Andy's "incredibly muddy prose" — when he's being funny and not trying to make a point, his wacky language can make quite enjoyable reading. Sort of a combination of David R. Bunch and

R.A. Lafferty tongue-in-cheek bit with a Southern accent. But I can see that anyone could quite easily be irritated by it — even Bunch and Lafferty are quite individual tastes.

And you noticed Leon Taylor's worthwhile little article in **CROSSROADS** too — this must be my lucky day! Unfortunately, you misinterpreted Leon's reasons for not wanting membership in the worldcon to be a requirement for Hugo voting — it's mainly **financial**. The cost of supporting memberships is too high, at least when you consider what you get back in return. I know that Leon has never voted for the Hugo awards because of the cost. Ethel Lindsay, too, recently complained that the cost of supporting memberships were too high, and that she would not be able to afford a membership in the LA con. Are either of those two people part of the "Great Unwashed" masses? Does shelling out six or seven bucks prove that you're a qualified voter?

You're right about the "one-fanzine syndrome" — how the hell a person who has seen only one of the five nominated fanzines can make a valid choice is beyond me. And I think that same sort of problem has crept into the prozine awards, too. Don't you recall that when Charlie Brown ran the results of the **LOCUS** poll last year, he mentioned that in the magazine category 'many fans listed only **F&SF**. They must be one-magazine readers'. Things like that can really shift the results of a poll or the Hugo awards. As a partial solution, what I'd like to see is a stern warning placed on the Hugo ballots somewhere which would read something like this: "Only vote in those categories for which you are qualified. If you are familiar with only one or two of the nominees in a particular category, **do not** vote in that category." Assuming that people would pay attention to a warning like that, I think it might solve the problem.

BOB SHAW

6 Cheltenham Park, Belfast 6 OHR, N. Ireland

Many thanks for the copy of **B1** which is really a distinctive fanzine with a nice sort of mature and thoughtful feel about all the writing.

Is **Fulcrum** a pun? Do you mutter in your beard because you are a messy eater and it is full of cookie crumbs? Anyway, you're wrong about **QUIP** being unmemorable. I remember lots of things about it, and was going to dig them out to refresh my memory of them, but unfortunately I've forgotten where I stored the box I keep them in.

I loved **Anabasis** and was impressed and slightly scared by the story within a story. Good stuff. All the illos were beautiful and wicked. As I said, there is something very wise and sad and mature about the whole zine.

WILL STRAW

302 Niagara Blvd., Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada

Thanks a lot for **Beardmutterings 1**, though it took a certain readjustment of my head to set me right after reading. A year or two in sercon fringe-fandom before getting into fandom proper made me naturally associate faanish things with the ditto or mimeo medium, and serious material with offset or multilith, but finding a crossover between the printing of one camp and the writing of another is Unusual.

I was going through old **FOCAL POINTS** a week or so ago to hunt down some reference that I can't recall (possibly, the time Terry Carr mentioned my name in **Passing Reference**), and realized that Arnie Katz is doomed to the type of unmemorableness you brought out — all kinds of articles I once waxed enthusiastically over but had since forgotten, whereas I have **LOCUS** issues from the same period practically committed to memory from one reading.

Your suggestions re **TAFF** seem well-founded, though I think a two-to-one ratio between the value of host country votes and

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origin-country votes is perhaps a little high. And you mention the "host country" as being the place whose voters should have a higher degree of influence, whereas I think the whole side of the Atlantic which is hosting the convention should have that same power. (It would be foolish for only Canadians to have two-point votes as to who comes to Torcon, if there is a TAFF race in '73, because the American fans will most certainly outnumber them.) And what probably would be better would be to close voting to Worldcon members only, since they're the ones who will be hosting the delegate.

Winter, 1959: *Anabasis* was superb. I'm sure it was a parody of something I ought to recognize, because I saw so many familiar lines and phrases in it, but it's quite possible it was a take-off on man vs. nature fiction in general. Actually, almost all of **Beardmutterings** takes me back to what I'm sure 1959 was like — faan fiction that gets its effect from showing the way minds work for those for whom fandom is a way of life, for instance, which was how Carl Brandon's stuff succeeded, I'm told, and your imitation Burbee writing in spots ("You have correctly surmised," he said to me with his mouth, "that something is indeed troubling me."). And the story behind *Who Taught You To Walk The Night*, though I was certain for a moment, considering what preceded that piece by two pages, that you were going to go into a parody of Andrew J. Offutt *Behind the Scenes in the Writing Business* articles.

