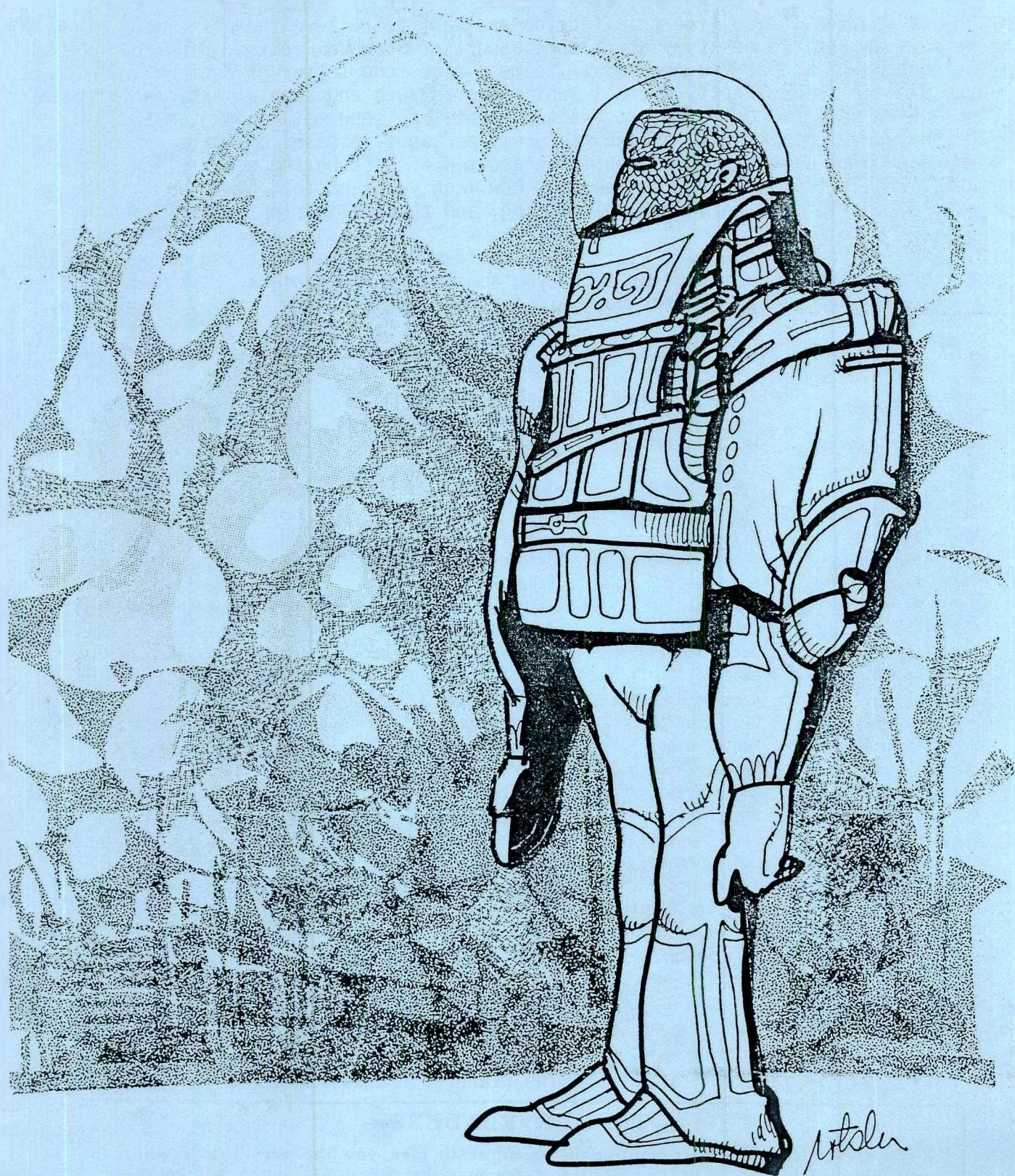


**...ANOTHER FAN'S
POISON**



BOB TUCKER ROBERT BRIGGS HARRY WARNER. JR.

...Another Fan's Poison is edited and published by Curt Phillips - a humble Fan of humble means who lusts for adventure, fanac, and Hugos far above his station. This is being sent to about 150 fans free of charge in the hope that everyone who receives it will feel moved to respond by contributing stories, articles or artwork/cartoons; by locating (a fannish term derived from "letter of comment") or writing in some way (if you're too busy to write, I'd appreciate at least a postcard from everyone who receives this.); or even by sending money. Here's how it works: If you like this fanzine and want to receive the next issue, then send me an article or story about some aspect of Science Fiction, Fannish history, or Fandom - State of the Art, or write me a nice long letter of comment in which you explain to me exactly where I went wrong in such and such an article in this, or - even better - how I got it exactly right, or, send me a check for \$2.00 U.S. or the equivalent amount in cash (securely packaged, please) of whatever country you happen to live in. Thus you'll be assured of getting the next ...AFP, and after I hear from you and realize just how much you want that next ish, I'll be assured that I'm doing a worthwhile thing, and that all's right with the world.

Some of you, by the way, will get the nextish no matter what you do because I either want to impress you, or I owe you something. If this box ___ is marked, you'll have to figure out for yourself just which that is.

CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE:

Dave Lawson	Richard Jasinski	Vince Singleton	Arthur C. Clarke
M. A. Foster	Bob Shaw	Barbara April McWilliams	Stan Woolston
Phil & Fruma Klass	Walt Willis	Karl & Barbara Wagner	Harry Stubbs
Tim Zahn	Ted White	Todd Trichel	Frank Robinson
Lee Hoffman	rich brown	Somtow Sucharitul	Kelly & Polly Freas
Lana Mierson	Dan & Lynn Steffan	Jerry Page	Rusty Hevelin
Mary Roberts	Mike Glycer	Lester Del Rey	Dean Grennell
Bob Tucker	Robert Adams	Sam Moskowitz	Lloyd Eshback
Isaac Asimov	Khen Moore	Roger Waddington	Robert Bloch
Harry Warner	Irv Koch	Art Thompson	Mary Elizabeth Councilman
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Jack Patterson	Don Franson	Gardner Dozois	Claude Degler
Steve Stanley	Kaymar Carlson	Robert Lowndes	
Charles Platt	David Heath, Jr.	Robert Madle	...and as many others
Richard E. Geis	Fred Ordway	Bill Rotsler	as I can. If you know
Paul Dellinger	David Hartwell	Alexis Gilliland	someone who really ought
Forry Ackerman	James Frenkel	Brad Foster	to have a copy of ...AFP
Joe & Gay Haldeman	Kay Renolds	Sam Basham	drop me a line and if
Don Wollheim	Mary Lou Lacefield	John V. Baltadonis	I have an extra copy, I'll
Dick & Janice Preston	Bob Pilk	Richard Minter	send it to them. That's
Robert A. Heinlein	Neil Raines	Evertt F. Bleiler	fandom in action for you!

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...ANOTHER FAN'S POISON



Fannish Nonsense Today.....Hugo Material Tomorrow!

January, 1986

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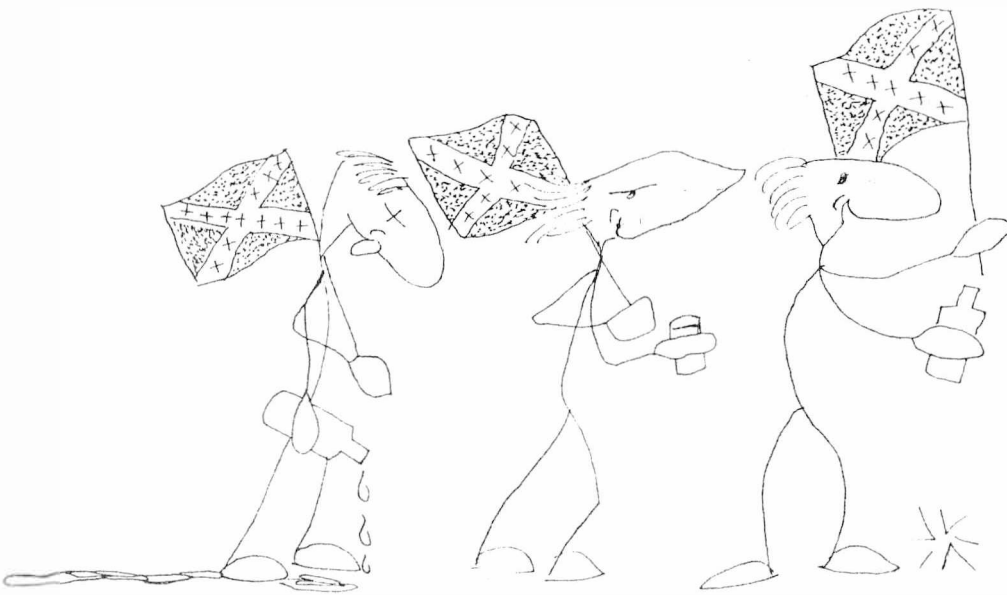
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-HOW DULL
WAS MY
WEEKEND-

(Reprinted from QUANDRY # 15,
Nov. 1951, by permission.
Illustrations by Lee Hoffman.)

