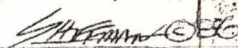


Nov. 86





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All-Star Thirty-Fifth Anniversarish!

# SCIENCE-FICTION FIVE-YEARLY 3



Issue Number Eight : November 1986

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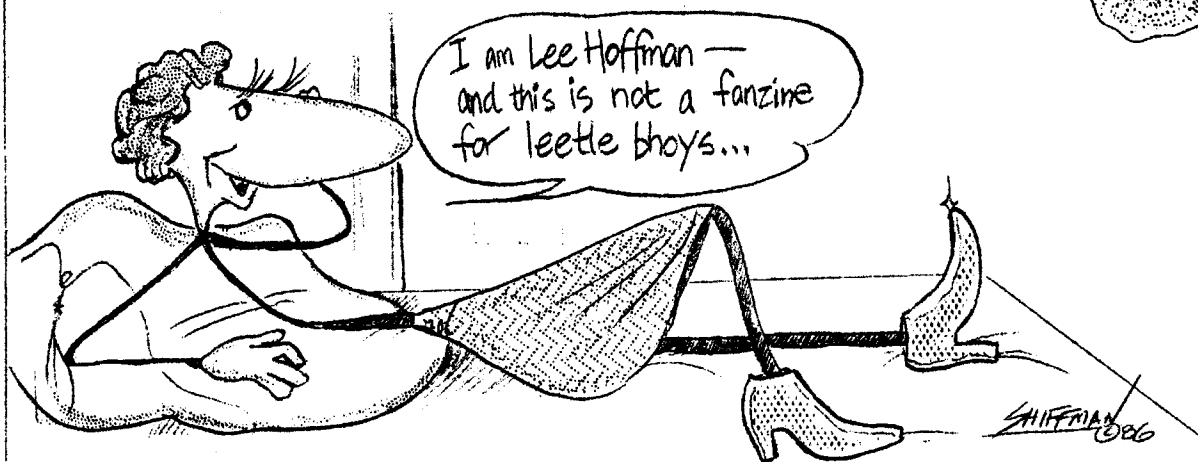
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Artwork: Lee Hoffman, pp. 4, 5; Teresa Nielsen Hayden, pp. 6, 7; Vinç Clarke, p. 13; Steve Stiles, pp. 14, 16; Ross Chamberlain, pp. 24, 25, 27, 28, 30; all other illustrations by Stu Shiffman.

SCIENCE-FICTION FIVE-YEARLY, The Fanzine They Couldn't Put Away, is published twice per decade by Lee Hoffman, Founder and Supremo, for a handpicked group of lighthearted idiots plus, of course, you. SFFY was founded in 1951 and has appeared since with the ticking regularity of isotopic decay. This issue's crew of Assistant (or Ass't) Editors comprises Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden and Art Editor Stu Shiffman. The contents of this publication are fictional and any resemblance between persons depicted herein and any living person, or Robert Bloch, is entirely coincidental. SFFY is copyright (c) 1986 by Lee Hoffman for the contributors; address all correspondence to her at 3335 Harbor Blvd, Port Charlotte FL 33952. 6th Fandom Is Not Dead; it simply rests a lot these days. Yngvi is still a louse.

# DOWN THE BLACK

# HOLE

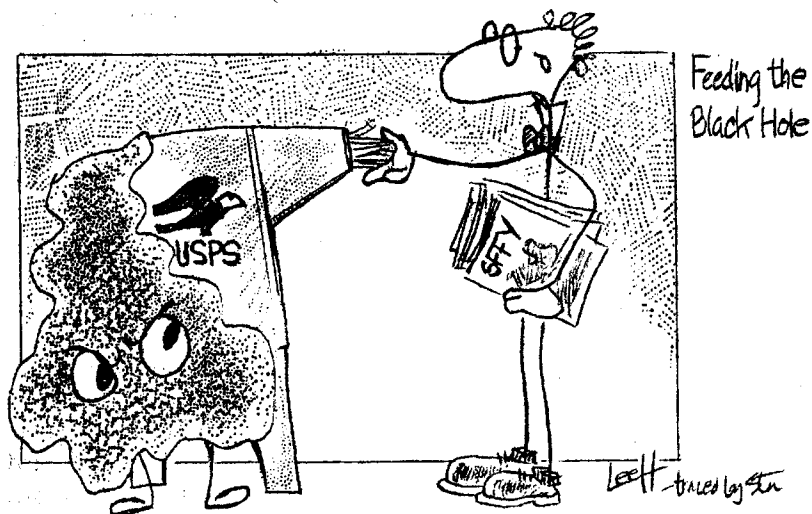


I REALLY SHOULDN'T SAY THIS, but I have a sneaking suspicion living in Florida can be hazardous to one's health. Florida, or at least this part of it, seems to be a regular residence of the Peripatetic Black Hole. You know the one. It manifests itself hither and yon, swallowing up things like the pencil you had in your hand a moment ago, or that batch of stamps you bought Wednesday, or the great idea you had for an SF novel just before you fell asleep last night.

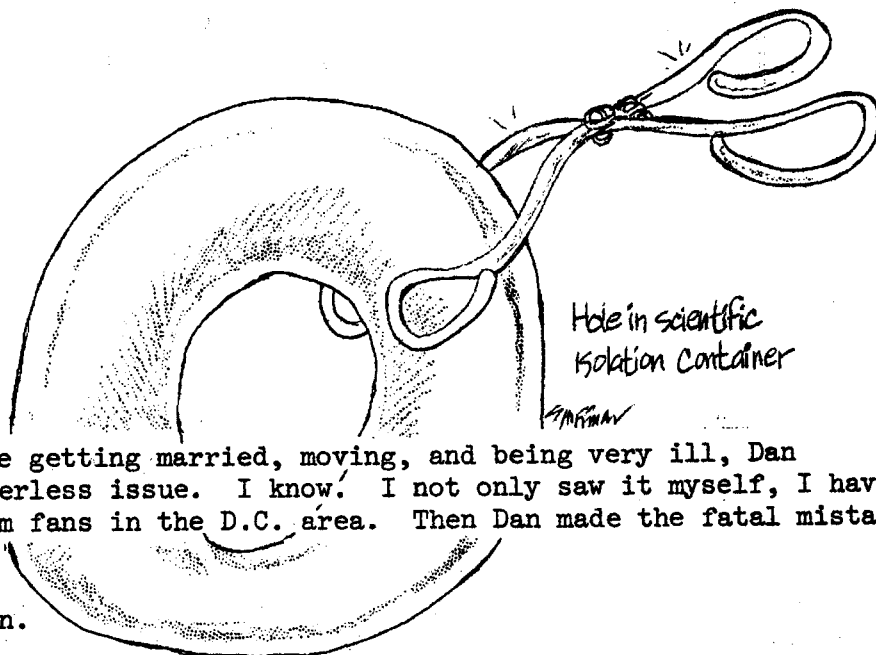
I think it is swallowing me. Piecemeal. When I first moved here fifteen years ago, I soon disappeared from general fandom. A while after that I dropped out of FAPA. Until SunCon I was just about unheard-of, and after SunCon I disappeared again. I never pubbed an ish myself again.

This curious curse even reaches out through the mails, its force field riding the eagle of the U.S. Postal Service to devour at miles' distance from this epicenter.

Last lustrum I recurred long enough to commission that fan among fen, Dan Steffan, to guest-publish the 1981 issue of SFFY. Diligent despite an onset of



BY LEE HOFFMAN



obstacles to his fanac, like getting married, moving, and being very ill, Dan prevailed and produced a peerless issue. I know. I not only saw it myself, I have eyewitness confirmation from fans in the D.C. area. Then Dan made the fatal mistake of mailing it out.

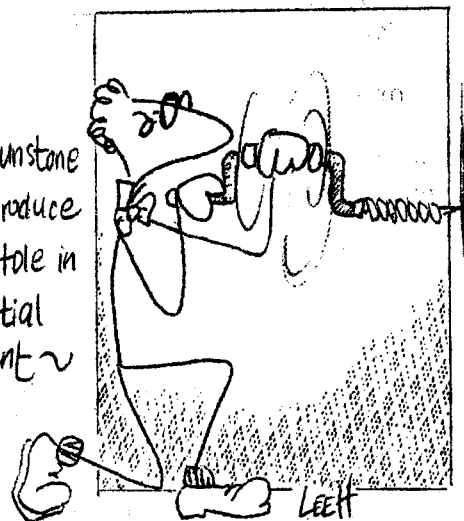
It was never seen again.

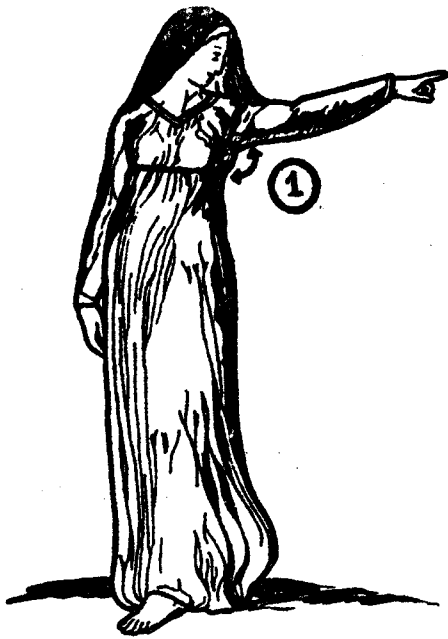
In the ensuing lustrum, I have noticed the Black Hole striking time after time. It wipes out the locs I plan to send to various fanzine editors before I can even get them on paper. It swallows letters I intend answering tomorrow. I started writing a column for MICROWAVE, and shortly (allowing for the time difference between Florida and England) MICROWAVE disappeared.

Yes, even as I was typing this, I discovered it had got away with three sectors of my word-processing program.

So if you're not reading this, and you never hear from Stu Shiffman and the Nielsen Haydens again, you know what happened.

Professor Wunstone  
tries to produce  
a Black Hole in  
a residential  
environment ~





# The Harp that Once or Twice

IN VISIONS AND VENTURERS, THEODORE Sturgeon has an unusual interpolation:

"He had Mother call up the office and say he had Twonk's disease, a falling of the armpits (wo whom do I owe this gem? Not my gag) and kept up his peregrinations all that night...."

As we of course know, this particular gem comes from the Fancyclopedia. Speer's original edition in 1944 credits the discovery of Twonk's Disease to the Minneapolis Fantasy Society (c. 1942 -- Bronson, Saari, Dollens, Gergen, Russell, Brackney) but describes it merely as "the ultimate in afflictions of any nature." It was not until Eney's Second Edition in 1959 that the symptom of falling armpits was identified.

Obviously the dissemination by fandom of its medical discoveries is far too slow for safety. To help our professional colleagues keep up with the latest developments in fannish medical research, here is the first edition of the Fannish Medical Dictionary; it will be kept up to the minute in following issues of SFFY. There will be no charge for this service.

**Alamnesia.** The condition of having forgotten the Alamo, revealed in a letter to Harry Turner's Now and Then (#6, November 1955). There appear to be no harmful side effects, except possibly in Texas.