BARRY SMOTROFF

147-53 71st Rd., Flushing, N.Y. 11367

You may be right about Arnie being doomed to produce unmemorable fanzines. As I type this I'm looking at a copy of something called *DamnYankee 14* from the 24th mailing of the SFPA. I doubt very much if many people remember this Arnie Katz fanzine. It dates back to about May '67 and basically consists of two parts. The first is ingroup writings called "Talk". Most of it is not very good reading unless one knows the people mentioned, and I only know of them. Arnie also mentions that he and Lon Atkins are co-editing a fanzine, which he calls 'Q'. About it he says: "I think things are going to work out." If Q is Quip, then things have indeed worked out. The second part of the zine is called "Another Try or A Maiden Voyage Into The Wonderful World Of Coherence or The Secrets Of The Literary Masters Revealed". Don't be fooled by the title. It's an answer of sorts to an article by Arnie that Dave Hulan had some comments about. And it's fairly well written, which may not seem strange except that the piece is really a critical (if you want to be semi-picky or quasi-critical) article on an aspect of literature. I wouldn't mind seeing Arnie write some more of this kind of thing, but I suppose he won't; he's too faanish now. Ah well.

That's a pretty vicious attack on Offutt you have there. Mind you, I'm not saying you were necessarily wrong in doing it, especially after that quote from *CROSSROADS*, which looks damning indeed. When I first read this part, I was afraid you were going to just use an "ad hominen" argument. (For those who don't know what an ad hominen argument is, it is a propaganda device which consists of attacking a person (personally) and ignoring their arguments). At any rate, you did at least go on to support your statements, and your attacks on Offutt's personality is to some degree justified in that Offutt's personality is what has to be attacked. I personally have never read Offutt's pro writings. What's Alexei Panshin's line? Something to the effect of, 'Andy Offutt had a writer's block for 45 minutes. Imagine, the chance to write two novels, gone, just like that.' Ah well, and his faanish writing always seem to be on Andy Offutt and *How He Writes*. Which is fine the first time, but **every** time is too much.

An ethics committee is a wonderful idea, and when you can find me half a dozen people that at least a simple majority of fandom will agree upon and who are "objective" then we'll do it. Yeah, at the first blue moon.

Some explanation seems in order for this tail-end column. Let me do it this way: I've expressed the view, in several LoCs I've written over the past couple of months (when I should have been preparing this issue of **beardmutterings**) about how annoying editorial insertions can be in printed LoCs. And although I've been sorely tempted to throw my comments into the middle of letters here in **bm**, commending those of you who agree with me and condemning out of hand those who don't, I have been pretty successful in not doing so. Not completely successful. Just pretty successful.

A few times I just couldn't help myself.

However, my objection has been to editorial insertions, never to editorial replies. So we might as well start tackling a few, by subject matter, starting like so:

Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund

First, I'd like to thank Waldemar Kummig for writing at length on the subject and clearing up some misconceptions. Thank you, Waldemar.

Like you, I have no desire to smear Mario for engaging in an advertising campaign that must have cost him more than he received from TAFF to come over here, but I must frankly admit that I would have done so, at least in American fanzines, without the slightest remorse had it turned out that money had actually changed hands. As it stands, I must add that what you reveal does little to alleviate the particular bitterness I feel in the outcome of this specific race. If anything, it serves to make the bitterness more intense. What it boils down to is that Pete Weston was too ethical when it came to soliciting TAFF votes in his own behalf, and he — and American fandom; when you come right down to it — suffered as a consequence.

We disagree on one aspect of TAFF, Waldemar, and I suspect that your view is the more popular one these days. I feel TAFF **should** be something of an egoboo poll, in the sense that the delegate should be someone that people in the host country really want to meet. I also feel that TAFF should generally go to someone who cannot afford to make the trip under his own steam. TAFF has a great potential for making fandom more international, and I'm all for that (although I'm unclear, in my own mind, just what most people mean when they say that) — but is that purpose served in this particular instance? And should that be the overriding rule? In both cases, I don't think so. It is nice that TAFF serves to "make fandom more international" — but it's a side effect, a natural benefit that accrues of its own accord by the very nature of what TAFF is and what it does. To make it the prime motivation, the end all and be all of TAFF is simply to put the cart before the horse. And TAFF can only promote good will among fans of different nationalities if it does in fact engender good will; in this specific instance, the feeling about Mario's having won, after having been here so recently, over Pete Weston, who narrowly lost in his previous run and was the person most fans in this country wanted to meet, runs the narrow gauntlet from indifference to, in cases such as myself, extreme bitterness — which scarcely does the cause of international fandom much good, does it?