-How I Saved Myself From Falling Flat on my Face by Quickly Grasping a Pullchain Hanging Nearby.- A Confession by Bob Tucker.

All conventions are dull, listless affairs. I discovered that a long time ago, after faithfully turning up year after year, city after city, card after card at each succeeding clambake. The same haggard old faces--Bloch, Korshak, Eshbach, Evans--repeating the same timeworn old words--gladtobehere, gladtobehere, gladtobehere--; the same huckstering old professionals--Bloch, Korshak, Eshbach, Evans--repeating the same old hackneyed come-ons; buythis, buythis, buythis. It was so dreadfully monotonous, so crass, so crude, so commercial. Weary of heart, I approached one more city and one more weekend, prepared to once again meet the same old beanie-wearing fans--Bloch, Korshak, Eshbach, Evans--squirting the same old waterguns--squishsquish, squishsquish, squishsquish. It was all so boring, so repetitious.

With all this in mind and an ample supply of aspirin in my old suitcase, I checked into the same old St. Charles Hotel on a Friday afternoon and the room clerk repeated the same old question: "Are you with the science fiction group?" I couldn't bring myself to lie, and admitted I was. "Welcome sir," he continued then in the same old vein, "That automatically entitles you to a higher rate. Your Mr. Moore has arranged it. We can give you an eight-dollar-room for ten dollars."

"Don't want it," I answered, swinging at once into the old routine. "Give me a six-dollar-room for eight dollars."

"Oh, I'm sorry sir, but I cannot. Your Mr. Moore did not reserve a block of six-dollar-rooms." This too, was familiar of course.

"Indeed?" I said wearily. "And what did our Mr. Block reserve?"

"Ah, sir," replied the clerk silkily, "in addition to the eight-dollar-moore's for ten dollars, your Mr. Block reserved a room of seven-dollar-moore's for only nine-fifty."

"I'll take it," I snapped, tiring of the conversation.

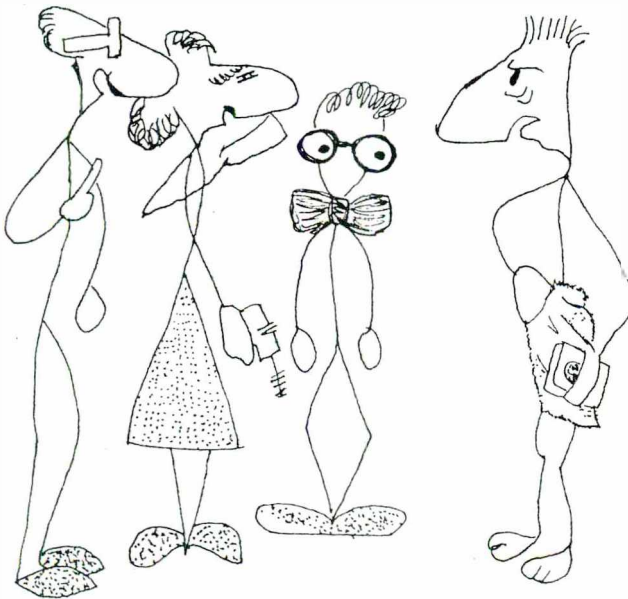
"Do you want a bath?" He was as urbane as always.

"That depends," I hedged, "will it be you, the manager or the house detective? I suppose the maids have a union?"

A motley crew of fans had gathered about the reservations desk as this byplay was going on, eager to learn the name of the new arrival. Other fans were arriving on the run, attracted by frantic wig-wagging and a few smoke signals curling up toward the lobby ceiling. Tiring of this spotlight of unwanted publicity, I turned and spat in the eye of a fan standing behind me. Immediately he whipped out his water-pistol, but of course I ducked and it was the room clerk who took the charge. I snatched the key from his paralyzed fingers and scuttled away.

Tired, weary, disheveled from a long day's drive, I slammed the door of my room, flung the suitcase into a far corner (where it promptly burst open and spilled my cargo of dirty books), stripped off my clothes and jumped into the tub. Three waterbugs, a centipede and a dozing bellboy jumped out. Coaxing water from the faucet drip by drip, I waited until there was a full inch covering the bottom and then lay back to soak in luxury. This was to be my only moment of peace and contentment in sweltering, hurly-burly New Orleans.

There came a sound at the door, the peculiar kind of half-hearted knock that could only be caused by a timid fan getting up nerve to kick the door in. I groaned and realized the same old routine had begun. Stepping out of the tub I reached for my trousers, paused, and dropped them again, knowing it would be the same old bunch -- Bloch, Korshak, Eshbach and Evans -- wanting to start a poker game. I wrapped a towel around my middle, began searching my luggage for a deck of cards, and yelled a bored invitation to enter.



Three strangers trooped in wearing abashed grins, a girl and two men. The girl looked as if she were desperately searching for better company than the characters trailing her. I silently sympathized, and stared at the trio, the meanwhile dripping soap and water on the rug. The two gentlemen stared at the towel and giggled, while the girl looked at the puddle on the rug.

"Hello," one character said.
 "Hello," another character said.
 "Hello," the girl echoed.

Sadly, I shook my head. The same old wornout greetings.

"We're faaaaaaans," the tallest character announced proudly.

"The hell you say!" I shot back, astounded.

"Yep." He was wearing a white T-shirt on which had been printed, I AM SHELBY VICK. Turning to face me, he asked: "Know who I am?"

I gazed at the T-shirt. "Bela Lugosi?"

He wagged his head, vaguely disappointed.

"Richard Shaver," I guessed again. "Claude Degler, Ray Palmer?"

"I am Shelby Vick!" he exclaimed then in clear, ringing tones.

"The hell you say!" I shot back, astounded.

I-am-Shelby-Vick then flicked a finger at his two conspirators. "You know Lee Hoffman, of course?"

Of course. I threw a bored glance at the remaining character and yawned, "Hello, Lee."

"No, no!" contradicted I-am-Shelby-Vick. "Not him...HER!"

Mustering what dignity I retained, I picked up my towel from the floor and stalked into the bathroom, flanging shut the door.

* * *

Knowing full well the monotonous proceedings that would be underway, still I wandered down to the convention hall later to let myself be seen and admired by the younger element present. Fighting my way through a flying cloud of paper airplanes, I stumbled over the same old crap game -- Bloch, Korshak, Eshbach and Evans -- were conducting on the platform behind the speaker's microphone. Declining the inevitable but insincere invitation to join them, I picked a precarious path thru a solid mass of whirling beanies and tugged at the chairman's sleeve.

Our Mr. Moore looked down at me. "Whatinthehelldoyouwant?"

"You'd better do something about them," I suggested mildly.

"Aboutwhodamnit?"

"A couple of characters up in my room. They fainted."

"Whatinthehellyoutalkingabout?" he wanted to know curiously.