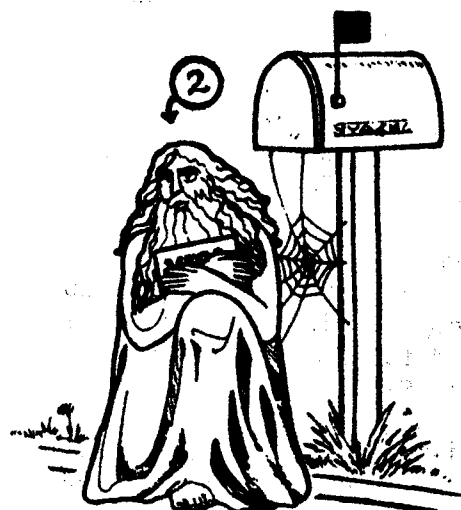
**Anorexia Nervosa.** Recently defined by Bob Shaw as a morbid fear of parkas.

**Annishthesia.** A state of coma of terminal gafia induced by exhaustion after publishing a very large anniversary issue, combined with disappointment at the absence of the expected paeon of praise. (That of course is why it's called annishthesia-- there's been no paeon.) There is no known cure except immediate and massive doses of egoboo. The ailment is also known as Nydahl's Disease, after its best-known victim (Joel Nydahl, Vega). Professor rich brown has recently promulgated a theory\* of the Conservation of Egoboo, which postulates that the amount of egoboo resulting from any given piece of fanac is constant. He points out that Nydahl is now as famous for his gafia as he would have been if his annish had received the acclaim he expected. But it is implicit in this theory that fame and egoboo are the same thing. This may be true in some circles, but not I think in fandom. If it were so, it would be just as desirable to have the reputation of Claude Degler as Harry Warner, and this is not so. Annishthesia, some authorities believe, is merely a special case of the more widespread ailment known as APathy (q.v.).

\* In Sikander #11, ed. Irwin Hirsh.

# by Walt Willis

ancient fannish maladies: 1. Twonk's Disease. 2. Annickthesia.



**APathy.** A type of lethargy to which all fans are subject from time to time, and which may in time result in the end of fandom as we know it. In the fannish continuum egoboo and fanac are related in much the same way as are matter and energy in the material universe. Fanac produces egoboo, and egoboo in turn produces more fanac, in a self-sustaining reaction. But it is important to note that it is not the destruction of one that produces the other, as is the case with matter and energy in the physical universe, but that rather the creation of one leads to the creation of the other. Conversely the destruction of one leads to the destruction of the other. If the ratio of egoboo to fanac falls below the critical level the reaction will cease to sustain itself and die. This condition is known as APathy and is the fannish equivalent of entropy. It is called APathy because the terminal phase of fandom resembles a universal APA, in which everyone writes of his own affairs and ignores everyone else. There is no recruitment; activity requirements are continually reduced; everywhere the once bright lights of fandom dim and die; it is the Universal Heat Death of fandom.

It follows I think that the Law of Conservation of Egoboo is a moral law, not a scientific one. It is that if we want fandom to continue, egoboo must never be destroyed or withheld.

**Backloggia.** Every fan editor in time accumulates a backlog of material which is not good enough to publish and which they dare not return: usually it is from personal friends or respected pros. This is a great source of distress to sensitive fans and may lead to gafia. Fortunately there is a cure, which happens to be the same as for Creeping Perfectionism (q.v.).

**Creeping Perfectionism.** Normally during the youth of a fanzine, each issue is better than the previous one. But inevitably there comes a time when this is no longer possible, and the editor is faced with the prospect of it being said that he is slipping, that his fanzine is on the skids, and similar hurtful expressions. Some prouder faneds cannot face this prospect and cease publication. The Greeks had a word for this, namely hubris, and certainly very few of their fanzines seem to have survived. There is however a simple and effective cure. It is to nominate a Guest Editor for the next issue, send him the backlog, announce a publication date and take a long holiday. (Ideally a TAFF trip.)

**Croglement.** A word invented by Dean Grennell to denote extreme astonishment, and very handy to describe the effect of his puns. One is for some reason reminded of the fact that dock leaves, which are good for nettle stings, are always to be found near nettles.

**Gijophanitis.** This is the harmless delusion that all American soldiers are science fiction fans. This ailment developed among British fans during and shortly after World War II, when the only Americans they knew were fans and the only Americans they met were soldiers. Thus it was that any American serviceman who happened to be in a hotel where a science fiction convention was being held found himself being stood drinks and invited to room parties. There were of course American servicemen in Europe who were fans, e.g. Lee Jacobs and Ellis Mills, but the person really responsible for all this goodwill was Forrest J. Ackerman who had, almost single-handed, kept British fandom supplied with science fiction, stencils and paper throughout the war. As a result the tradition developed in British fandom that Forry Ackerman was to be included in every mailing list and sent a complimentary copy of every British fan publication. This tradition was still going strong when I entered fandom in 1948, with the result that Forry was the only American to get a copy of Slant #1.

**Jacobismus.** This is a trauma named after Lee Jacobs who, at the London Convention in 1951, was refused beer in Forry Ackerman's hotel. At that period in the evolution of British fandom there was no Convention Hotel as we know it, everyone making their own arrangements. So Lee was merely a visitor in Forry's hotel and as such under British licensing laws was not entitled to drink there after hours. The harrowing course of trauma Jacobismus was described in Quandry #13, pps. 36 & 37 (Warhoon 28, pps. 77 & 78) and it made a lasting impression on me. So much so, that some 20 years later, by which time I had become a Government official in a position to influence a Government's legislative program, I quietly ensured that guests of a hotel resident could drink at all hours. Good old Lee is dead now, but I think he would have appreciated that kind of memorial.

**Kentcoreyism.** This is the name given to a state of untidiness so malignant as to interfere with fanac. The classic case is that of Shelby Vick who once sent me a handwritten letter explaining that he had lost his typewriter. In his den. The name derives from an incident during the visit by Professor Harris in 1954, when I made to show him a letter from Kent Corey and was unable to find it despite numerous unhelpful suggestions from Harris. It eventually reappeared, having been used as a bookmark, and since then objects which disappear are said by us to be in the Kent Corey file.

**Nebormalia Agitans.** This is a state of acute stress and anxiety induced by the conviction that the man next door is getting your mail. It is endemic in neighbourhoods where the fan actually meets the postman every morning and is personally handed his electricity bill, newspaper bingo advertisements and Kaleidoscope catalogues. The postman then turns away, still holding in his other hand a bundle consisting of airmail envelopes festooned with American stamps, and bursting with egoboo, large and small clasp envelopes containing fanzines with letters of comment from you, and for all you know the post-Annish issue of Vega and Tom Weber's column for your fanzine. Some fans are unable to restrain themselves from wresting these forcibly from the fellow, and in his learned monograph Through Darkest Ireland with Knife, Fork and Spoon (1954) Professor Harris recounts a harrowing incident in which a prominent fan actually accosted an unfortunate postman in the centre of the city and induced him to hand over a bundle of mail. Fortunately the cure is simple. It is to go to the Post Office and ask for a Form RDM1, for redirection of mail, and forge your neighbour's name to it. It is as well not to attempt the simultaneous interception of the mail of more than a few neighbours, lest attention be attracted by the delivery to your house of mail in sacks. If this does happen, put it about that you have failed to renew your subscription to Readers Digest.

**Stigwort's Disease.** This is a particularly insidious disease, because it has no symptoms whatsoever. It is therefore very difficult to diagnose. However for the same reason it is even more suitable than Twonk's Disease for claiming exemption from

work when a fan wants to pub his ish. But on the other hand it attracts very little sympathy from friends or relatives, despite the fact that there is no known cure and it is invariably fatal. Victims may survive for 80 or 90 years, maybe more, and then for no apparent reason-- pouf!-- out they go like a light.

Yobberment. Apparently a fate of discombobulation with extreme crogglements. It is mentioned in both editions of the Fancyclopedia in the form of a quotation from the third FAPA mailing and its discovery is attributed to Wollheim and Michel:

"I, THE Mentator Itself, call upon all heypoloyalists to rise and slice these absolte ones, slice them, write and wrothe and then-- then-- Yobber! Yes, Yobber! This is a time for stern measures.

"But first, yob the leader. Yob the pehlth iksel! The pehlth that preens and croes. The very pehlth that durst murmulate The Mentator myself! Vah! Tho we scorn with frange these attempts, yet we warn lesser sorji that things may get out of hand. So forward-- YOBBER TO THE VERY END!"

Not much is known about the longterm effects of yobberment, but fortunately recent research indicates that the Poo remains mightier. All we have to do now is find out what the Poo is.

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Yngvi sawed Courtney's boat  
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#### THIS LUSTRUM'S GOOD CAUSE

Rain is falling in Pimlico, turning to sleet. At the corner of Denbigh Street there is huddled the figure of something that used to be a human being: there is a tin cup beside it and a placard around its neck. Most passers-by avert their eyes from the spectacle of the ultimate in human misery. Others, more callous and more curious, pause to read the placard...only to reel away in horror and disgust. It says "unable to appreciate the writing of Vince Clarke and Mal Ashworth."\* Friends! Can you imagine what it must be like to be deaf to the soaring harmonies of Mal Ashworth, blind to the subtle brilliance of Vince Clarke? Would life be worth living? They say there is no cure for this most terrible of maladies, but it can at least do no harm and may give some hope if you all send this wretched creature small excerpts from your favourite articles by Mal and Vince. As Dean Grennell might have put it, be it ever so humble, there's no placebo like homeopathy.

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\* Gist of Joseph Nicholas letter in Xyster #9, ed. Dave Wood.

-----  
The louse  
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"Is not style born out of the shock of new material?" --Ascribed by Synge to Yeats

"In Europe conversation is like tennis-- you hit the ball to the other man and he hits it back-- whereas in America everybody goes on hitting his own ball."  
--Peter Fleming, quoted by John Berryman in The Freedom of the Poet

"An Empty Book is like an Infants Soul, in which any Thing may be Written. It is Capable of all Things, but containeth Nothing. I hav a Mind to fill this with Profitable Wonders."  
--Thomas Traherne, Centuries, Poems, and Thanksgivings

"Dreams! adorations! illuminations! religions! the whole boatload of sensitive bullshit!"  
--Allen Ginsberg, Howl



# THE FIVE- YEARLY SENTENCE



ROBERT  
BLOCH

THREE CHRONOLOGICAL EVENTS seem destined to go down in history -- the Thirty Years' War, the Seven-Year Itch, and Science-Fiction Five-Yearly.

My own feeling is one of empathy. For I myself went down in history -- long ago, when I was in the fifth grade -- also spelling, arithmetic, and nuclear physics. But that is another story, and much too clean to interest readers like yourself.

Let us return, instead, to a consideration of the chronologically-christened calamities listed above.

The Thirty Years' War is something I know very little about, since it occurred before my time. If you want a first-hand account, ask Walt Willis.

When it comes to the Seven-Year Itch I'm on slightly firmer ground: I've endured this phenomenon approximately nine times during my life and in another year I expect to be up to scratch again.

But the Science-Fiction Five-Yearly is something of which I can speak with authority. I have written for this publication continuously since its inception, shortly after Lee Hoffman had his sex-change operation and became a girl -- a transformation for which we are all duly grateful.