I agree with Will Straw that my idea of the weighted ballot was poorly expressed and that if I'd given the matter a little more thought I'd have realized that the weight should be on the whole side of the Atlantic which is hosting the convention, not the boundaries of certain countries. But I don't think it would be a good idea, Will, to limit the voters to worldcon members, since this would probably lower the number of people who vote — and provide money — for TAFF. The high price of worldcon membership, and particularly supporting membership, would also be a factor to consider. This would drastically reduce the number of people who could vote, particularly those from overseas who did not want to pay the cost of supporting membership in addition to contributing when they vote. Even with the penalty now imposed on those who pay for their memberships at the door, many pipples still wait until the last minute before joining for a number of reasons — for example, finding out that one really can

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make the journey at the eleventh hour; these people might want to vote for TAFF, but simply wouldn't have the time.

I don't think my arguments contradict each other, Mike Glycer: Try reading them again. I think a much more apt analogy of my weighted ballot proposal (as amended in this column by Will Straw; see above) than "UN Reform" would be the Senate and the House of Representatives. Legislation proposed by either branch can be passed, but a Senator's vote is stronger than a Representative's because there are fewer of the former than the latter. I think having no vote in the race at all would shrivel contributions enormously, but that most fans would switch roles from 'Senator' to 'Representative' gladly as long as they understood that it was a switch, i.e., every other year it would be their vote which would carry the extra punch. This is not to say that there would be no disgruntled pipples who would refuse to vote under these conditions. But I do think their number would be relatively few as far as TAFF is concerned, and easy to ignore if the end result — fairness — is achieved.

Part of the problem in arguing thus, Mike, is that TAFF is many things to many people. To some, as you say, it's "politicking" — getting out on the stump and soliciting votes. Maybe that is all TAFF has become. If so, then all I have said or will say will be so much empty air. TAFF as she was set up, however, was an endeavor to award some fan's accomplishments in international fandom — which, almost, by definition, would have to be fanzine fandom (although that is by no means absolute) — with a little emphasis on the fan's real accomplishments. Joe Snurd, down at the local fan club, may be a heck of a nice guy, and if the whole club votes for him en masse they might succeed in winning TAFF for him, but you can't blame people on the Other Side if they're a little miffed when he knocks out of the running someone who has done a great deal for fandom over a number of years. Maybe Joe Snurd should have an "equal" chance to go out and run for TAFF, though. Maybe I'm just an elitist.

Darrell Schweitzer's imaginary TAFF race came out with a happy ending for me: That's precisely what I'd like to see happen. As specifically and clearly as I can state it, I would like to see the hosts playing host to someone they really want to play host to — even if that someone is someone I don't know. Is 'promoting international fandom' some sort of code that means if the guy most fans wanted to meet here loses, and fans voting along strictly nationalistic lines force us to meet someone who was here just a bit more than a year before, that we're suppose to grin and bear it? Phooey.

I am absolutely sure I don't agree with Mark Mumper on TAFF voting. See comments above to Mike Glycer.

But while you've pointed out the difficulty of getting "objective" statements, Mark, at least the idea has some merit. If the ballots were not already so crowded, perhaps the backers of each of the candidates could also write short anti-platforms, i.e., why they think the other candidates aren't equal to their own. However, the idea of weighing votes by how much money the voter contributes would, I think, do the opposite of what you claim: It would make it much easier to buy TAFF. Let us postulate that I am in an imaginary TAFF race against, say, Andy Offutt, and further postulate that it is a close one. For reasons which we will not go into here, it would be a Severe Blow to my pride to lose to him — so I give a friend of mine \$100 to contribute when he votes for me. And in what was previously a close (but honest) race, I've bought myself a trip overseas. Thanks, but no thanks.

Robert Bryan also points up the flaw in my weighted ballot suggestion: The dividing line should be the Atlantic, not the country that is hosting the con. Nor is the two-to-one vote ratio the only possible way to make things fair: Another alternative would be to figure the percentage of the vote each candidate receives on both sides of the Atlantic, add in whatever factor is needed to give at least equal and probably more-than-equal weight to the ballots cast by the host side and divide by two to determine who wins. That, of course, would be highly complex, but the alternatives are certainly there.

In reply to Jerry Lapidus, I'd say that I tend to doubt that extensive publication of the fact that Mario had been to the U.S. worldcon im-

mediately preceding Boston would have changed the American vote significantly — the vote here was largely for Pete Weston, as I pointed out, more because people here really wanted to see Pete than for the above-cited factor, which was pretty well known here anyway. And in shifting to a weighted alternating TAFF ballot, I'm not suggesting that we change our motivations for voting. I would of course vote for the TAFFman I wanted to represent American fandom — but if the hosts significantly preferred someone else, I would defer to that decision.