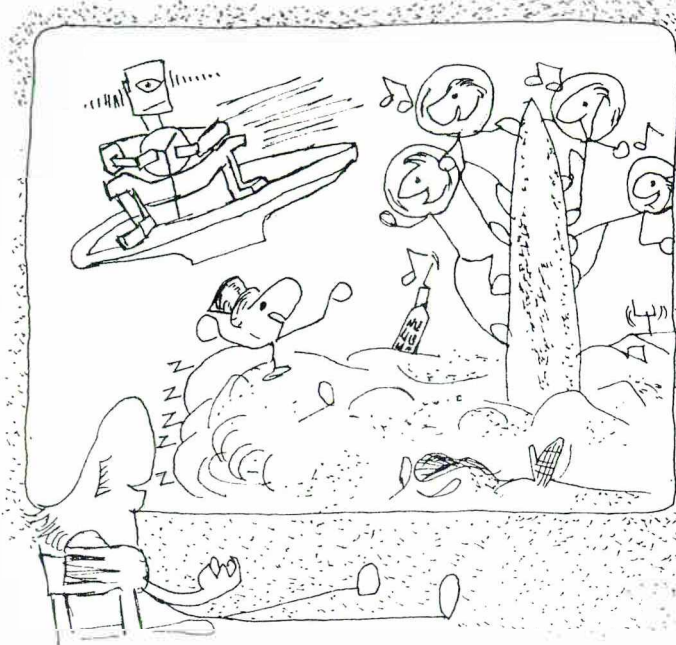
I explained patiently. "A pair of characters have fainted up in my room. Perhaps you'd better send up a bellboy, or something."

"Tohellwiththem," he answered pleasantly. "I'vegotmyowntroubles. Thishereconventionhasgottastartroghtnow."

I said all right, meekly though tiredly, and sat down with Lee Hoffman. Our Mr. Moore approached the microphone, stumbled over the crap-shooters and loudly suggested the floor come to order. Wiping off the simultaneous discharge of a half-dozen water pistols and neatly side-stepping a fireball from a roman candle, he opened the convention. The opening was the same old grind. He announced in a bored voice that the conclave had grossed a bit over four thousand dollars, had paid all debts amounting to a hundred-odd dollars, and that the balance would be used to pay the train fare home for destitute fans. After everyone present had put in their claim and received their share, he closed the convention for another year. We all left the hall and trooped back to our various rooms to conduct the annual business sessions.

Wearily knocking on the first closed door I found, I entered, to sit back and listen to the same old arguments -- by Bloch, Korshak, Eshbach and Evans -- about where next year's convention should be held. No one present really wanted it and the unholy quartet had the very devil of a time forcing it down the throat of a young, unidentified fan sitting off in the corner. Later on nobody could remember who the stranger was nor where he was from so there still remains a small doubt as to where the next convention will be held. Popular opinion -- that is, Bloch, Korshak, Eshbach and Evans -- held that the stranger would eventually betray himself when he began selling memberships, and that it would only be necessary to read the postmark on his letters to discover the name of the next convention city.

Rapidly tiring of this dull conversation, Lee and I left to wander along the corridor in search of another session. From behind a partly-closed door came the sound of rocketships zooming, accompanied by music in the background. Yawning, I remembered my manners in time to ask her if she wished to see the preview movie, THE DAY THE EARTH COLLIDED, and conducted her inside a dark, smoky room. Pushing aside several enthusiastic fans -- Bloch, Korshak, Eshbach and Evans -- we made room on the floor and sat down. I promptly fell asleep, but she told me later it had been an extremely interesting picture depicting the perils of the first space flight...something about a millionaire playboy and his three buddies -- Bloch, Korshak, Eshbach and Evans -- building their own rocketship after the governor of Iowa turned down a fantastic request that his state build it. The governor of course was in the pay of the dictator on the approaching planet.



Finishing and launching the ship just in time to avoid a tidal wave sweeping down on them from the New York City reservoir, the four playboys land on the Iowa capitol's big ball diamond and demand that nearby Missouri be annexed to the state. The governor refuses, being in the pay of the Missouri legislature, and a huge tidal wave sweeps him off the capitol steps just as the menacing robot from the invading planet lands in a flying saucer.

Lee admits to being a trifle hazy as to what happened after that, but in the end four strangers from Mars -- Bloch, Korshak, Eshbach & Evans-- arrive in time to save Iowa's corn.

Tired beyond caring, dazed, bored to death by it all, I allowed myself to be dragged into still another room where the guest of honor and several noted speakers -- Bloch, Korshak, Eshbach and Evans -- were giving out the same tired old phrases on the glory of science fiction, the glory of science fiction fandom, the glory of science fiction magazines and the glory of science fiction books. As they finished speaking their assistants rushed about the room, hawking the wares of these publishers and writers. With a bored yawn I watched one rebellious fan thrown from the window, some upstart who caused an awkward moment by asking if this were a FAN or a HUCKSTER convention.

Rather fascinated, Lee wondered if this were a common occurrence and I assured her that it was. Stretching back into my memory banks, I told her the tale of a dreadful day in Cincinnati when some sixteen such upstarts were dipped in oil, feathered, and then tied to the coat-tails of sixteen wild bellboys who were sent running pell-mell through the lobby. These revolting sixteen, it seems, made the mistake of getting up a petition to exclude professionals from all future conventions. It was a sad, memorable day.

"What are 'professionals'?" she wanted to know.

"ssssshhhhHH," I whispered. "They're sensitive!"

"But what are they?"

"Super fans," I explained. "Responsible people who have outgrown the beanie and watergun stage, outstanding adults with unimpeachable reputations who are saving fandom from itself, preventing it from becoming ingrown. By means of books and dollars these superfans provide fandom with something to think about, other than themselves."

She gave that considerable thought. "I see a flaw," she said at last. "A flaw in that line of reasoning."

I gave her my tired attention. "What?"

"Us ordinary fans can't read."

* * *

The remaining days of the convention were the usual sorry mess. Again and again I chided myself for coming, for using up valuable time that could have been spent more profitably elsewhere. Late one evening I briefly thought I had discovered something worthwhile, something to make-up to myself the time wasted. Avoiding the elevator because mobs of young fans -- led by Bloch, Korshak, Escbach and Evans -- had taken over the machine, tossed out the operator, and were joyriding up and down, I was wearily climbing the stairs to the seventh floor when a combination giggle - titter reached my ears. Pausing instantly, senses alert, I espied the location of the sound and the cause of it. Someone had a home-movie machine and was projecting family pictures in a darkened room. Half-alerted to this possible saving diversion, I stood on the doorknob and peeped through the transom, only to have my fondest hopes dashed. I'd seen the pictures before at the last Legion stag.

Unlocking the door to my room, I was mildly astonished to find two characters stretched out on the carpet in a dead faint. They seemed familiar, so rather than chuck them out the window I called the house detective whose joy, upon finding them there, knew no bounds. It seems the blacked-out characters were I-am Shelby-Vick and his sidekick, Paul Cox, who had been missing for three days and the house detective feared they had skipped without paying their bill. He congratulated me on the discovery, saying the manager would give him a raise for this. After he left I locked the door, stepped over the fans on the rug and went to bed. It had all been so tiring.



Since you asked...

A FEW MORE YESTERDAYS

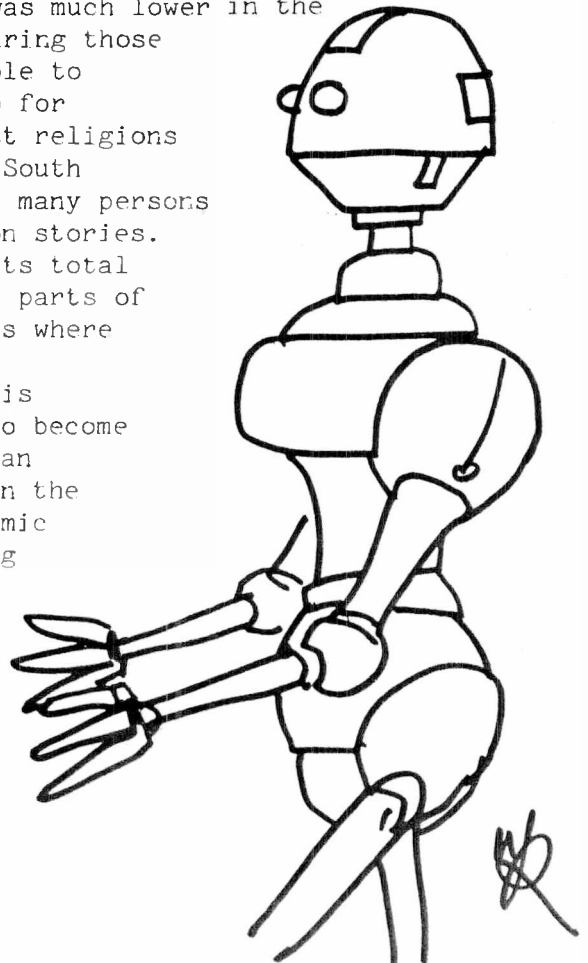
by Harry Warner, Jr.