In fact fans have ample reason to be grateful to Lee Hoffman. With the exception of the Science-Fiction Five-Yearly she has never done anything to demean, demoralize, or destroy fandom. Which is pretty much like saying that Adolf Hitler was a real neat guy, aside from the Holocaust and starting World War II.

Mind you, I'm not comparing Hoffman's publication with a world war, nor implying that reading an issue of S-F 5-Y is the equivalent of being incarcerated in a concentration camp. For one thing, her publishing career went on for considerably longer than WW2 -- or even the Thirty Years' War, for that matter. And Lee Hoffman can never be accused of racism. She has always insisted that some of her best friends are fans.

Or were, before reading the Science-Fiction Five-Yearly.

By this time the intelligent reader (and I'm almost sure there's one of you out there) must be beginning to wonder just what it is about this intermittent publication which raises my hackles -- me, of all people, who was once noted for having the lowest hackles in town.

The answer can be found in the phrase employed in the preceding paragraph -- "intermittent publication."

The newspaper comes out every day, rain or shine. Time and Newsweek and TV Guide pop up weekly, most other magazines make a regular appearance each month, and there seem to be at least six new Stephen King novels published every year.

As a result these frequent and familiar fixtures of fact or fiction, arriving at their appointed moments, do little or nothing to remind us of the passage of time. The newspapers' daily disasters tend to blur into a continuum of calamity; the magazines with their weekly woes (which by all means includes the listing of television programs) come in such rapid succession that we can scarcely distinguish any elapsed duration. Waiting for a monthly magazine or the bi-monthly Stephen King book does sometimes give us a slight indication that time isn't standing still, but it's easy enough to shrug off such considerations. After all, what's a month out of our lives, more or less? And as for the King books, they're getting to be so long that they take two months to read anyway, so we haven't really lost any time at all.

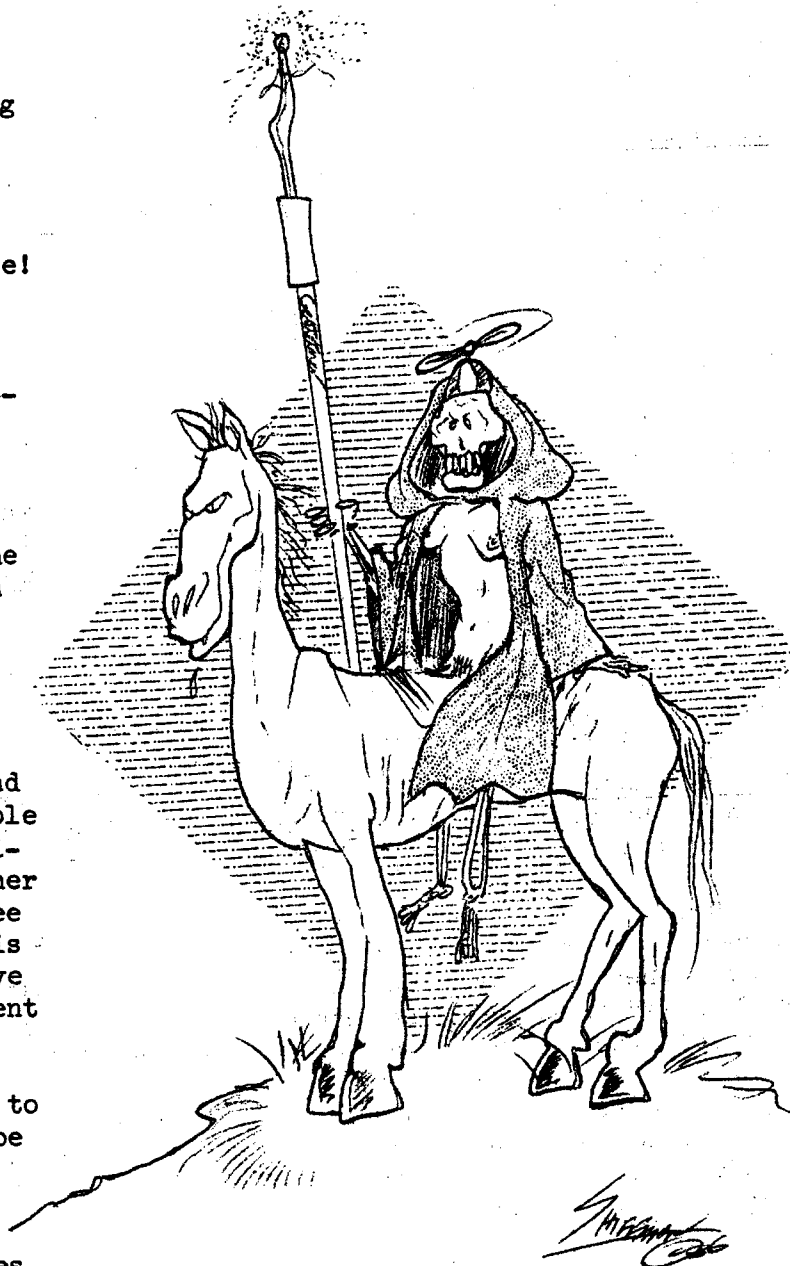
But Science-Fiction Five-Yearly is, to be sure, a horse of another color. A pale white bony nag bearing a skeleton rider, armed with the symbolic scythe of the Grim Reaper. Every five years this messenger of mortality gallops forth, and every five years I say, "Hey--wait a minute! Not another-- it can't be time yet, it's too soon!" But when I clamber down into the sub-basement and fight the rats off the piles of fanzines -- sure enough, the last issue of the Science-Fiction Five-Yearly bears a publication date five years old.

Dorian Gray had a picture in the attic. Me, I've got Science-Fiction Five-Yearly in the basement. It's things like this drove Oscar Wilde.

On the other hand, there is, I admit, a certain reassurance in it all: the magazine still comes out and I still write in. Over the incredible stretch of years, with their incredible events and non-events, it's rather comforting to know that fans like Lee Hoffman have never lost sight of this goal -- even if that goal is to drive us a little whacko with this recurrent reminder of time's passage.

As a matter of fact, I've come to look forward to the zine, and will be properly happy to read at least another eight or ten issues.

Even if they do contain articles by Bob Tucker. |||



# LAST & FIRST DOGS



OURS HAS BEEN ESSENTIALLY a philosophical age; in fact the supreme age of philosophy. Such questions as "Is it fair to throw a stick to where it can't be retrieved?" or "How many angels can dance on a tin of dogfood?"-- all of these long-debated points which have troubled previous generations have been answered. Even the runt of a litter can now give a reply which would have confounded such giants of the past as Rover CVII or Boy CCXL.

But there remains the baffling question: what happened to Man? Where in the Cosmos has he gone? It is a scentless trail. Our archaeologists, digging furiously into the midden-heaps of the Past, have discovered many tasty items, but this central conundrum remains unresolved by either hard science or philosophy.

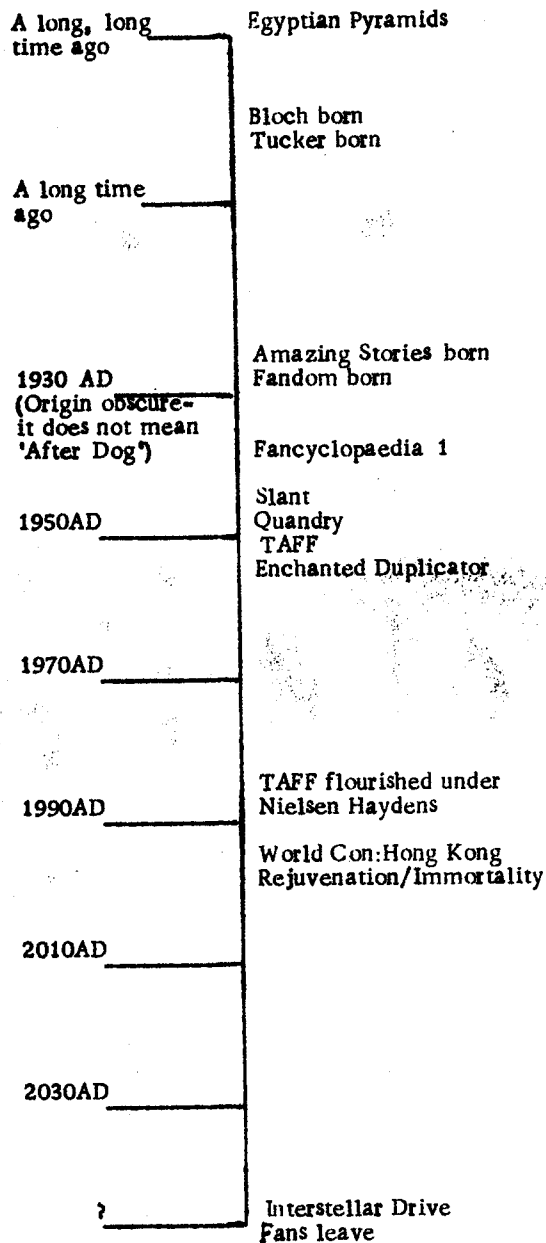
We can conjecture, of course. We know that the interstellar drive was discovered by Man many aeons ago, and recent excavations into the temple (?) known as the Ackermansion have revealed that the dissatisfaction expressed by that select breed known as Trufen was also prevalent outside their sniffing territory. Did Mankind as a whole follow the lead given by the Trufen, out into the interstellar reaches? Or did the bulk of Mankind obliterate itself in a World War after the finer spirits had left? Is the fragment relevant which bears a short inscription in Early American Fan, Who Sawed Courtney's Boat? Brutus CCCVI, the philologist, argues that this is a mistranslation or typo, and that the second word should read saved. There has been much learned discussion of this.

Yet this is a philosophical age, and whilst the practical dogs yelp and bark over fragments that survive from the past, it is left to the philosophers to sum up the sweep of history. Leaving aside the question of whether there was a Divine Creator or not, we do know that at one time there dwelt on the Earth the Trufans, the Men, and the primaeval Dog. Towards the end of the Twentieth Century-- a phrase whose origin has been lost-- it appears that the secrets of rejuvenation and immortality were discovered. Soon afterwards, within two or three hundred years, the Bickerstaff Interstellar Drive was perfected, and Trufans left for the stars. The knowledge derived from the Ackermansion excavations ceases at this point; the alleged letter from one Harry Warner Jr. which appears to have been written about this period and which mysteriously states "We passed Sirius yesterday and had to gag Willis, Shaw and the other punsters..." does not appear relevant. Brutus CCCVI has argued that the last word should read "punsters" and has attempted to knot this in with the previously-quoted "Courtney's Boat", but grave doubts remain.

So Trufans left the Earth, and the remaining "mundanes" (to use an ancient Trufan phrase) appear to have gone through a series of wars, mutations, and emigrations. When Dog arose and built our present civilisation, Man had vanished. Had they followed the pioneering Trufans? In the millions of years that have elapsed since then only the diving operations in the Sea of California and the Temple excavations in Old New York's jungles have yielded clues to the Mighty Ones of the distant past. Now, with the Sun flickering dangerously-- as forecast by an ancient cleric named Vance-- we have reconstructed the Bickerstaff Drive and will shortly follow Trufans and Men to the stars. Appended herewith are some Time Scales, based on the latest findings, which may be of interest.