The Hugos

Sorry to contradict you, there, Dave Hulvey, but I was not "bemoaning the victory of LOCUS in the Hugo balloting." To some it may have appeared that this was the case, but in fact what I was doing was complaining bitterly about the total lack of ethics employed in LOCUS receiving that award—an important distinction there, at least to me. The fanzine Hugo has a rather poor batting average in picking out the "best fanzine" of any period — the unlamented FANTASY TIMES copped a Hugo over HYPHEN, as I've pointed out more than once, and LIGHTHOUSE lost out to NIEKAS, to cite just two examples. The award of 50 Hugos to LOCUS won't make it a better fanzine than, say, BEABOHEMA, anymore than the award of the fanwriter Hugo to Geis makes him a better writer than Carr. The true mark of a fanzine's worth lies in how much it is sought-after, in its immortality, if you will; something which Charlie Brown cannot buy with sample copies. I will gladly trade my copies of FANTASY TIMES, NIEKAS, AMRA, SCIENCE FICTION TIMES, YANDRO, SFR and LOCUS — Hugo-winners, all — five-for-one for copies of HYPHEN, LIGHTHOUSE, INNUENDO, VOID, QUIP and EGOBOO, some of which lost in Hugo balloting and some of which have never even been nominated. If you hear of any takers, would you kindly point them in my direction?

This is not to say that the Hugo has not gone to some fanzines deserving of the award. It has indeed. But by and large you're right that the fanzine Hugos just aren't oriented to properly reward that kind of achievement. So nu?

Ok, Cy Chauvin, I'm with you — lower the cost of supporting memberships. But I could just as easily do without opening the Hugos to votes from just anyone.

As to your other Hugo suggestion, I suspect that you're right, that many people — regardless of category — vote for what they've read, and if they've only read one of the fanzines, prozines, novels, stories or what-you-will, that is the one they vote for. Whether or not the stern warning you suggest would do any good is a matter of conjecture; but I don't see how it could possibly hurt.

Well, Stephen Fritter, the professional Hugos haven't produced any duds worth mentioning, although (like most everybody else, I suspect) there have been some I haven't really agreed with, either. STARSHIP TROOPERS comes to mind. The Nebula helped engender a sense of "me-too"-ism in the Hugo when Sam Delany's "Time Considered as a Helix of Semi-Precious Stones" won in contradiction to the Hugo publication rules after winning a Nebula. Despite these minor quibbles, I agree that in the professional categories the Hugo tends to be a pretty accurate indication of the best works in the field. What that says about the field for some years is perhaps best left to the imagination.

There is nothing in the Hugo voting rules, Dan Goodman, to keep you from voting for Patten or Lupoff as best fan writer. Although I have not seen any recent complete APA L mailings, I of course received all 69 mailings of the legitimate APA F, and none of those mailings, taken as a whole, was ever superior to the best fanzines of the time, so much did the high crud factor detract from the few items that were really good. An apa can be highly enjoyable to participate in without every line or zine being Golden Prose.

I think there would be two problems to handling the Hugos as you, Jerry Lapidus, suggest. The first would be getting it out of the hands of the convention committee — not quite as simple as you suggest, since it would most likely be difficult to convince those attending the business meeting that the move was anything more than an elitist

group trying to take over their award (which it is, by definition of the WSFS rules). Secondly, of course, the low fee would be an open invitation to buy the Hugo. Perhaps the book and magazine publishers could be counted on not to consider such a practice, but I can easily envision some future movie or TV series, say, whose promoters would think nothing of investing \$1000 or \$2000 to assure a couple of hundred extra votes. In a mail ballot, it could be done, and even with the committee handling the questions of eligibility I think you can see how simply they could get around it.

While I don't entirely agree with Lapidus, I don't entirely agree with you, either, Lew Wolkoff. There are plenty of qualified people who are active in fandom or read sf avidly who must pay an outrageous price if they cannot attend the convention and still wish to vote. This, too, is an inequity. I am just confused, in my own mind, as to what can be done about it that will not cause even more inequities.

Well, Barry Smotroff, assuming I can make the necessary arrangements with the parliamentarian and that I make it to the convention in Los Angeles, I just might propose the establishment of a Hugo ethics committee. Those who agree or disagree with me are welcome to come along. A simple majority of fandom will not be needed to determine the make-up of that panel, only a simple majority of those present at that session of the convention. I conceded at the outset in *bm 1* that it would not be easy to choose the members of such a committee, but I do not think it is impossible.