Much has been made in recent years of the fact that fandom contained few women and no blacks among its members during its first decade or two of chronicled existence. But those situations don't seem mysterious, in the light of social circumstances and ways of thinking that predominated during the 1930's and early 1940's. Less publicized and decidedly more difficult to explain away is the fact that so few fans resided during that era in the South of the United States.

While first the Depression, then World War Two kept fandom small in numbers and limited in ways of expressing itself, the biggest concentrations of fans lived in metropolitan areas like New York City, Los Angeles and Philadelphia. There were smaller clumps of them in a few large cities in the Northeast, Midwest, and Pacific Coast. Individual fans could be found scattered in rural areas or tiny towns, but most of these lonely fans resided north of the Mason-Dixon Line or west of the Rockies. The huge geographical area generally reckoned as the South had few fans, fewer fanzines, and next to no local fan clubs.

I don't have any guaranteed-accurate explanation for this almost forgotten aspect of early fandom. All I can do is suggest possible causes, one or several of which might provide at least a partial reason why the South was so poorly provided with fans and fanac. Average income was much lower in the South than in most other parts of the nation during those years, so fewer young people might have been able to afford to buy prozines, the accepted first step for getting into fandom at the time. Fundamentalist religions still held a comprehensive grip on most of the South early in the century, which may have prejudiced many persons against the implications of most science fiction stories. The South didn't have as high a percentage of its total population residing in sizeable cities as other parts of the nation, making it harder to reach newsstands where prozines were sold.

Today, of course, the situation in fandom is sharply different. Fandom in the South began to become more prominent as soon as fandom in general began expanding through such influences as the boom in the paperback science fiction market, postwar economic conditions which meant more money for many young persons, the coming of regular conventions in every part of the nation, and the change in public attitude to science fiction created by the first sputniks and satellites. It could be argued that the South today has the most flourishing fandom of any section of the United States. It's indisputable that the South has the only United States fandom which thinks of itself as a geographical entity.



At last I have arrived at my main point. All the generalizations above are valid, but there were occasional inexplicable exceptions to the basic fact that fandom was slow to develop in the South. The most improbable refusal of the South to behave as described came during the war, when an astonished fandom suddenly found itself bombarded by fat fanzines, letters, articles, and other forms of fanac from the comparatively small city of Columbia, SC. Almost simultaneously, four Columbia fans came into prominence, Joe Gilbert, Harry Jenkins, Lee B. Eastman, and W. B. McQueen. I don't think you could find four active fans in any of the much larger cities in the South at that time. What's more, the group that called themselves the Columbia Camp launched efforts to promote fandom all over the South in ways that weren't much different from the far more successful promotion of Southern fandom during the 1960's and 1970's.

The Columbia Camp members had several things in common besides their chronological and geographical positions in fandom. All four of them were quite literate, capable of writing for fanzines in a style that was better than the average fanzine prose of the era but not highfaluting enough to make them sound like scholars slumming. They seem to have had the ability to get along with one another and with the rest of fandom, a knack that wasn't at all common in the feud-plagued fandom of those years. And when they gafiated a few years later they did such a thorough job of it that I can't remember encountering any evidence that any of them made even the mildest of returns to activities in later years. Perhaps someone has encountered one or more of them at a convention in the South without recognizing the significance of the name, in recent years; that's how complete their disappearance from fandom turned out to be, and how forgotten they are today by the superactive fans in the South..

The most lasting evidence left behind by the Columbia Camp was The Southern Star, which published five thick issues in the early 1940's. Other Southerners like Art Sehnert of Memphis were editorial assistants and the emphasis was on Southerners for contributions of material. There's no need to smile indulgently while re-reading its issues today; many of the articles are still useful for the information they convey or entertaining for the high humor with which they're written. Joe Gilbert probably did more than anyone in Columbia to create this fanzine. Harry Jenkins published a couple issues of Fanart, which must have been either the first or one of the first of the good-sized fanzines devoted to drawing for fanzines. Two or three of the Columbia gans became active as FAPA publishers for a while. They contributed much material to fanzines published elsewhere in the nation. Moreover, the Columbia Camp was the moving force behind creation of the Dixie Fantasy Federation. This was an organization with aims similar to today's Southern Fandom Confederation, although it included a slightly larger area in its definition of the South. The Columbia gans even tracked down that rarity, a female fan who lived near Columbia.

In a sense, I suppose, the Columbia Camp were like the pre-Columbian explorers of North America. They're virtually forgotten because they didn't represent an influence which connected directly to later propagandists for fandom in the South. I doubt if any of them was still active by the time Lionel Inman began publishing Southern Fandom in 1948. By the arrival of the 1950's and the coming of QUANDRY, an entirely new generation of active fans was bobbing up in the South.

I can think of only one other example of lots of fans suddenly appearing and gafiating together in an unlikely place in early fandom. That was the Decker Dillies, a half-dozen or so men and women in Decker, IN, a small village. But their emergence wasn't quite the same thing as the Columbia Camp, because they had already been close friends in a mundane local club and happened to discover fandom together.

I'm sure there must be active fans living in the vicinity of Columbia today. If they could track down any members of the old Columbia Camp who happen to continue residing in the South Carolina city and arrange for them to be honored at a regional con, it would be a nice gesture, proof that fandom eventually remembers its good people, even if it forgets them for a while.



ONE FAN'S FANDOM...

Fannish Horror Stories - Part 1;
Conventions, North & South

One of the fannish advantages of living in the Appalachian Mountains as I do is that I'm pretty well equi-distant from the sites of most of the better SF conventions east of the Mississippi River. I can get in my car and in just a very few hours be in Atlanta, Louisville, Chattanooga, Washington D.C., or even Lancaster, PA; all of which have become fannish meccas on their respective weekends of the year. (10 hours will put me in New York which, like L.A., is a fannish mecca year-round) In attending these and several other conventions over the past few years I've noticed some characteristics of these cons which seem to me to reflect the nature of their respective cultures.

The northern conventions like Novacon in Lancaster, PA, Starcall and the August Party in the Washington D.C. area, and Balticon in Baltimore tend to have highly organized programs, be faster paced, and have noisier parties. (Whether or not that's a disadvantage would depend on what kind of parties you enjoy.) Multi-track programming is common which usually results in small audiences at each event. Often a panel discussion will have more panelists than attendees.

Southern cons, like Chattacon in Chattanooga, Kubla Khan in Nashville, and the DeepSouthCon - which travels from city to city around the South each year - usually have a much looser program, are paced to allow naps if you so desire, and have parties that are much more relaxed, yet at the same time, much more intense. Make no mistake, the South takes its parties seriously. These cons often have only a single track of programming and sometimes no programming at all. (But no one misses it.) Program items are generally less serious than in the North. ("The History of Rape and Pillage in Science Fiction" by Robert Adams at Stellarcon 6 in Greensboro, N.C. for example) which is all right as their chief function is to provide a break between parties.

Northern cons tend to have an atmosphere about them that makes you feel as if the convention is going to end Real Soon Now so you'd better hurry and get to that panel you wanted to hear or hurry and take one more run through the dealers' room. This is largely because most of the people around you are running to do those things. It's made worse by the fact that "Killer" has become Real popular among the under-sixteen crowd at cons lately. ("Killer" is the game where you find a dozen or so "assassins" stalking each other around the convention in an elimination-by-pseudo-death contest. It's not unusual to be walking down some dark, out of the way corridor in the hotel and have a young gunsel leap out of a shadow at you, level a very real looking .45 cal. shaped dart gun at your head and scream, "DIE, MUTHAFU...!" then, "Oh, sorry," as he realizes that you are not in fact his intended victim. Then he'll leap back into a shadow and you'll be left alone to compose yourself before moving on in search of a room party.

The atmosphere at a southern convention is mostly one of relaxed indecision, which results from so many people trying to decide which party to go to next.