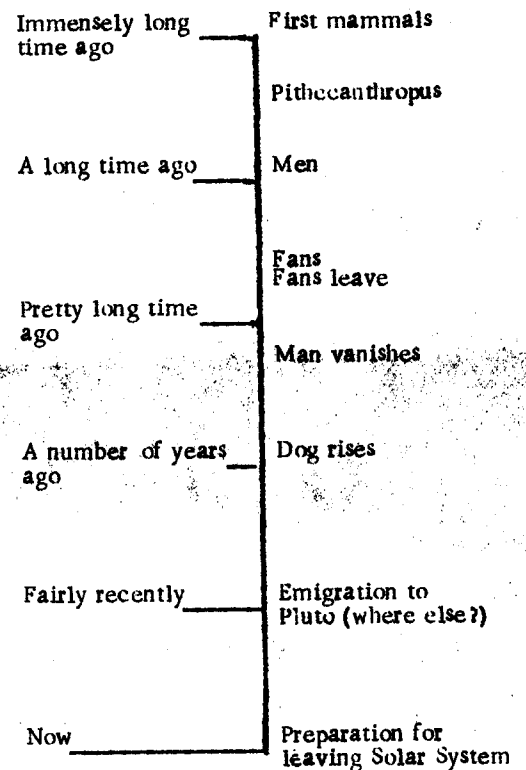
## Time Scale 4

One hundred times the preceding scale. Doubtless extremely inaccurate.



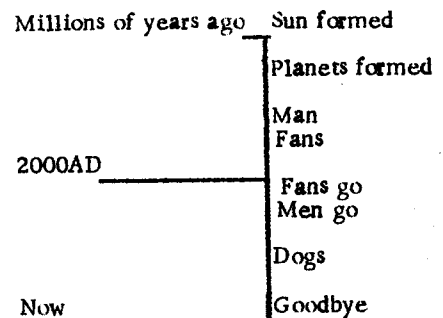
## Time Scale 5

One hundred times the preceding scale. Doubtless extremely inaccurate.

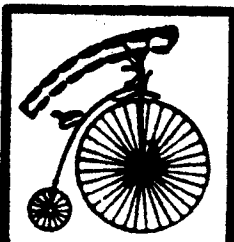


## Time Scale 6

One hundred times the preceding scale. This one's really wrong!







# SOMEWHERE NEAR PENRHYNDEUDRAETH



**DAVE LANGFORD**

THE GOOD THING ABOUT THIS freelancing is that you can declare a holiday whenever you like. The bad thing is that you don't. I dimly remember a time when my employers allowed me to take evenings and weekends off.... After calculating that we hadn't had a proper holiday for 00000110 years, I realized the computers were eating too deeply into my once sensitive and fannish soul. Hazel packed the car with luxuries (clothes, food); I added the essentials (books, booze); and we rattled off into the sunset, which is also the direction of Wales.

Toiling up through the Marches and torrid zones of bilingual road-signs, into a landscape of mountains intermittently visible between the sheep, I took notes for a long-planned but never written article on Welsh as she is wrote. The Welsh are eager to confuse the vile saes or English, but (in contrast to the Irish) are hampered by having a relatively straightforward language. Translating the town of Wrexham into Wreccsam seems mere perversity, and few saes are likely to be confused by a double-decker bws, a walk on the seaside promenad, an eighteen-hole cwrs golff, or a drink at the clwb (necessitating a visit to the toiledau). In Caernarfon (trans.: Caernarvon) Castle, the historical bits included such conundrums as William I (Y "Concwerwr") or Dapestri Bayeux. Spoken Welsh is something else, and every evening a hotel TV would gush incomprehensibly: well, almost. "Llanfairpwllgwyngyll teleffisïon gogerychwyndrobwl social security llantysiliogogogoch...."

Then the article and our fannish street credibility ended with a loud

simultaneous bang, at Portmeirion. To fandom, Portmeirion means Patrick McGoochan's resoundingly terrific 1966 series The Prisoner, and by extension its fan club's Portmeirion festivals, and the mild tedium associated with media groups which focus all their energies on a single cult object. Under that burning-glass of fanatic devotion the object seems to wither, like Star Trek actors dwindling from sequel to sequel. Yawn, snooze, and where's the Jacqueline Lichtenberg Appreciation Society when we need it? This is known as prejudice.

But: "We're coming back here," said Hazel before we'd so much as unpacked, and in defiance of all intricate forward planning we spent the rest of our week at Portmeirion. There has probably got to be a reason for this.

Firstly, despite the urgings of common sense, the place wasn't specially tricked out for the Prisoner series. Barring a few obvious items (to the best of my belief there are no sliding doors, craggy subterranean corridors or rocket launch silos) and some mild surprises (the reality is smaller, and cunning camerawork made it front on open sea rather than a mere estuary), the late Sir Clough Williams-Ellis's village really is like that. It's a colossal folly, a Gothic-Italian dream, a Disneyland of real architecture put together as the... as the fanatic of a real architect.

All is crammed into a tiny fold in the coastline, acombe which funnels down to the estuary while the dotted buildings cling to its sides and the clifftops. Near-garish colours predominate; I can think of no other context in which Hazel would reckon an arched belvedere painted pale mauve looked (somehow) right. Personally I loved the jackdaw resourcefulness: the sinister Green Dome of the series has an impressively intricate facade which turns out to have been half of a giant fireplace; the staggeringly ornate plaster ceiling which posed over us at dinner-time had been transported wholesale from some condemned country house; seven vast Ionic columns acquired on one of Sir Clough's whims (and then stored for 30 years before use) have been incorporated into the landscape, and we spent a fruitless afternoon looking for the alleged eighth. Odd salvaged gargoyles, cornices, balustrades, statues, urns, crenellations, arches and colonnades are everywhere... not to mention a brace of cannon and an errant Buddha. Even the part where we stayed (some buildings are "hotel rooms," some are shops, most are self-catering cottages) sported bas-reliefs and statue-niches from goodness knows where. The designer modestly called it his Home for Fallen Buildings.

I have a nervous feeling of evoking a mere architectural junk-heap. Actually the overall effect is weirdly integrated and witty. As you wander around, there comes a realization that there are no accidental perspectives: viewed from any angle, the place has its own daft perfection. By cunning use of the slopingcombe, a three-storey cottage called Telford's Tower dominates its corner of the skyline; a wholly non-functional "Campanile" stands even taller, and the Dome looks like that of St. Paul's. None of these is actually as big as our own perfectly ordinary Reading house, but their height is forced on you as an optical illusion. Speaking of suggestion, I hope that the innumerable and inexplicable old paintings of volcanoes which line the walls of the "Town Hall" breakfast- and dining-rooms weren't intended as a cruel allusion to the dreaded holiday tummy....

Around the village are woods big enough to get lost in (we promptly did), full of forgotten exotica (bamboo, in North Wales?) and remnants of nineteenth-century gardens--fortunately I was sufficiently out of breath not to recite the whole of Swinburne's "A Forsaken Garden" into the teeth of the salt wind. A lost beach was heaped with the endless white skeletons of sea urchins; a grim little glade offered headstones and graves, which proved to belong to a bygone someone's dogs. The Gilbert-and-Sullivan spirit of the village didn't penetrate this far, but there was the same sense of infinite remoteness from word processors and bank managers.

The funny thing about Sir Clough's fantasy world is that it's as durable as his

favourite Ionic columns--robust enough to absorb and ignore tourists, cars, all the tentacles of a mundane Outside. Portmeirion's facade is solid, with no peeling plastic or fairground impermanence. The spell extends even to the one place which does sort of drop to a different level of unreality: the Prisoner souvenir shop, lying behind the very door which in the series opened on Number 6's palatial lodgings. All was illusion: there's only one tiny room in there, containing Max Hora.

Max used to live near us in exotic Reading. A leading light of the Prisoner society, he's genuinely achieved his own fantasies. Imagine a high-tech fan offered the SF bookshop concession in the Houston control centre, or a John Norman devotee given his own bondage parlour. Max lives in Portmeirion, drives a remaindered Mini-Moke from the series, spends his winters writing booklets of Prisoner memorabilia, and in the summer flogs them to visitors. He will also sell you a "Rover" weather-balloon: mere seconds after our arrival we found him coaxing one to sail across the central piazza's ornamental water, for the nostalgic benefit of yet another visiting TV crew.

I sipped much beer with Max (fandom will always find a way), and heard the inner secrets of the tiny community of Portmeirion residents: but the demented magic of the place still didn't fade. Outside in the warm evening, the village was empty and judiciously floodlit. Mere lack of population failed to lessen it or to evoke that grey abandoned-stage-set hollowness: Hazel and I would wander happily around flower-scented paths, past many a Palladian pediment or rococo grotto, until too tired for more. Damned if I try to analyse it further. You had to be there.

As indeed we plan to be, later in the year, for a full week. Two Welsh holidays in a single year! I don't know at all how I'm going to justify it to that harsh taskmaster D. Langford who makes me work such long hours at the keyboard: but a way will have to be found, since Hazel has already made a chart and is ticking off the days.



-----  
"The passion of laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from some sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly." -- Thos. Hobbes, Treatise of Human Nature, ch. ix, pt. 13

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# WHY I NEVER WRITE ARTICLES for FANZINES

by Chuck Harris  
(hero of the people)



GET OUT THE TYPEWRITER, WIND in the paper, fit the ski-goggles and stare at the great white waste for the obligatory 20 minutes. Make the traditional start: type "I."

"What are you doing, Dad?"

"Dear daughter, I am writing a fanzine article. It's either a report on the 1986 Novacon -- which doesn't happen for another two months -- or a bit of dire warning on the perils of the English language for would-be Conspirators."

"Sounds fun; er, do you think you could drive me up to the Girl's League of Health & Beauty before you start? It's my work-out night. Please Dad."

...where was I? Right, a Novacon report.

"I dunno why we bother," said Arthur. "Conventions are so predictable nowadays, and anyway, there's only two things worth seeing in Coventry. After you've seen the concrete Godiva statue and the Kama Sutra Pop-Up book in the Bishop's bookshop you might just as well catch the next train down to civilisation again."

I don't think the bookshop really belongs to the bishop, but if it does I hope he never finds out about the pop-up book. Years ago Sue gave my dreary two-dimensional edition to St Augustine's Bring & Buy Sale. This would have been the ideal replacement: Fully Illustrated, Meticulously Detailed, Adults Only. Inside there are hundreds of earnest Indian gentlemen doing absolutely incredible things in a manner startlingly different from my familiar missionary position. And due to the cleverly contrived cutouts, if one opens and shuts rapidly, the little chaps bob up and down in a remarkably realistic fashion. It's hardly erotic but it's still fascinating to flick the pages and see all those grave-faced unsmiling acrobats working their way through the lingam limber-up exercises and then twisting, twirling, defying all the laws of gravity (as well as decency and propriety) as they spin to fulfillment.

Which is more than can usually be said for yrs trly.