**The Pro-Fans and Fan-Pros
or
the transmorgification of andy offutt**

Well, yes, andy offutt, you have a point there and a fairly valid one: Two pips do indeed indicate direct quotes. And there was some license taken there in making your singular quoted prose conform to my plural verb outside the quotes. You may have indeed had specific individuals in mind, although it seemed to me that the thrust of your article was that the cited actions of these individuals made "fandom a goddamned shuck," if I may remind you of the title of your piece. Or do I misrecall that, also? Perhaps it was, instead, something along the lines of "Specific Individuals in Fandom are Stupid Crumbs"? Or then again, perhaps not.

Think of my piece as a personal attack on you if you must; it only saddens me to the extent that it gives you further passage down your ego-tripping road. I consider the piece an attack on a point of view I find repugnant, a point of view which found acceptance in the heyday of SFR -- I am tired, yea, weary, of know-it-all third-rate pros belaboring us poor fen with tales of wounded pride, bemoaning the fact that we find more interesting things to talk about than just how one hack differs from another, and trying to dictate the proper modes of respect we should accord them because they are, after all, so much beyond mere mortals such as we. If andy offutt got splattered in such an attack, it is not so much because rich brown, well-known dwarf about New York City, has any particular feelings about offutt, but because the latter -- in an article which he wrote -- so much epitomized that point of view.

As for your final paragraph, andy, the new, revived Proxyboo, Ltd. (see editorial for details), will take the matter under advisement. It is

just possible that we may form an affiliate specializing in polishing off, er, up tarnished pros. For a modest fee, of course.

I stand corrected, Darrell Schweitzer, on the source of Walt Willis' fanzine review column, and make note of that story in *IF*. What I said, however, was that Walt wasn't a professional writer of science fiction unless you wanted to count his fanzine review column in that category. So amend that to a fanzine review column and a collaboration on a short story. *THE IMPROBABLE IRISH* (which he wrote under the pen-name of Walter Bryan) may have been borderline fantasy, depending on how far and humorously you're willing to stretch your definitions, but it wasn't science fiction. Too, I was being a bit restrictive in defining science fiction professional in that context; there are scores of fen, myself included, who have sold a short story or two or three over the years who wouldn't "seem professional" to me. But tastes differ.

If you're just wishy-washy from hanging around with editors, Robert Bloch, I'd say you're a lucky man. Foo knows, there are a lot of worse things you can get from hanging around with them. Seriously (he said after nobody laughed) there are plenty of pros who do not consider themselves fans that I like well enough, and a number like your venerated -- or do I mean vinegared? I seem to recall something about you & pickles -- self, who fit both categories. Ted White was best man at my wedding, although I can't recall thinking of him as either my "pro" best man or "fan" best man; he just happened to be the best friend I had around at the time.

I guess I just don't think of this as a fan-pro thing in the traditional sense of that historic argument. On the one hand, I don't much care for those who've sold a handful of stories sweeping into a fandom they're totally unfamiliar with, acting as though they expect everyone around to fall at their feet, or who, from far oof East Mashed Potato Falls, Idaho, purport to have the "inside scoop" on the perfidies of the New York publishing scene. But I also feel my hackles rising when some new fan who should nonetheless Know Better begins to tell the SFWA how it should conduct its business. So I can swear at both sides, while you have sympathy for same. My real secret is that I also hang around with editors, and since I can't tell who's right or wrong, I can rant a pox on both their houses. While I'm no less confused than anyone else around this nuthouse, I get to eat my pickle and save it for posterity, too.

Well, Dan Goodman, Alex Panshin is one pro I mentioned who was a pro before he was a fan. The fellow I was replying to immediately above, whom I also mentioned, is another. In fact, it's darkly rumored that fandom is just something Bloch dreamed up ages ago to impress his pen-pal, H.P. Lovecraft, with the fact that horrors need not be nameless.

Also, I believe offutt was writing fanzine reviews for *TRUMPET* before he started writing porn, which in turn predated his sf sales. And from what I've seen of Gerrold's fan stuff, he fits more in the offutt classification.

Except for yourself (Jerry Lapidus) and Buck Coulson in *YANDRO*, most everyone replying in *CROSSROADS* to the offutt article took it seriously. How was it humorous? A pastiche of the very sort of pro-fan attitude I was so vehement in abhorring? If that was the case, I can only remark that it did not appear to be so out of line with other offutt articles I have viewed.

Hank Davis

...who gets a section all to himself because his comments on the two preceding subjects, and a few others, deserves a separate reply.

I am not at all sorry, Hank, that I sent *beardmutterings* to you, despite what Jerry Lapidus says about me writing as if I didn't give a damn about viewpoints that differ from my own.