Parties are, I think, where the differences between North and South are most noticeable. Northern conventions don't serve alcohol as often as their counterparts in the South, and when they do it's usually dark beer or mixed drinks. (I'm talking about room parties as well as consuites.) There's almost always

a lot of people in the room talking, often about science fiction. The rooms are crowded, particularly around the doorway - which is the preferred place to stand and talk at these functions. In spite of the crowding, (or quite possibly because of it) the overall theme of these parties is "always room for one more!" Indeed, the doorway gang will usually grab ahold and pull you into the room if you seem hesitant. (I once saw them pick up a nubile young thing and pass her into the consuite over their heads until they found a space on the floor for her. She didn't seem to mind that at all.

Southern parties are much more relaxed. First of all, there are more of them at any given convention so the party mongers are spread rather more thinly. There are often as many as 20 at one of the bigger conventions as compared to three or four in the North. At most cons, anyone else who's holding a con within the next two years will host a room party. Thus at Kubla Khan two years ago I went to a Chattacon Party, an Istacon party, a DSC party, two Atlanta parties, and so on. The bid parties are the best. That's a party where the host is bidding for the right to run one of the "bid conventions" like the Worldcon or the DSC in his city. A big reason why I supported Atlanta over New York or Philadelphia for the 1986 Worldcon bid was that the Atlanta fen threw tremendous parties all over the country for two years. They'd have prodigious amounts of food; cookies, cakes, fudge, wierd but tasty little dessert things, the usual potato chips and such, and INCREDIBLE peach daiquiries. I didn't get so much as a stale "Chee-to" out of the New York or Philly phans.

At most of the lesser southern cons the consuite usually provides bathtubs full of soft drinks and beer. (Separately, in cans, of course.) Kubla Khan also thoughtfully furnishes coffee and tea, but they make up the cost of this service by choosing Red White & Blue beer as their principal alcoholic beverage.

Conversation at the southern parties tends mostly to concern other parties:

"Boy, Khen, these Atlanta folks shore do make fine peach daiquiries."

"Yep, Irv, they shore do."

"Yep. Let's us go on down to the Chattanooga party and git us some hushpuppies."

A final note must be mentioned concerning the late-night character of convention parties. While the northern parties don't change much as the night wears on, (you will notice more "Howdy-Doody" type people just sitting around and grinning along about 4:00 a.m., but they're mostly harmless) at southern parties a strange and terrible transformation takes place in the consuite. Large, sweaty, hairy creatures wearing dark, ill-fitting clothing and souvenir "digger" hats that they picked up at one of the Australian Worldcons creep into the room, glare all the comics fans out and begin playing that most manly of all the two-fisted card games, hearts! With an occasional glare over their shoulders to keep the room clear they'll play until dawn, and then they'll pack up their cards and their loose change and creep away as mysteriously as they came. One presumes that such creatures exist at northern cons, but there they have private rooms to play in whereas in the South all the private rooms are filled with parties.

It should be remembered that all these observations are rather general and should not be applied to any particular convention. SF cons are as individual as the people who run them and sometimes just as strange. Which of the two, northern or southern, do I prefer? Well...probably the southern ones. They don't make you work quite so hard. Apparently many others agree with me as Atlanta won the 1986 Worldcon bid. (You'd have thought that Philadelphia would have at least provided some Ritz crackers and cream cheese, but no.) I'll look for you there in the consuite.....CWP

The author is a "senior writer" for the Roanoke, VA. Times & World News, has had several stories published in FANTASTIC, AMAZING, FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION, and other publications, can sing, hum, or whistle the theme music to every "B-western" movie ever made, and is ever in quest for...

THE PERFECT SCIENCE FICTION STORY

by PAUL DELLINGER

(Author of "To Reign in Hell", "Werewolf of West Point", ect.)

It had taken a lifetime---or at least most of the 40-plus years of Campbell Bates' life---but now, finally, The Collection was nearly complete. He now had every pulp, paperback, hardback, and even every fanzine in the science fiction field, ready to be programmed into his Integrated Gathering & Organizing Reader---the fast-scanning computer he'd built over the past three years.

He pushed the console button to activate his IGOR. Already he had programmed all the s-f works up to 1970 into its memory, and this would start it scanning through the final pile. Then, with IGOR's innards filled with every s-f story ever written in the English language, the computer would be ready to synthesize it all into one perfect story, a story which would finally get Campbell published in an s-f magazine. Any s-f magazine! Campbell didn't care.

Actually, his collection was the result of not one but two lifetimes; Campbell's father had been a fan, too (he'd wanted to name his only child John Wood Campbell Junior Harry Bates, but Campbell's mother wouldn't hold still for that), and he'd been collecting the magazines since the first AMAZING in 1926. Without that foundation, without that edge, Campbell could never have assembled all the others.

Now his collection rivaled even that of Forrest Ackerman's in California. Forry also collected movie, TV and similar s-f items, of course, but Campbell doubted that even that collection could equal his own so far as printed s-f went. He remembered the story of how would-be conquerors from another planet mistook the Ackerman collection for an actual history of the planet Earth, and fled in terror from Superman, Doc Savage, the Lensmen and all the other defenders of this world ("This World is Taboo," Perry Rhodan No. 36, part of Campbell's own collection, of course). Too bad the aliens couldn't have blundered into his house instead, Campbell reflected, watching the mechanized sorting arms connected to IGOR flipping through one magazine and book after another at blurring speed.

At heart, Campbell was a completist. He had no trouble buying everything that was printed up until the 1950's, even such offbeat material as the thin little children's book by the early Robert Silverberg, REVOLT ON ALPHA C," in which a major character, born on Jupiter but raised on Mars, was named Harl Ellison. The s-f explosion of the more recent decades, though, would have wiped him out financially except for his lucrative computer expertise---the same expertise which allowed him to assemble IGOR.

Like many s-f readers, and particularly in Campbell's case since s-f had so much influence on him as he grew up as an only child, his major recreation---approved by his father but regarded in disdain by his mother---reading one s-f volume after another, Campbell wanted to write s-f, too. He would be satisfied with only a single story published. But, if he had to settle for just one, he wanted it to be the most amazing fantastic astounding startling thrilling wonder story there was.

He had tried, heaven knew. He had the rejection slips to show for it---the dingy gray form from OMNI, the chatty notes from ASIMOV'S and AMAZING, the almost illegible scrawlings from GALAXY, the reprints of covers from F&SF with "Sorry, no" written on the backs, and more.

But now, today was the day---a very special day, on which no new magazine (he subscribed to them all, of course) was scheduled to come in the mail, no new s-f paperbacks were due out (the recession had some benefits after all, in this case) and nobody seemed to be publishing any other kind of a 'zine related to s-f. Just for today, he had access to everything written in the field of s-f. Tomorrow, something new might come out and ruin his program---but today IGOR would have it all, long enough to produce Campbell's potential Hugo/Nebula/and every other kind of award-winning perfect s-f story.

With his one perfect story through IGOR, Campbell would be up there with the giants---Asimov, Clarke, Heinlein, Bradbury, and their kind---and all his years of collecting would have paid off. IGOR was already scanning the last of the recently-published hardbacks; it would be through in a minute. And then---then--- Campbell would type in his order and his perfect s-f story would come out of the printer, page by page.

There was a knock at the door.

"Hi, Mr. Bates," the postman said. "Special delivery---you mind signing for it?"

Campbell signed, then looked at what he had. For a second, an alarm sounded in the back of his mind. Was this a fanzine he hadn't known about? If so, did it contain a piece of s-f that was not a part of IGOR's program? The success of the program depended on getting every piece of s-f into the computer at a given time; if he missed this one, there wouldn't be another time until possibly 1989 or 1990, depending on the publishing industry schedules by then.

He started to breathe a sigh of relief. It looked like a 'zine listing materials someone had for sale or trade, with a few articles and a bibliography...

Oh, no!" And a story. Campbell's eyes widened as he read the title, and realized that some other computerized collector out there somewhere had beaten him to the punch.

The title was "The Perfect Science Fiction Story," of course...