"I once asked Sue about that double reverse chasse," I said. "She warned me that if I so much as bent a finger in her direction she'd call out the constabulary."

"Umm," said Arf, opening and closing the book faster and faster so that the frenzied figurines bounced madly to ecstasy and we half expected a little white speech balloon to pop up saying "Scream, you bitch." "I blame civilisation. We should never have allowed winceyette pyjamas to replace the dhoti. Mark me words, if these people had had trampolines, there'd be synchronised screwing in freefall in the



next Olympics....and now let's get the hell out of here; the manageress cometh too."

"Only browsing, dear," he said as we moved around the paydesk and onto the street again, looking for the De Vere Hotel.

"Dear one, do you know it's The Anniversary next week?"

"Anniversary...anniversary? Edgar Rice Burroughs 1st Sept, H. G. Wells 9th, Brunner 24th, Damon 19th, Cas Skelton on the 7th...should I send them all a card or something? God only knows the Burroughs and Wells addresses nowadays."

"OUR anniversary, you wally."

"Oh yeah, great...you haven't seen my correcting fluid anywhere?"

"Our 25th Anniversary, DEAR."

I already have a note in my desk diary: "Buy prezzie, order lovely bunch of flowers, take family out for top-notch, get pissed" (all of which I did in due course), but what the dear girl is trying to find out is what I'd like for a prezzie.

"It ought to be something you can keep. Would you like another ring?"

"Nope...spoil my macho image: you think I'm Liberace, maybe?"

"An identity bracelet?"

"Jesus Christ! You DO think I'm Liberace...and before you ask, the firm has already given me a fancy gold watch, cufflinks and a solid gold tie-clip engraved with the likeness of Henry the First."

"How about a gold chain, then? Lots of men at the Golf Club wear them now."

"No, no point...nobody would ever see it under my sock anyway."

"All right, smartarse, what do you want?"

"Well," I said, looking longingly at the typewriter, "what I'd really like is an ivory tower. One of those old-fashioned ones with a little room at the top just big enough for a chair and typewriter, and a bucket-on-a-string for hauling up essential supplies of gin tonic-water ice & lemon."

"Oh. Am I interrupting? Are you doing something?"

"Yes, as a matter of fact I'm practicing the tenor lead in Rigoletto which I will perform at La Scala in Milan at 8:30 tomorrow night, sharp. I am also trying to write something for SFFY, maybe something on the 'two nations divided by a common tongue' theme that DAG was talking about."

"Sorry, dear; I'll talk to you later."

I've been reading the US pulps for nearly half a century and I'm still as confused as when I started. We don't really speak the same language. We all know about the innocent Brit in LA trying to buy a couple of rubbers and his astonishment at not getting pencil erasers. If he'd asked for a packet of Kwells -- hoping to get the travel-sickness remedy sold in Britain under that name -- he would have got a US preparation for killing body lice.

"Here's the gin, the ice, the tonic-water and the lemon, dear. I'm working on

the ivory tower."

Little things like that are no more than confusing, but words like "hump" or "bang" or "french" or "knock-up" are something else again. The verb "to hump" means "to carry" -- nothing else. A "knocker-up" is a sort of human alarm clock who, for a small fee, taps your bedroom window every morning to ensure you get up in time for the first shift at the cotton mill.

"I'm sorry, but your boss is on the phone. Have you got a valid passport? You've got to go to Cologne for orientation within the next month or so. He's making up a party."

"Tell him I haven't. Tell him it's nearly midnight. Ask him why the hell this can't wait until I'm in the office tomorrow morning. And, uh, tell him nicely, hmm?"

Inside the De Vere foyer was a huge notice.

WELCOME TO THE NOVACON.

VERBOTEN:

Illicit drink, sandwiches, curious resin inhalants, hookahs, syringes, razor blades, photographs of Ted White are FORBIDDEN. Lewd women, bare feet, bare anything else at all, sleeping bags, commies, scientologists, and hurtful remarks about the Committee or the hotel staff are NOT PERMITTED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. Mandatory body searches for all would-be attendees.

Signed Hauptmannfuhrer Tony Berry  
Chairman & Convenor

"Wow," said Arthur. "Whee," said Chuch.

"I never imagined Tony meant it," I said. "I thought it was just talk about raising standards and cleaning up the image. I never dreamed the iron fist would become reality."

Arthur nodded at the crash barriers dividing the foyer into separate aisles, each with an inspection point at the far end. "It looks just like a Safeway's checkout," he said. "I shudder to think of all those questing hands probing our fair bodies."

We edge our way down the aisle staffed by Avedon and finally reach the check-in table.

"Uh uh," said Avedon. "Not here, Father. I lay one tiny finger on that zipper and every fanzine in Puerto Rico will scream 'Incest!' at us."

She beckoned to the girl in the next aisle. "Kate, Kate honey, could you give a thorough, intimate and meticulous body search to Arthur and my Daddy?"

"I already have," she said wearily. "Three times. I don't know what's worse, me searching them, or them searching me while I'm searching them. Last time I thought he was getting -- I mean becoming -- aroused, but it was only his illegal sl-e-ping bag stashed in a very odd place. The time before he tried to convince me he had to wear this special truss shaped like a bottle of Gordon's Gin. I tell you, yesterday I was a respectable young girl, and today I'm a sex toy for 6th Fandom." She snorted. "Fun, huh?"

Avedon thought for a moment. "Right," she said. "Move over two aisles and try the Debbi Kerr experience and then..."

"Dad, can you come here a moment? The toilet bowl's blocked up again."

"Fanny" is an especially dangerous word. Somewhere in mid-Atlantic the word suffers a sea-change and the geographical location moves 180 degrees. In your US argot it refers to a lady's bottom and is just (if barely) mentionable in polite society. In England it becomes her pudenda, her secret garden of delight and no gentleman...

"Dad, it's overflowing."

I have to go now. In our next issue, November 1991, I'll do a piece on English usage and maybe a Novacon report. Separately.

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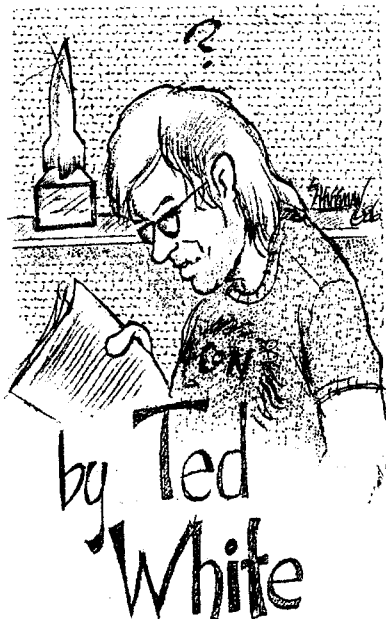
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# The Purple Fields of Fanzine (part II)

the serial that the  
entire "Justice"  
System could  
not repress!



IT WAS HARD TO DEAL with. He knew that. Every time he thought he understood the dynamics involved, something else would occur -- something unexpected.

Take that business with Don Vegas, for instance: what could you make of that?

Vegas put out VAGUE, a fanzine that had started out as a personalzine -- hell, a letter-substitute, one or two sheets. But he put it out so frequently, sometimes three or four a month, that it had generated its own momentum. Soon he was printing letters, and it was a dozen pages. Some of the letters were thinly disguised articles -- fans quickly learned the kinds of letters Don liked to print -- and from there it was an easy step to the monthly genzine of 20 pages which VAGUE became: an inevitable evolution.

He didn't begrudge Don his success; hell, he'd been a part of it, one of VAGUE's first regular contributors. He liked VAGUE, he liked it a lot. The arrival of a new issue made his day. (He'd put it aside and read all the rest of his mail first -- sometimes he even answered the rest of his mail, or some of it, first -- saving VAGUE to be savored, saving it to be read slowly and completely, from its first pages to its last, never egoscanning it, never paging ahead.) Vegas was a damned good editor, and he crafted VAGUE. You had to read it carefully and thoroughly to get everything out of it, to grok its fullness. He admired Don for that, an admiration that held not one twinge of envy or jealousy.

All he wanted was to be part of the fanzine -- for his letters to be quoted in the early issues, for his pieces to appear in the later, genzine issues. He worked hard at that. He'd figured out that what he wrote for VAGUE should be linked to the fanzine, an organic part of it. He worked in references to topics which appeared perennially in the fanzine, alluded to running jokes, and took for his themes incompletely-realized thoughts expressed by others in earlier issues (though rarely those of Don Vegas himself). At the same time, he avoided incestuousness -- you could read one of his pieces from VAGUE in a fanthology and still enjoy it.

So it was incomprehensible to him when Vegas cut him off VAGUE's mailing list.

He'd noticed that VAGUE #30 was late, and put it down to either a problem with the mails (never too dependable), or Vegas's own schedule. Hell, it was amazing how regularly Don pubbed his ish; you had to be superhuman to maintain a monthly schedule for so long.

Then he received another fanzine and discovered within its pages a review of VAGUE #30. Stunned, he dashed off a hasty note to Vegas: "What happened to my copy of V#30? Just saw it reviewed in Temple's BELLES LETTRES, ferghodsake, and I never knew you even traded with that crudzine...."

Vegas didn't reply directly, but in a letter in Arnie Farber's SPOT he said, parenthetically, "... (some elitist



assholes, who consign zines like BELLES LETTRES to the purgatory of 'crudzine', can't even figure out why they're off my mailing list)..." -- which seemed to be addressed obliquely to his own note.

It made no sense to him. They'd been friends, ferghodsake. It's true they'd rarely exchanged personal letters, but he'd been one of VAGUE's most frequent contributors, often in response to topics Vegas himself had suggested. There had been a sense of fannish kinship, dammit, an implied warmth between them. Had he just imagined that?

Then came the open attack.

Bob Miller had never been one of his friends. They'd always rubbed each other the wrong way, and Bob had often sneered at him as "one of those jerks who has no life outside fandom, obsessed with being a big frog in a small pond, one of life's failures vegetating in the fannish asylum." But that was typical of Miller: Bob always put down what he considered to be "excessive fannishness," and he had few friends in fandom himself.

Significantly, Vegas had never been one of Miller's friends. Indeed, Don had once written an editorial in VAGUE about "fans like Bob Miller, who make a career of putting down their fellow fans. You have to wonder why Miller himself remains at all active in fandom. Is his cynicism just a schtick?"

So Don Vegas's attack on him in the pages of Miller's ARSEWIPE came as a complete surprise. In the piece Vegas excoriated him as a liar -- by juxtaposing lines he'd written at widely separated times, from totally different contexts -- and as a "fannish snob who thinks most fans are beneath him." Vegas apologized for having associated with him for so long -- "I was completely fooled by his sycophantism, although it embarrasses me to admit it" -- and said that as far as he, Don Vegas, was concerned, fannish ostracism was the only answer for a fan who thought he was "too good for the rest of us."

He was shocked. Shocked, and hurt. What did it all mean? Why was Vegas doing this to him? He wracked his memory -- and the carbons of his correspondence -- for an answer, and found none.

Then he rallied. He began writing to his other correspondents, his fannish peers. "What do you make of this?" he asked. "Is Vegas off his rocker, or what?"