I am flattered by your comparison between my writings and Arnie Katz's, whether you find him a congenial writer or not. I think Arnie's humor is more polished than mine, more thought-out and probably generally less hurtful, but I will admit that we are influenced by some of the same fannish writers so perhaps some of that comes through. Anyway, thanks.

The rest of your comments are just incredible. Really.

I thought I was an enthusiastic follower of Terry Carr's fan writings. But I guess not. I not only had no knowledge of Terry having made any statement about offutt at any convention, but I also don't recall reading anything in his *FOCAL POINT* column about offutt, either. I'm not disputing your word, Hank; I simply must have missed it.

Still, I'm pretty sure you must be on the right track there. No doubt Terry turned to me at some New York fan party when I was totally

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unaware of it, fixed me with his jaundiced eye (the left, or sinister, one) and instructed me to go out and attack andy offutt in my fanzine. Now, I have no specific recollection of this, you understand, but then I could hardly be expected to — since, after all, Terry's last hypnotic command would have surely been for me to bury his instructions so deeply in my subconscious that I would feel I was acting on my own rather than as a hint for Tucker to bring out another issue of LeZ. How foolish of me to think I was actually replying to a pernicious and uninformed article written by that self-same andy offutt! Fortunately for me, Hank, there are people around such as yourself to open my eyes — people who can easily and logically tear through the thin veneer of pseudo-reality to the essence of Truth. And from such a great distance, too!

Such a good turn deserves another, so let me at least try to return the favor. I realize that Kentucky fen might get upset when outsiders refer to them as some third-rate pro's yes-men, but using your own logic here, I found it curious to note the timing of your missive: It followed, by only a few weeks, offutt's letter of reply. (There have been other defenses — just as there have been other attacks — of andy, and from people who are neither from New York or Kentucky, but this only indicates, to me, the total awesomeness of andy's — and Terry's — strange hypnotic powers.) Again, using your own logic, the simplest way for Kentucky fen to save themselves from such accusations is to stop acting like yes-men.

Maybe you see what I mean about your comments being incredible. Maybe.

The quality of andy's professional output was germane to the 'special attention' he seems to ask of fandom. I don't think fans should genuflect everytime a pro — of any calibre — condescends to participate in fmz or at conventions. As I said, the pros I have known and liked who participate in fandom are those who do so as equals, rather than demanding automatic adulation because they have sold a few stories. The demands become all the more ridiculous when they are made by second- or third-rate writers.

I do not know the title of that fannish newszine in which Ted White "pulled rank" (?) on Linda Bushyager. Perhaps you will prod your memory a bit and come up with it in due time. I do recall that Linda cast aspersions on Ted's honesty in her fanzine because the EGOBOO POLL results did not suit her, and that Ted took a paragraph in FOCAL POINT, a fannish newszine I coedited with Arnie Katz, to reply to it since she had not sent him the fanzine in question. This is all water under the bridge now, and my only reason for bringing it up at all is to make it clear to the readers of beardmutterings that you're certainly not equating a retort to an unfounded smear with "pulling rank" (??) on someone. Obviously, you have some other instance and some other fannish newszine in mind.

Who were the two people who joined the worldcon who weren't LOCUS subscribers and who didn't receive sample copies — and what were their convention membership numbers, i.e., when did they join? There were a number of fans here in New York, whose current addresses had not then appeared in any fanzine, who received their first copy of LOCUS upon joining the convention. And I understand that those "samples" came equipped with Hugo ballots, too, which was certainly handy if not a direct hint. It is, of course, your prerogative to assume that Charlie somehow manufactured these fannishly unknown addresses out of his own head and that the fact that these people had just joined the convention was just a coincidence, if that is your desire.

My question was not whether Charlie had access to the membership list and used it — it was fairly well known that he had, and did — but whether the Noreascon committee actually contacted the editors of the other zines up for the award and told them that the list was available to them, or whether the other editors had to somehow deduce this — a bit hard to do since, as a matter of policy, the worldcon membership lists had never before been available to the editors of Hugo-nominated fanzines. Mike Glicksohn answered this question, and this seems a good enough time to quote his reply:

I may be partly to blame for the apparent confusion over the availability of the Worldcon mailing list. I recall writing to one of the fannish fanzines that was busy attacking Charlie some time ago that the anger at his "underhanded" use of the Noreascon mailing list was misdirected since the list had been available to others if they'd wanted it. I pointed out that anyone could attack Charlie for the practice itself, as a question of ethics, but to accuse him of deceit in the matter was simply clouding the issue. Since then I've seen a variety of confused discussion on the topic. Let me elaborate on what I meant.