FANTASY BOOK REVIEWS

- by the Editor

I am not a particularly good book critic. I do believe that I can tell a good piece of honest writing from hack work, but I don't have that knack for cranking out the sort of high-falutin', convoluted, introspective, serious literary criticism that allowed Algis Budrys to find a new career after he stopped writing SF a few years back. However I sometimes read a book that impresses me so much that I want to recommend it to my friends and that's what this column will be concerned with. I'm just as likely to talk about a book that has been out of print for 20 years as I am the new releases, so be prepared to hunt the used book stores if some of my enthusiasm rubs off.

Daw Books published WAVES by M.A. Foster back in October, 1980 and I remember trying to read it at that time, but putting it aside before I had even read 3 pages. It was a very difficult book to start with very odd sounding names like "Fraesch" and "Severo-Pelengator" and characters that seemed sullen and impassive. Last month I picked up WAVES again and this time I had to ask myself what the problem was in me that had prevented my enjoying the book 5 years ago. I think what I was reacting to then was Foster's characteristic style of writing a very multi-layered story that proceeds at its own pace and doesn't drop everything to look back and see if the reader is keeping up. I almost wrote "uncompromising", but that would be misleading since it implies that the author doesn't care if the reader can keep up or not. Quite untrue. Foster's novels (and WAVES in particular) are very complex and tightly written, and do not lend themselves to light reading. They take concentration and a willingness by the reader to forget about the world outside the window while you explore the world that Foster has put you in.

I mentioned Foster's "multi-layered" style; In Waves the layers are very prominent and very much a part of the story. It is really a modernistic detective story in a science-fictional setting. I don't want to describe the story in any detail but I do want to give you an example of the style of this very unusual novel. This is from a later section of the book where the protagonists hear from a native of the world they've come to who has something to tell them of their part in the scheme of things;

"We live in times very different from those times in which our sort of creature was shaped, times and environment as well. We travel to new planets, live there, create new polities, new pools; the new environment may have drastic effects or subtle ones - who can tell. We observe odd reactions and we say something caused it. But we may not know the source immediately. Then there are the different kinds of life - natural and prolonged. The realities of life for humans has not changed, the basic realities; one becomes adult, one participates in procreation - which is only part sex - one is confronted with death, and all the things in between. There seem to be as many ways to dance the life dance as there are dancers; yet you lifters seem to elude something, and in escaping it, lose something. You have the length of days, but to us who take only our own portion you are as ephemeral as mists, ghosts...I wonder that having a lot of such ghosts concentrated in one place might not cause something..."

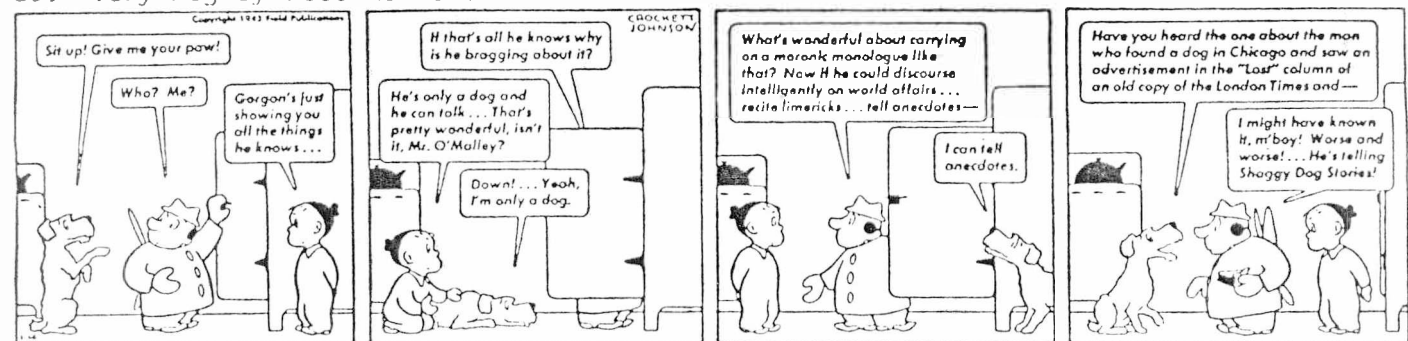
I highly recommend WAVES, and although it's most likely out of print from DAW it might turn up in used book stores. It's worth looking for. I understand that Foster is no longer writing exclusively for DAW so perhaps some other publisher will bring out WAVES in a new edition. It deserves it more than a lot of books that get reprinted these days.

Speaking of reprints, DEL REY has just released the first two volumes of their complete set of BARNABY, a fantastic comic strip by Crockett Johnson (who did my very favorite children's book, HAROLD AND THE PURPLE CRAYON, which is available in paperback as well as the rest of the HAROLD series) which ran in newspapers for just under 10 years starting on April 20, 1942. The hero is Barnaby, a typical 5 year old boy in the WWII years who aquired a fairy godfather named "Mr. O'Malley - a loveable old humbug whose magic tricks are limited to "Pick a card, any card..." and who spends more time raiding Barnaby's mother's icebox than anything else. There's Gorgon, Barnaby's dog who was as surprised to find that he could talk as anyone else. There's McSnoyd, an invisible, wisecracking ("Noitz!") Leprechaun, Gus, a cowardly ghost who knows all sorts of embarrassing anecdotes about



Mr. O'Malley's checkered past, Barnaby's parents, who don't believe in "this fairy godfather business" since they've never seen him - but that doesn't bother O'Malley since he doesn't believe in these "parents" that Barnaby keeps speaking of, & others. Although written for children to enjoy, these strips are delightful entertainment for adults - particularly those who never thought they'd laugh at a comic strip again. I had expected the strip to be rather dated since it is very topical with references to Air Raid Wardens (at one point Mr. O'Malley is sighted flying over the city and mistaken for an enemy spy plane), the OCD (Office of Civil Defense?), scrap-iron drives (which Barnaby wins - with O'Malley's inadvertent help - by finding an abandoned 20-ton steam roller.), coffee and gas rationing (which O'Malley gets mixed up in when he...) you get the idea. Instead of being at all dated, the strip reads like a wonderful old adventure novel and the above cited references make me realize just how much of genius was involved in creating this world that Barnaby lives in.

I understand from a review in LOCUS that DEL REY is waiting to see the sales figures on the first three volumes before they decide about going ahead with the other 9 volumes. Please, PLEASE go to your bookstore and have a look at the first two volumes now available. I'm sure that once you read a few of the strips you'll be hooked as I was. You may have to look around a bit as I found my copies in the "humor" section at the local B. Dalton's. Seems to me that they should have put some copies in the SF or Fantasy section because I doubt that most of the people who would like BARNABY make a habit of checking out the humor section. Please be sure that you do. Very highly recommended.



TALMAGE POWELL: SOUTHERN MYSTERY MAN

by RALPH ROBERTS

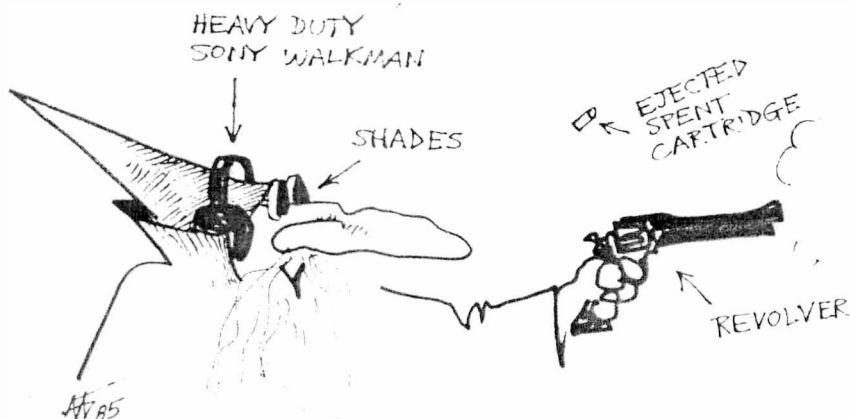
There have been a lot of murders in Talmage Powell's nice home on a quiet tree-lined street in Asheville, North Carolina. Luckily all this violence has occurred on an 8½ by 11 sheet of paper in the confines of Talmage's typewriter, where the good guys triumph and the nogoodniks meet a richly deserved fate. He's a writer, you see. And, he's a Southerner.