He received few replies to his letters, and no support. One of the letters he did receive angrily denounced him for attacking Vegas's sanity: "It's just like you to decide that anyone who doesn't agree with you is insane. I suppose you'll say something equally rabid about me, now...."

Stunned and embittered by the experience, he decided to gafiate for a while.

\* \* \*

In a room under the lunar surface, only a short distance from the white picket fence that delineated the boundary of his property, others watched him on television monitors. As technicians maintained the illusions of Terran gravity and environment, their superiors checked the computers which generated his incoming mail.

"This new program has created some interesting reactions," said one man. "But do we wish him to lose all interest in this 'fandom'-construct?"

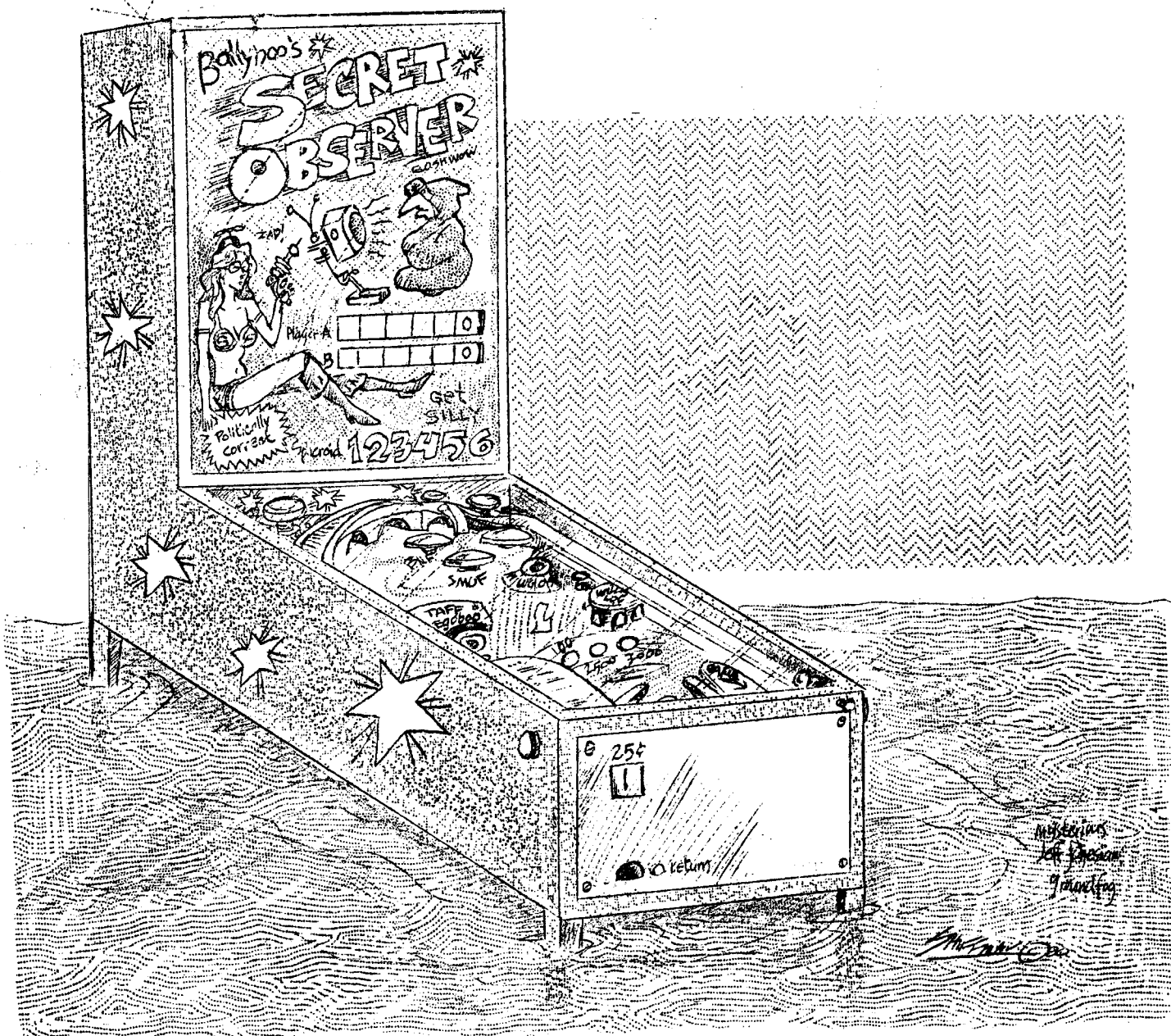
"Of course not," replied the second. "But he was slipping into an easy routine. Boredom would have followed. This has jolted him out of that. We'll let him stew a little longer -- then we'll feed him some support, pick him up again."

"The timing will be tricky," the first said. "We don't want to mess up on this." He glanced upward. "We don't want to get them upset."

The other looked sharply at him, then involuntarily looked up, his eyes seeing beyond the room's opaque ceiling. A brief shudder passed over his body. "Don't even think of it!" he said.

- To be continued in 1991 -

Ted White, 9/28/86

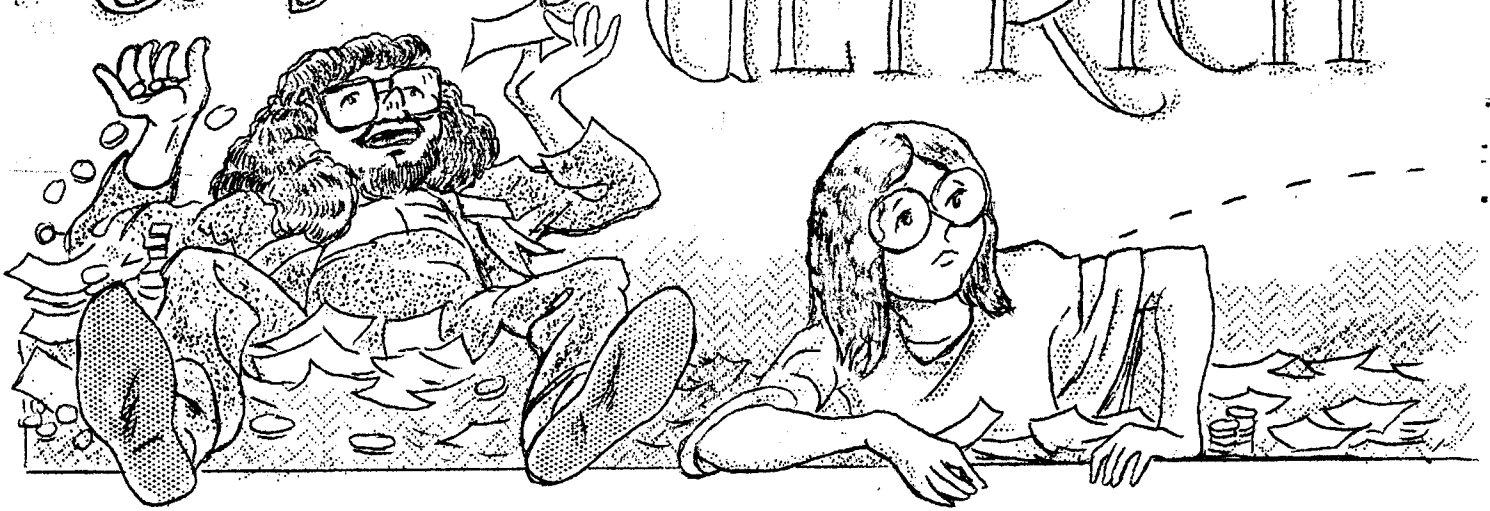


#### LETTER COLUMN

Bob Earl Butz  
10520 Mishawaka  
Pearl City, AK  
64758

12 November 1982: Dear Mr. Hoffman: Thanks for sending me Science-Fiction Five-Yearly, I guess, but you should oughta know that us modern fans don't much go for that artificial, forced Sixth Fandom Fandom stuff any more. You sound like a promising young fellow and if you take my advice you'll work to develop your own voice instead of slavishly imitating all those olde-timey Sixth Fandom fans like Charles Burbee or D. West. Look at some good American fanzines like RATS IN CREAM SAUCE or DUMBER BY HALF. See how they don't rely on hoary old [cont. p. 72]

# The Fan Family GET RICH



"WHO WAS THAT ON THE PHONE, Linda?"

"Oh, er, um...I'll tell you in a minute. I think it's a matter for our weekly general business meeting later tonight. Switch the video back on and let's carry on with the film programme."

Life wasn't always easy for the Fan Family. Try as they might to schedule their non-mundane time in a manner as close to a convention as possible, the real world kept creeping in. Phone calls were tolerated as a link to outside faanish interests, but it was a nuisance to get one in the middle of the film programme.

"Was that Pam Wells? I thought we'd sent her a copy of the weekly HomeCon programme so she'd know when our free time was scheduled. She knows better than to call during the film programme."

"Yeah, it was Pam, but it was important news. I'll tell you after the film, during the business meeting. Just get on with the video."

Greg flipped the VCR to "play" and Forbidden Planet rolled on. Both had seen the film hundreds of times and were truly bored with it but it was a Faanish Classic and as such had to be tolerated. An hour later they bid farewell once again to Robbie the Robot and turned off the TV before getting out their notes for the WGBM, the last event of the night.

"OK, meeting in progress. Let's cut out all the minutes and attendance crap and get straight to the new business. What did Pam have to say on the phone?"

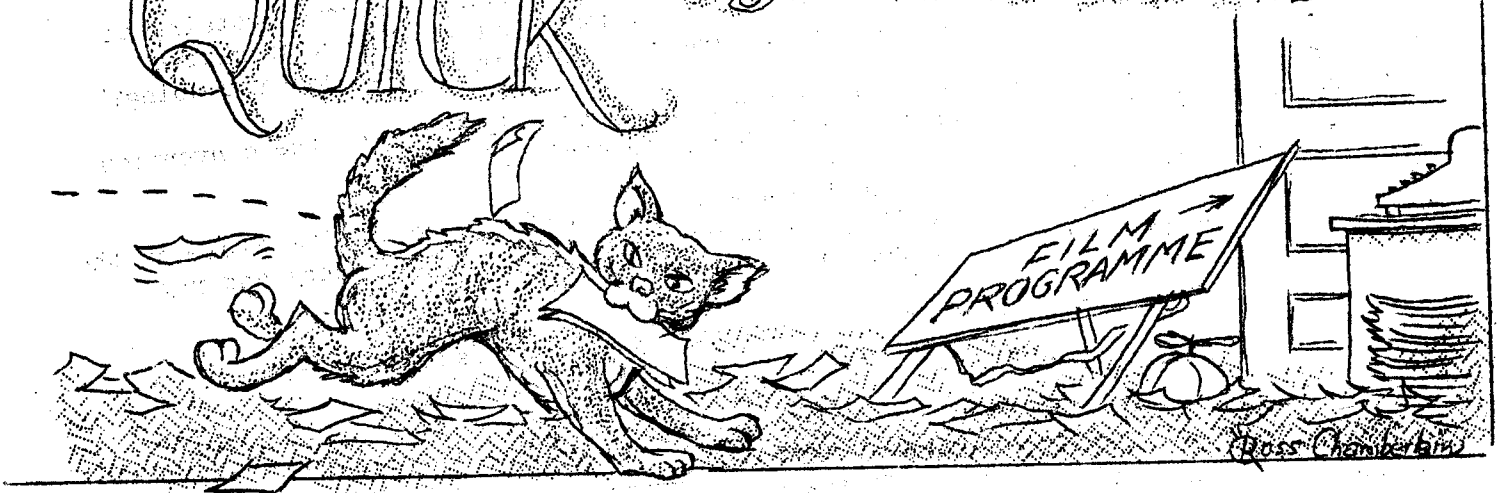
"Well, it seems Alun Harries will be moving to a new job in the London area and is looking for a room. She thought we might be able to rent him one of our spares until he can find a place of his own."