As you may or may not know, Canadian fans have published an annual summary of the Hugo nominees to serve as a voting guide for those unfamiliar with all of the nominees. LOWDOWN has appeared

for three of the past four years. When we published this year, we decided that the best use of the thing would be obtained if we sent it to as many people on the Noreascon mailing list as possible, since these were the eligible Hugo voters, and hence the people who stood to benefit from our reviews. We simply wrote to Tony Lewis and asked if a set of Noreascon mailing labels could be obtained for the purpose of mailing LOWDOWN. Obviously, if we could get the pre-typed gummed labels, we'd save a hell of a lot of money and time. Tony said we could have a set of labels at cost—\$3. We sent the money, he sent the labels and LOWDOWN was mailed out.

I never for a moment thought of getting a listing for my own use for ENERGUMEN. . . Whether or not I could have obtained such a list as the publisher of ENERGUMEN, I don't know. I don't see that Tony could have refused, though, since it was common knowledge that Charlie had access to the lists. . . As far as I know, there was never an announcement to the effect of 'Copies of the mailing list can be had for \$3 from . . .', we just decided we needed one and wrote for it.

So it seems that the other editors in question were never, "in fairness," informed that the lists were also available to them — but if they'd bothered to ask, the list may have been available to them. Well, well.

But let us assume, Hank, that the editors of the other zines nominated for the Hugo last year had telepathy, or whatever power would be necessary to realize that, suddenly, the worldcon membership list might be available to them where it had never been available before if they would but ask for it. Would this have made things fairer, as you claim, or was it something which, as I said, would give a special edge to a small highly frequent fanzine such as LOCUS?

Let's consider it. Most everyone else seems to have been able to figure out what I meant without lengthy explanation on my part, but I'll gladly take you by the hand and explain my contention.

The other zines up for the award were SFR, RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY, SPECULATION and ENERGUMEN. Against LOCUS' circulation of 800, SFR pitted 1200, RQ maybe 600, SPECULATION and ENERGUMEN possibly 400 each. (The last three, of course, are only guesses on my part, but if anything I would say I have guessed high.) LOCUS went weekly for a good 10 or 12 issues before the convention; SFR was bi-monthly and the other three were published about quarterly. Thus, if any of the contenders besides LOCUS was to be distributed to the worldcon membership, it would have to be accomplished in one, or perhaps (in the case of SFR) two issues. LOCUS, coming out every week, could afford to spread its distribution of samples out over eight or 10 issues to achieve the same purpose.

Let us eliminate the late-comers at Noreascon and thus pare the available membership list to a nice, round, 1400. This question arises: How many of the people already receiving the zines nominated for the award are also convention members? Impossible to estimate. If we assume that none of the convention members are receiving the nominated zines, the advantage is clearly Charlie's — it would obviously cost him less to publish and mail out 1400 copies of LOCUS than it would cost the editors of the other zines to publish and mail 1400 copies of theirs. But consider the unlikely event that all of the readers of the above-named zines were also members of the convention — if, for no other reason, than to weaken my argument. That would mean only 200 extra copies of SFR, 600 of LOCUS, 800 of RQ and 1000 each of SPEC and ENER. SFR might seem to have a slight advantage over LOCUS until you stop to consider that most issues of SFR were 60 pages or more, while LOCUS averaged between eight and 10. For that minimum "extra" circulation, in paper alone, SFR needs 12 reams of paper for its extra 200 copies while LOCUS needs only six reams for its 600. Further, the extra 200 SFRs would have cost \$40 to mail; the extra 600 copies of LOCUS would have cost only \$36 — and I point out, again, that Charlie had the added advantage of being able to spread his extra cost over a number of issues.

In any event, SFR had folded its tent before the real voting got under way — which left LOCUS competing with three quarterly zines that averaged between 40 and 50 pages per issue and would have had to publish and mail, at a very minimum, 800, and probably closer to 1000, extra copies of their fanzines to be even — if they had known the list was available to them, which turns out not to have been the case. If this fits your idea of "fairness," of providing "an opportunity for an editor to cancel the advantage of LOCUS' big circulation," you have a pretty piss poor idea of what fairness really is, Hank Davis.

I would also point out to you that Charlie has seen these charges — in beardmutterings and elsewhere — and never bothered to reply to them. If he would have you, and his other staunch defenders, believe that he did not use the worldcon mailing list, it would seem that the least he could do in your behalf would be to issue a simple denial.

Perhaps I am wrong in this. Perhaps you can tell me why.