But Talmage Powell is not your typical stereotyped Southern writer. No placid magnolia-shaded college campus with a professor's cushy salary while sporadically turning out deathless prose that births stillborn for Talmage. He's a working professional who's made a fulltime living from writing since selling his first mystery story to the pulp magazine, TEN DETECTIVE ACES, in 1943. And is still doing so.

To date, Talmage has sold over five hundred short stories to national magazines and has published eighteen novels. And his popularity is not confined to just the United States; his work has been translated into several European languages and Japanese, as has some of the screenplays that he wrote in the sixties for the ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS television show.

Alfred Hitchcock has been good to Talmage Powell and Talmage Powell to him. For, in addition to the stint in California writing for the show, scores of his short stories and novelets have been published in ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE and in many of the Hitchcock anthologies including several of the most recent. And on one wall of Talmage's home hangs a hand drawing of the famous Hitchcock profile autographed by the master himself in appreciation.

Talmage was born in Hendersonville but has lived in such places as Brownsville, Texas and the west coast of Florida. But Asheville, here in the mountains of Western North Carolina, has claimed him the longest. He is happily married to a lady named Mildred, who is his biggest fan and his nemesis at backgammon. Their son is long since grown and a successful businessman in Kentucky.



A fascinating conversationalist, talking with Talmage is like opening a window overlooking the wide vistas of the publishing world. His friends are the greats and the near greats of the book business for the last thirty years. They number such luminaries as the legendary Day Keene, Bill Pronzini (who included Talmage in the dedication of his recent novel, UNDERCURRENT), Don Wollheim, Robert Turner, Charlie Beckman, and a host of others. For twenty-five years Talmage's agent was Scott Meredith (the same who just got a seven figure advance for Arthur C. Clarke's sequel to 2001--- Meredith only represents the best).

In the heyday of the pulp magazines (from the late forties to the early sixties) he was a much sought after writer. Editors knew that Talmage would always provide a well-crafted, gripping yarn that would give the reader his money's worth. Scores of magazines in this period prominently featured Talmage's name on their covers.

While probably best known for his mystery stories, Talmage also wrote science fiction, fantasy, and western stories by the ream. He's had science fiction stories in AMAZING, ORIGINAL SCIENCE FICTION (Robert Lowndes' magazine of the late fifties), and others. HITCHCOCK'S, MIKE SHAYNE'S, and others published his fantasy stories and called them 'mysteries' so as to avoid scaring off the readers. But once you start a Talmage Powell story, you finish it. He has a way of drawing you into the page that only the really competent writers have.

He's had eighteen novels published to date, also. Such things as a very unique Western, THE CAGE. It concerns the desperate fight of a sobbuster to restore his wife's sanity. Long before meeting Talmage, or even knowing who he was, I had read this book in the late sixties and the plot had stuck in my mind. A good writer does that to you. And THE CAGE is much better than the standard 'formula' Western that seems to dominate the field.

But Talmage's most successful novels were in the Ed Rivers series. Books like CORPUS DELECTABLE, THE GIRL'S NUMBER DOESN'T ANSWER, START SCREAMING MURDER, WITH A MADMAN BEHIND ME. Ed Rivers is agent in charge of the Nationwide Detective Agency's Southeastern Division. A tough-guy detective, at first glance, like so many in the mystery novels of the sixties. But reading the books, you find Talmage's skill bringing Ed Rivers to life on the page.

Hard-boiled on the exterior is Ed but a sensitive human being underneath. Living in the South but hating hot weather, he suffers the steamy mugginess of places like Tampa and Ybor City but never lets it deter him from finding the killer. Not just simple mystery novels either, are these Ed Rivers books. There are enough complexities, sub-plots, and undercurrents to allow reading on several different levels. A 'good read' is the term editors use. Talmage Powell is a good read.

But don't harbor the idea that all Talmage Powell has done is in the past. Or that he rests content on the laurels of yesteryear. He's in late middle age now, but his hair's still black and there's still a spring in his step. The skin around his eyes crinkles with

The deadline for submissions to the next issue of ...Another Fan's Poison is somewhere around the middle of February, 1986. My birthday is Feb. 6, so if you want to send me a fannish birthday present, write something for the next ...AFP.

with good humor as he launches into an anecdote and the listener finds himself as enthralled with Talmage's verbal renderings as the gripping stories he puts on paper. And he still writes because all his tales are not yet told, and all his characters not yet created.

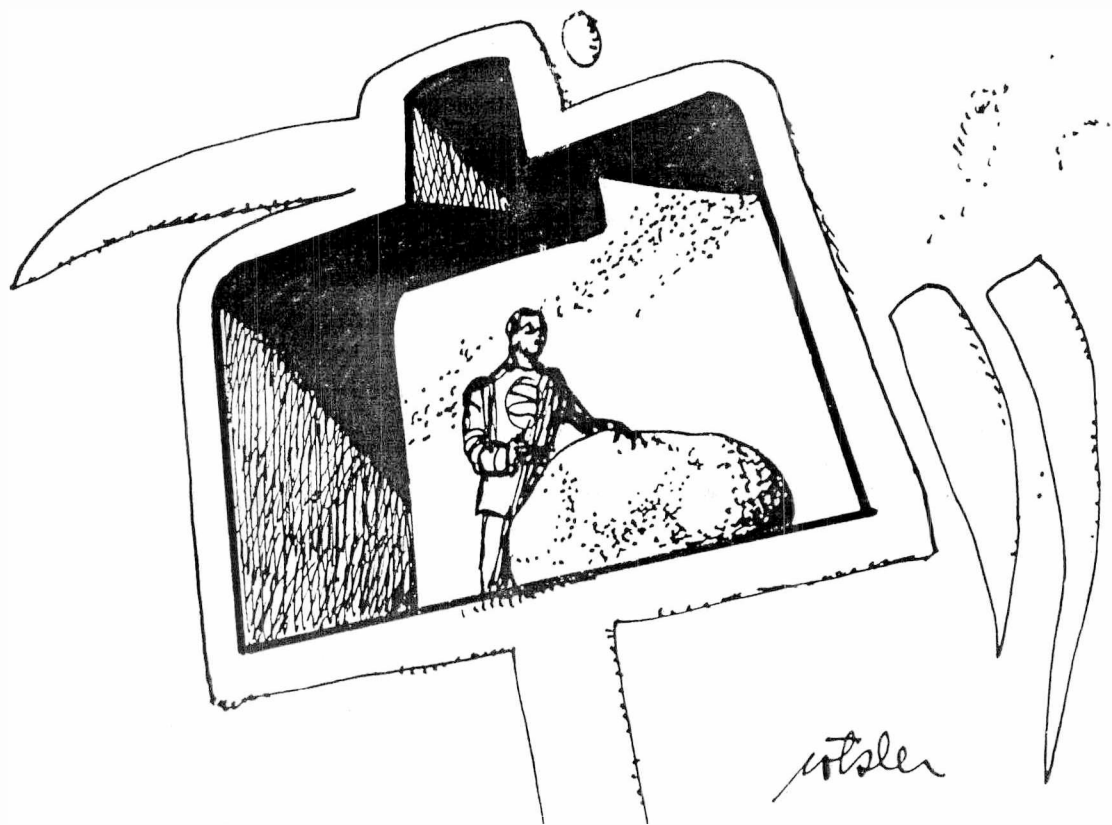
Ralph Roberts is the author of well over 1200 stories and articles, many of them Science Fiction and Mystery. He lives in Asheville, N.C. and hopefully will be a regular contributor to ...Another Fan's Poison.

"...Science Fiction fans are just like other people, only different..."

--Bob Tucker

CORFLU 3, Feb. 14-17, 1986; McLEAN, VA.