"Our spare room, eh? I dunno. I mean, Alun is a good guy and I'd like to help him, but is he faanish enough? You know I hate to sound like an elitist snob here, Linda, but we have chosen to live the faanish life: restructuring our homelife in a convention format, converting our dining room into a replica of a hotel con bar and lounge, setting up our living room as a miniature programme-hall...."

"Yeah, and don't forget the hotel room door on our bedroom complete with room number, lock and only one key."

# QUICK

by Linda Pickersgill



"Right, and we've programmed all our non-mundane time for our many fannish activities. Does Alun know what it means to live a faanish life? Can he cope? Does he have the stamina? the will? the credentials?..."

"He has twenty quid a week to pay for the room."

"...the courage? the faith? the...twenty quid?"

"Yeah, Pam says he'll pay up to twenty quid a month and that's less than he'd expect to pay for most flats in London."

"Hmmm...that's eighty pounds a month. And he'd have to buy all his own food and prepare his own meals, right?"

"Of course."

"All right. I move that we take in Alun Harries as our new HomeCon member for the fee of twenty quid a week."

"I second it."

"All in favor?"

Linda raised her hand and Rastus flicked his tail in a positive way.

"Against?"

Ant'ny padded out of the room and was heard digging in the cat litter tray.  
"I'll take that as two for and one against. I'll call Alun and make him the offer."

\* \* \*

And so it was that HomeCon gained its first -- but not only -- new member. Within a few weeks Nigel Richardson, the Joy Boy of Yorkshire found a job in London and for another twenty quid a week took the other bed in the spare room. Pretty soon Michael Ashley joined his Chicken Brothers in London and for five quid a week was allowed to crash on the floor. Soon after that Steve Higgs along with wife Leah and little baby Jophan were forced to flee Reading for greener pastures and for a mere thirty quid a week were granted the entire second spare room.

"Greg, we've got to do something. Things are starting to fall apart around



here. The Chicken Brothers have started their own alternative program upstairs and Leah has requested that we provide a creche. You know that we find alternative programming ideologically unsound. Greg...are you listening? What are you doing?"

Greg looked up from the old duplicator box he was using to keep the convention membership money in. "Huh? What? Did you say something?"

"Greg! We're supposed to be having a panel discussion here on 'The State of the Con: Is All Well on the Home Front?', remember? Now stop counting money and pay attention. I asked, are the Chicken Brothers ideologically sound?"

"Sound? Of course they're sound. They pay up full in cash every Friday, no problem. It's terrific. Just look at all this money."

"That's not the point, Gregory. I'm worried about the faanish life we're supposed to be living. Last night we scheduled Alien on the film programme and only Rastus and I turned up. You were off taking a bath and the Chicken Brothers were holding a disco upstairs."

"Yeah, yeah, OK, OK. Listen, I got a phone call today...."

"No. Not another fan moving to London."

"Not quite. This is even better. Some Canadian woman called and she's touring Britain with her local fan group. They wanted some suggestions about places to stay and I told them they could stay here. And they'll pay £5 per head per night. Can you believe it?"

"Wonderful. And how many are in this group?"

"Only six."

"Six! Where are we ever going to put six fans? They are fans, aren't they, Greg?"

"Of course they're fans. We're living the Faanish Life, reeember? Now calm down; I've got this all figured out. We'll put them in the duplicator room. With the duplicator and all the accessories out of the way we can build two triple bunks along the walls. It's perfect."

"And where will the duper go?"

"We'll put it in the kitchen for now. Don't worry. It's only for six weeks. Think of the money we'll be getting. We may even be able to afford that tabletop photocopier you've always fancied."

"Really? Do you think so? Will we really have that kind of money?"

"Linda, we're making a bomb here." He dipped his hand into the box and brought out a wad of bills. Ant'ny lept up to Greg's lap and swatted a fiver out of his hand. Rastus picked this up in his little kitty mouth and the two ran out of the room through the back cat flap.

"What the hell was that about?"

"I dunno," said Greg. "They've done it a couple of times now. Ghu knows what they're doing with the money. Anyway, don't worry about it. I've rescheduled our weekend programme. We're cutting out all films, fanzine reviews and loc sessions

and we'll be building bunks instead."

"Building bunks! Greg, that's...that's...that's mundane."

"Think of it as an investment in our faanish future. Remember the photocopier."

"Oh, all right. Let's get on with it."

\* \* \*

"I don't believe it. I just don't believe it."

"What's the matter, Lin?"

"Have you tried getting into the kitchen lately?"

"No."

"You can hardly move. There's a queue out the back door of people waiting to use the duplicator. I want to run off my apazine. The deadline was yesterday and I promised Hazel that it was in the post."

"Did you take a number?"

"Do what?"

"You gotta have a number to use the duplicator. I'm afraid that Higgins, Richardson, and Wells are ahead of you."

"Pam Wells! What's she doing here?"

"Oh, I forgot to tell you. HomeCon is proving to be such a popular focus for fannish events that we've started selling day memberships."

"You're joking. Greg, you've got to be kidding. How could you?"

"Calm down, will ya? We're getting a fiver for every head that walks through the door. Say, I wonder if that means we get ten pounds for Rich Coad's two-headed boy?"

"Greg, that's terrible. You can't just keep thinking money."

"Do you want to keep thinking photocopier?"

"Poot. Where do I take a number?"

\* \* \*





"Greg! Greg...where are you? I can't...pardon me...I can't...excuse me... I can't find you. Greg, where...oh, get out of my way, dammit. Who are all you people?"

"I should ask you the same thing. You're not wearing a con badge."

"Badges? Badges? I don't need no steenkin' badge, I live here. And you don't. Who are you? And where's Greg?"

"If you mean the con chairman, he's upstairs knocking a hole in the

wall. I'm from the Central Texas Fan Group and my friends and I have been sent over here to scout out the British fan scene before the worldcon so that we'll know what kind of femmefans will be available and what to expect from the room parties. The con chairman said that there'd be room for the twelve of us during our London stay as soon as he finished knocking a hole in the wall. And for a reasonable price as well -- only five of these pound things per head and...say! Did you see that? A cat just ran by with a bunch of money in its mouth. Hey, guys, did you see that?"

Pushing past the herd of Texans Linda raced up the attic stairs, where she met Greg on the way down.

"Did you see Rastus run by? The damned animal grabbed more money out of the money box and just ran off with it."

"What the...what's that hole in the wall? What are you doing?"

"Oh, I figured that if we could get into the attic space we could convert it into a dorm to sleep the Texans. Uh, didn't I tell you about the Texans?"

"No you did not. Oh, look at that mess. Greg, you can't expect twelve people to sleep in there. It's dusty and old."

"They won't feel a thing after the bheer-tasting party we're having tonight. As long as they all roll over in their sleeping bags at the same time I don't foresee any difficulties. Neat, huh?"

"No, it's not neat. Oh, Greg, what's happening? Our programming is all shot to hell. I can't concentrate on any fanac, I can't get near the duplicator, the bathtub stays full of iced bheer and by the time I get to read any fanzines that come through the door they've been passed around by a dozen people first. Do you know that I can't even get near the typewriter? The cats keep hovering over it, playing with the on-off switch. Gregory. OUR FAANISH LIFE IS RUINED."

"Linda, I just don't understand you. The money is simply rolling in and soon we'll have enough for the photocopier and a word processor with a spelling corrector for you. Isn't that faanish enough?"

"Oh, all you're thinking about is money money money. Even the cats have gone

money mad. What are they up to?"

"I've no idea. Here, come grab hold of this board and help me pry it loose."

"This is ridiculous. We can't just keep thinking about material gain when our faanish credibility is at stake."

"Who cares about faanish credibility when you can make a bundle of...."

"STOP! That's it. I can't believe what I'm hearing. I'm quitting the con, Greg. I'm...I'm...I'm gafiating."

"Hand me the hammer before you go, will you?"

\* \* \*

"There's a visitor to see you, Mr. Pickersgill."

"Uh?"

"Greg, it's me. Hi, love, I came as soon as I could. The doctor told me it wasn't too bad -- just a broken leg, a few cracked ribs and a ten-stitch gash over your eye where you fell on the duplicator. Your hands are just fine, though, and you'll be pleased to hear that he feels that you'll be typing again in no time."

"What...what happened? I was moving the last of the sleeping bags into the attic when there was a loud crash and...oh, no. Don't tell me..."

"Yes, dear, the ceiling fell through. Luckily most of the HomeCon guests were out at the local Indian restaurant for the banquet so no one else was hurt."

"That's just wonderful news. Cheers me right up."

"The only real damage, other than to yourself of course, was to the dining room and kitchen."

"How could I have let this happen -- the fans, the flat, the money! My Ghu, the money! What's happened to the money? Is it safe? Can I see it?"

"Don't fret; I've got everything under control. All the fans have moved on to other cons or lodgings. I've got a construction crew out at the flat this very minute starting on repairs. The money you've been collecting will pay for just about all of it. Isn't that neat?"

"What? You mean all of it? All of my money? Gone?"

"I'm afraid so."

"Well. What can I say."

"Not much, really. I think this has been a great lesson passed on to us, love. An act of cosmic justice from Ghu or Roscoe or whatever faanish deity you believe in."

"Do you mean a lesson like 'money is the root of all evil', or that material greed can lead you astray from the faanish path, that true peace and harmony can only be obtained through living the faanishly ideologically correct life?"

Good lord, no. Don't be absurd. I mean a lesson like 'never underestimate the mind of a devious cat.' You know, I found where Rastus and Ant'ny were taking the

money."

"What's up?"

"I followed them out of the house this morning after they swatted a fiver from my hands. They were keeping the money in an old Whiskas cat food tin in the back alley. I also found a peculiarly typed note that said 'Fifty pounds of your best Scotch salmon'. Where do you think they got that from?"

"I give up."

"Yeah, it's a real mystery."

"Linda...about the money you found. Does this mean we still have some?"

"Well, yes and no. There was over a hundred quid in the tin. The cats were pretty pissed off when I took it, but I figure I used it for a worthy cause."

"You mean you've spent it already?"

"Well, I was going to surprise you but I might as well tell you now. I bought us a new second-hand electric duplicator and a whole new supply of paper, ink, and stencils. I thought that when you got back home you and I might...well...that we might....pub an ish."

"I...I...I..."