Yes, Hank, I do assume that neos and fringe fans will vote for the one fanzine they have seen. Of course, having not been privy to the ballots cast for the Hugo over the years, I have no ironclad proof that this is so — although I would hint to you that when the total number of ballots cast for the award tops the total circulation of most of the zines up for the award, it is sort of hard for me or anyone else to believe any other way, your own admirable disclaimer for yourself to the contrary notwithstanding.

But believe what you want to believe, Hank Davis. That's what most people do.

A Few Unrelated Comments

RUTH BERMAN: Actually, Ruth, I do remember QUIP, in glorious and minute detail. I think Arnie knows the things you point out here, too, and overall I'd say he's really generally satisfied with the recognition that QUIP has received, while acknowledging your point that no fan ever gets as much egoboo as he thinks he ought to. — And certainly in a number of instances, not as much as the fan deserves.

JERRY LAPIDUS: While of course I personally feel that I am a fellow one can agree with completely, and have even had a recent testimonial to that effect from one whose opinions I respect, it has plagued me from time to time that there actually are people who do not agree with my opinions. Over the past 15 years this has caused me no end of paranoia, panic and depression. I strain ardently to sprinkle my printed opinions with 'I thinks', 'in my opinions' and 'it seems to mes' — but I still come on sounding strong, as if I had no respect for the misguided opinions of those incapable in their blind stupidity of seeing reason, i.e., agreeing with me without qualification. The result of my rather forceful way of expressing myself is not to intimidate fans into remaining silent — Jesus Christ on a crutch, Lapidus, nothing could do that — but rather forces them to come forth with their own ideas about what I've said. As you have done. As others have done. I'd rather achieve that effect than get everyone to "accept" what I have to say right off the bat; fandom would be a bore if everyone in it found instant agreement with all my opinions.

STEPHEN FRITTER: I, the poor man's Marquis de Sade, cruel? Perhaps. But publishing a fanzine is a hell of a lot of work for a ghoddamn hobby, and if I'm going to invest that work, and time, and money, in the hobby, it has to provide me with a reason for doing so. That reason, for me, is response; I've already published one fanzine that generated more Sticky Quarters than it did LoCs and as a result found myself lacking enthusiasm to continue publishing it. Fanzine publishing is seldom a breaking-even proposition anyway, unless you run it as a business ala Charlie Brown. And unless you're trying to break even, or make money, subscribers are an annoyance: Except when their subscriptions come due, they sit out in the "audience" and you can't even hear them breathing (although you know they're there).

Besides, now you've done more than gotten your feet wet. Is it so bad? At least, now, we both know you're alive.

ROBERT BRYANT: In my typically flippant, fannish manner, I blame the insufficiency of postage on the U.S. Postal Service. It was a member of that group of steadfast individuals who informed me, when I brought a sample copy to inquire about postage, that **bm** would cost six cents to mail. Virtually all 300 copies I mailed out — with the exception of those sent to FAPA, which Andy Porter mailed — went for six cents. When 40 or so copies were returned in a bundle stamped "insufficient postage" (fortunately without ruining the stamps) I mailed them from Manhattan instead of Brooklyn. Thus far, you're the only one who's reported having had to pay postage due. Maybe Arnie Katz isn't cursed after all — maybe it's really you.

TERRY HUGHES: Colleen will be writing something for **bm** as soon as I can get her chained to a typer. Right now she's busy with an eight-hour-a-day job, taking care of mineself and our daughter, and studying to be an economist — else how would I be able to publish a **Fancy, Expensive Fanzine**?

Oh, that Lee Jacobs were still with us! — he would have been the ideal person to take up the germ of the idea about the fannish **OK Corral Gunfight** and do it justice. Your comments are well meant, and equally well taken, but thus far the targets of my darts, with the exception of offutt, have not replied. We will see what we shall see.

JIM MEADOWS: I like your suggestions for the movie treatment of by Great American Kgnovel and promise, if I take any of your suggestions, to cut you in on a percentage of the royalties. We here at the editorial offices of **beardmutterings** are waiting still with an-

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icipatory anticipation for a definite offer from Hollywood.

WILL STRAW (and others): Offset is the cheapest method for me. With the use of the typesetting equipment I get more words to the page (very necessary for someone as longwinded as I), it generally looks nicer and it's a lot easier on me than using a mimeo or ditto and cutting stencils or masters. The first issue only cost me \$50.

I chose it, however, largely to see if message can overcome medium. Precisely because of what you say here: It is largely the province of dull, serious fanzines. Walt Willis overcame the shame of printing **SLANT** with a pun — "My father was a printer, and I have just reverted to type." I hope to overcome the shame of offset by telling people I've chosen it as my medium because so little of it is rare or well-done.