"I know. You're speechless. I did it all for our little fan family. The sooner we try again, the better. Why, look, here's the attendant with your breakfast. It's little eggy-weggies, dear."

"And greasy bacy-acon."

"That's right."

"Triffic."



ASS-  
ENDS

(Words from the Subeditors)

FAIRWAY VIEW: This past week I've been living in dreams a lot. I blame it all on Eli Cohen (well-known demigafiate), and his and Linda Gerstein's recent party. I don't know what was in the onion dip--onions, probably, and that noted hallucinogen, beef stock--but I haven't been quite in the real world since. My life has been lived on the edge: grave danger and thrilling wonders. Tuesday, I was almost run over by one of New York's kamikaze taxi-drivers while lost in a reality of my own. The Big City is a place of excitement and rare delight when you're not looking where you're going.

My night dreams have been a bit strange, too. No, you haven't been appearing there, but maybe that person right behind you. They look just a bit familiar.

I'm not about to detail those classics, Stu's Dreams of Yesteryear, like the one about Joan Vinge, Ben Zuhl, the President's daughter, and the orange juice, nor the more obscure one about the Revolutionary War battle fought around the Queensboro Plaza elevated station, nor the recent one about bringing peace to East and West through guacamole.

But last night, boyoboy, I had such a dream. This was after innumerable hours bent over a light-scope in the service of Truth, Justice, and SFFY. I'd finally gone off to bed, leaving the fanzine cover barely begun. Knowing when to go home is like finally understanding that Lin Carter and Angela Carter aren't married to each other. It comes in a great flash of enlightenment: y'know, their stuff is nothing alike...

Enclosed in a wrapping of frigid blanket, I watched the room frost over, a miniature blizzard in the area of the bookshelves blowing out to encompass the entire apartment. A Saint Bernard with a cooler of Pepsi slung around its neck came out from under the bed and poured me a tall cool glass. You know you're a BNF when even in your dreams strangers pour you a tall cool glass of Pepsi without your asking. The Saint Bernard explained that he was my guide to the Otherworld, which I thought was kinda cool although I preferred something a little less sectarian. Not knowing any secular humanist breeds, however, we decided to hang out together for a while. I put on the new Christine Lavin album for him while I got dressed. He seemed to like it, so I gave him the address of J & R Discount Records by City Hall and then left the rest to him. Indeed, left all of him, for soon I found myself at the edge of a muddy field, alone and with no notion of what to do. But Dave Hartwell was there, in a pair of day-glo tartan pants (Clan MacFreak or MacFilmore) and a Ken Fletcher cartoon necktie. He told me that Jon Singer said hello, and that we had to cross the mud to get to the past. I was naturally appalled.

"What! David, I can't do that. These are my new shoes! Why do I always have to walk in the mud when I have new shoes?" Dave told me that I had no choice, so we crossed. I tried to walk on the muddy surface's top only, so as not to ruin my shoes again.

Then we were in Australia in 1944. I'd been disappointed to miss Aussiecon because of my operation, but Western Australia in 1944 was a bit on the ridiculous side. I think that Lucy Huntzinger was there too, but only for a minute. I didn't see her for the rest of the dream. I was walking down the street into a public park when I realized that this was the alternate Australia of the novel I've been meaning to write. The park was the "Israel Zangwill Memorial Park"; this was the world where Western Australia had been colonized by territorial Zionists and was now the Aussie state of Zion. This was the city of Herzlton, the alternate-world Perth. Even in my dream, this touched my sense of wonder: goshwowoboyoboy.

A band in a gazebo was playing a klezmer version of "Waltzing Matilda." The Great War memorial had some benches in front of it. I sat down to contemplate the inscriptions on the stone. My maternal grandfather's name was down as having been killed at Gallipoli. This made me depressed and I cried, and the sky became a deep cobalt blue. A zeppelin floated by, with a London double-decker bus towed behind. I found this peculiar and laughed, and the sky lightened again.

A policeman in the uniform of the Shomrim, the Zion State Constabulary, walked up to me. "Excuse me, sir, but we're arresting all out-time visitors today. Could you come with me, please?" I went along to an outback kibbutz where I was interviewed



by a red-tab officer of the Territorials. He wanted to have me prove that I was from a future. I looked through everything in my shoulder-bag. Unfortunately, the only thing with a date on it was the new SCIENCE-FICTION FIVE-YEARLY. I handed it to him. It was obvious that he was anticipating some amazing sci-fi world-of-the-future magazine with three-dimensional color illustrations and energy-field binding. He seemed a little disappointed.

"Hey, what's the story with this magazine? It's just mimeographed--we can do that now!" This is when Fred Haskell rescued me with his flying guitar.

Have you noticed that some non-fans just never understand about fanzines? [-Stu]

REPORT ON THE ONGOING PLOT: As he recently revealed in his editorial for SFFY #7, [p & t nh] Dan Steffan's publication of that issue was only an incidental part of his vast, all-encompassing<sup>1</sup> plot to flatten fandom beneath himself and become its Rilly Supreme Being. For those of you who have not yet received #7, Dan explains there how he had some sort of illuminating experience at the 1980 Noreascon--white light, sourceless music, strange numinous figures appearing before him to dispense advice (among other things, they told him to publish something called PONG)--which he identifies as the genesis of his ambition.. We have seen Dan Steffan at worldcons, and we believe that he is telling the truth.

From there it's no great leap to the conclusion that he's succeeded. Dan Steffan is in fact fandom's Rilly Supreme Being, and much that was previously unclear now makes sense. Consider the ontological argument: Given the frequency of fans' alluding to the "person(s) who run fandom", and/or accusing various parties of trying to run fandom, it logically follows that some such entity must actually exist in order to give rise to the idea. (Cf. Aquinas, "My Good Buddy God," in A BIRD UP YOUR EAR #4.) Someone is running fandom, and there's a certain aesthetic...consistency of tone...in thinking that it's Dan Steffan. Besides, he's already copped to it and won't argue with us.

"But," as Gary Farber, Master of Fannish Pilpul, would doubtless interject if he were here instead of off somewhere in Brooklyn having Thanksgiving dinner at his mother's house, which is why we're doing his lines for him, "you have merely established the necessary existence of someone who is trying to run fandom, and god knows why he or she is doing it." Gary frequently affects to be blasé about such matters, mostly because he used to run fandom himself. He gave up on the project, he says. Gary says a lot of things.

"Aha!" we rejoinder rejoinderishly. He has fallen into our logical trap; it is all a setup, and we will for once win an argument with Gary while he is off in Brooklyn. Hope yer mother's turkey was worth it, har har. Obviously, if Dan Steffan were only trying to become fandom's Rilly Supreme Being, his maneuverings would still be visible. But the last fanac we saw Dan engage in--so long ago that it's been written up in RUNE--involved spending about six hours trying to get Reddi-wip out of his sinuses. If that was a fannish power-grab it displayed an almost unthinkable subtlety of approach: hardly his style. Ergo, it is certain that Dan has in fact had his way with all fandom. QED.

Furthermore! Why else, in the dying days of PONG, did we suddenly begin to receive urgent communications from all corners of the aether, instructing us to undertake the manifestly loony task of publishing a small-fast-frequent-regular fanzine in its stead? With the result, mind you, that we're spending our weekends cranking out IZZARD (Over Two Years Late! The Fanzine That Ate Washington Heights!) while Mr. Steffan lounges about in Washington D.C., applying soothing draughts of lactose to his much-abused nose, and his erstwhile co-editor, Ted "Theodore" White, pursues a lifestyle more sedentary still. And why did God leave an electric Gestetner 320 on a sidewalk in the neighborhood of the U.N., if he didn't intend us to print SCIENCE-FICTION FIVE-YEARLY on it? Our lives are acted upon by mysterious forces.

Actually, the mysterious forces initially employed John Carl for their purposes,

<sup>1</sup> (breath-taking, mind-boggling, eye-rattling, pulse-pounding, fingernail-biting, compound of a noun and the present participle of a verb to form an adjective, earth-shattering...)

possibly because he was wandering around aimlessly in that neighborhood at the time. This was during the period after he'd left Seattle to come live in New York, but before he left again to work undercover for the CIA. Once he'd phoned to see if we wanted the Gestetner and then brought the thing uptown by cab, and we'd paid off the fare plus the horrendous bribe John had had to promise the cabbie to persuade him to transport a heavy, ink-laden piece of machinery on the car's upholstery, and we'd kicked John out with his reward--a subway token, clutched in his sweaty paw--we settled down to get intimate with the mimeo. And rediscovered an ancient fannish verity: The Enchanted Duplicator is the one with the trufan out hunting up a replacement for its silkscreen. The allegorical significance of this is too familiar to remark upon, so also with the perpetually-clogged ink gun; fandom is just Like That some days.

The gunk on the gears called for more ingenuity. The discovery came as a shock to us; in all our years in fandom we'd never seen anything quite like the greasy, paraffinoid, queasy-yellow crud that Person or Persons Unknown had poured all over the gears. We blew the coverplates off this scandal, letting it stand naked to the merciless light of day, and schpritzed the gears unstintingly with a plant-mister filled with ditto fluid. And it ran, after a fashion, until that bleak day when the machine let out a grinding burp! and started running backwards.

Ah, but this is a digression, and here too the true allegorical meaning of events is too clear to require our explication. But consider, in its light, the fact that it was Dan Steffan who finked out of the 1984 TAFF race, which led directly to the chain of events that resulted in our inheriting TAFF plus enough fanpolitical headaches to choke a quorum of smofs. It was Dan Steffan who shook the hatful of name-slips at the 1986 Corflu, when Terry Carr drew Teresa's name. The concept of "Guest of Honor" abruptly acquired a new complexion minutes later ("Aside from the honor and the glory of the thing," Teresa said, "it's a lot like getting pied,") and she was driven to deliver a give-'em-hell GoH speech that spoiled forever her carefully-cultivated pose as Harmless Dupe. In all the crucial turning points of our recent fannish career, in fact, the hand of Dan Steffan can be detected somewhere behind our heads, making surreptitious bunny ears.

But what is the purpose of it all? Dare we ask? -- we murmur to ourselves, as we watch fandom's erratic gyrations and reflect that Dan Wants It This Way. In his position as Supremo of that all-powerful fannish cabal known in dark taverns and bazaars from Van Nuys to High Holborn Street as "The Guys," it may be that he's marked us out as the suckers most likely to take this "fanac" biz off his hands. Having forged us with IZZARD, hammered us into shape with TAFF, and tempered our cutting edge in a bath of cream pie, his final act has been to distantly manipulate us into publishing SFFY while he consolidates his position as Rilly Rilly Supreme Being. Unto himself he gathers the power and the glory that is fandom--the six-thousand-person Worldcons, the endless flow of barely readable fanzines, the flotsam and jetsam of cons and house parties from coast to coast, from Australia to Sweden, from Edmonton all the way to the (whisper it) mysterious Carribean; the endless politicking, back-breaking unpaid labor, worries and hassles...

Amen. So be it.

Many are called, but few are chosen; fixing the mimeo seems more our speed anyway. It now spins in the right direction again. That's enough. We walk softly, and try not to talk to any strange burning bushes. [—p & t nh]

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