A few weeks ago I found in my mailbox - right there between the Sears ad and my monthly package from the International Cheese Club - what looked to be a fanzine with a very nice Dan Steffan cover. Little did I know that this was in fact, my invitation to Corflu 3. I soon realized that it wasn't just a personal invitation to me alone, but rather an appeal to my fannish patriotism; to go forth and tell all of fandom about...IT! CORFLU 3; an ALL-FANZINE convention to be held on the above date at the Tysons Corner WESTPARK (Best Western) Hotel at 8401 Westpark Dr., McLean, VA. 22102. Ph. (703) 734-2800. Room rates are \$55.00 a night, and membership is \$25.25 which includes the Sunday afternoon buffet banquet. Checks go to CORFLU 3, c/o New Decade Productions, Box 409, Falls Church, VA. 22046. rich brown (who once promised to send me a copy of his zine "beardmutterings") Ted White, and Dan & Lynn Steffan are running the show, and I plan to attend mostly because of how they describe this convention: "Corflu is the fanzine fans' convention. Since this means we don't have to pander to the tastes of any other type of fan, we haven't, don't, and won't...we will have no media programming, no costume balls, no gaming, no Dr. Who or Star Trek quizzes... if you're interested in fanzine fandom, please attend; if not, we'd probably bore you silly--so why bother?" I can't wait.....CWP



Robert Briggs is a long-time fan and observer of the fannish condition in general. It has been aledged that back in the '40es he and Bob Tucker successfully border-ran a fanzine called "Spicy Space Tails" in defiance of Postal regulations, but Robert has steadfastly denied this. We do know that he survived the infamous party in room 770 at the New Orleans worldcon in 1951, so it seems fitting that we turn to him for some comments about how he has seen Fandom change over the years. This article first appeared in a SAPS mailing in 1976. The footnotes were all written by your editor.

THE FAN FROM THE TIME MACHINE

BY

ROBERT GLEN BRIGGS

Among the first fanzines I recieved when I returned to fandom after an absence of 20 years (I dropped out before Clevention - that was 1955) was the Summer, 1975 issue of ALGOL.

It had a full color cover. WOW! As late as 1960 no one dreamed of a fanzine with a four color cover. Indeed it was impossible. A semi-prozine had never been thought of because the market was too small. In 1946 - that was 40 years ago - I recieved my first fanzine ever. It was VAMPIRE, published by Joe Kennedy. (Who remembers Joe Kennedy? Who remembers JoKe? Who remembers Sargent Saturn? Who remembers the letter hacks?) ① VAMPIRE had a lithographed cover. Golly! That was the mark of the "Big Time"! Should some time traveler have told us then that the day would come when fanzines would have full color covers, we wouldn't have believed him.

A change from black-and-white to color can be viewed as a change in scale or expense. But there was a change in quality as well. It was a Mike Hinge cover using his color seperation technique. This is a very modern style. Fourty years ago, fans would have denounced it. Fans were quite reactionary about art and graphics in those distant days. Only Frank R. Paul and Virgil Finlay were praised.

Hannes Bok was alive as recently as 20 years ago, but no one liked his work. He made drawings for cons and such only because there were no other artists available. His work was too stylized and individualistic for the time. I liked his style, but I don't recall meeting anyone else who did. Now, I understand a book of his work has been published. Like so many artists, he became a success after his death.

Not only werefans reactionary about art, they were uninterested in it. Today, art books, color prints and posters are published. No one would have bought them 35 years ago. Nor would they have published columns of art criticism like ALGOL and S.F. Review.

I read with stupifaction that Franz Rottensteiner's SCIENCE FICTION BOOK, AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY had an initial print order of 100,000 copies. Even more mind numbing, it was greeted by fans as a commonplace event.

Another surprise in ALGOL was the advertising. There was an ad from the Orlando Sheraton-Towers Hotel! Hotels never advertised in fanzines in the old days. Can you imagine a hotel taking out a \$2.00 ad in a mimeographed fan magazine with a circulation of 100?

Also 35 to 40 years ago, a worldcon was too small to bother with. These giant cons that can fill up the largest hotel weren't even dreamed of.

Avon paperbacks had a backcover ad for THE DISPOSSEDED. Surprising enough in itself. But even more so, large type told us it had placed first in the LOCUS poll and been nominated for a Hugo. 35 years ago, publishers would not

only have not known fanzines polls existed. The Hugo Award, when it first came out was equally unknown to mainstream publishers. They certainly didn't think advertising a Hugo Award would help sell books. During my years in Limbo, when I first saw a S. F. book emblazoned as a Hugo Winner, I knew by token, big changes had come to fandom.

In the midst of Limbo, I spied a S. F. Book on a paperback rack in a grocery store. I stopped dead in my tracks and stared at it with wild surmise as on a peak in Darian while shopping carts swerved around me, honking peevishly. We never dreamed in 1955 that 30 years later S.F. would be so popular that it could be sold in grocery stores.

In the next issue of ALGOL, there was an astonishing interview with new writer, Gardner Dozois. This rotten kid complained that paperback S.F. "rarely sells more than 100,000 copies." A 100,000 copies! "The mind falls fainting away."

I remember a nighttime street in Philadelphia. Lloyd Arthur Eshbach had recently started the FANTASY PRESS. He told us he had a print run of 1,000. On the train home, we were filled with confidence. One thousand was just the beginning, from there on, it would soar upwards. Why print runs might even reach 2,000!

And now, 40 years later, along comes this kid, Dozois, and looks down his nose at sales of 100,000 copies. I tell you, that in 1950 sales of 100,000 copies were beyond any pros wildest dreams of averice.

You're spoiled rotten, kid.

When fans first started small publishing houses, I thought they would still be in existence 40 years later. I never dreamed Doubleday & Ballantine would have a S.F. line.

I read that one in ten books published is S.F. or fantasy. Thirty-five years ago that would have been one in 1,000. I remember a time, 1944, when no S.F. or Fantasy books were published.

Everything in fandom has brown tenfold since 1950. Jackie Franke had a regional con report in the January 1976 TITLE. The Iowa State S.F. League held it over Hallowe'en. A huge crowd of 200 came to the two-day con. Yet she strangely describes this vast affair. She fears "many new people" will come to the next one and the "unique enjoyment of a small con will be destroyed and lost forever."

Would you like to know what a regional con was like in 1950? In the first place, there were very few of them. Only a half dozen were held during a year in the whole country. There was one in New York City, one in Philadelphia and, I think, one in New Jersey which stopped about 1950 when the Disclaves began. The West Coast and mid-west would hold one or two and that would be all.

Nor would they last two or three days. (The Detroit Autoclave lasted four days. Do you hear that, Roscoe! Four days! I think you have all gone mad!) Indeed, they lasted only half a day. The program would begin about 1:00 p.m. Fans would have spent the morning on the train coming from New York or Washington. We didn't go by car; few fans had cars or flew in those days. The program would feature speeches by L. Sprague deCamp and Willy Ley. The attendance would be about 40. We would all congratulate the clave committee on the large turn-out. By 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. the program would be over and groups of us would go out to restaurants for supper. I seem to recall that we tended towards Chinese food. By 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. we would be back at the railway station, ready to head home.

And so to bed by 12:00 or 1:00 a.m.

These were very local affairs. We travelled along the railroad between Washington, New York and Philadelphia. No one, for instance, came to a Disclave from as far away as Boston or Cincinnati.

As for Jackie Franke - see here, Missy, a small regional convention is one with 20 attendees.

Fanzine activity has also increased tenfold. Donn Brazier has made a study of fanzine activity for the year 1975. His original list of fan editors, artists, locers and writers was over 1,500. Fanzine editors alone numbered more than 300.

(I don't know if this enormous list includes apas or not.) And, this was compiled just from the zines he himself had received.

Consider for a moment! In 1945, there were only 30 or so fanzine titles published. How many actifans were there? Lee Hoffman says in 1950-1955, there were less than 100.

Harry Warner writes in LOCUS that 1950 saw an upsurge in Fanac. That year saw the first issue of Lee Hoffman's QUANDRY. It was the fanzine of that era. Everyone who was a true fan subscribed. At that time, I was a member of SAPS and took only one outside fanzine - QUANDRY. Yesterday, I asked Lee Hoffman, who lives nearby, what her circulation was. She replied, "Two hundred and fifty." "Not over 300." "Oh no," she said.

OUT WORLDS has a press run of 1,000 and OUT WORLDS does not cover all of fandom the way QUANDRY did. LOCUS has 6,000 subscribers and ALGOL, a press run of 5,000. If we can say one fourth of Fandom took QUANDRY, the total fandom of 35 years ago only numbered about 1,000.②

What is the size of today's fandom? If we add to the 1,500 FMG fans, all the convention goers and club members, what would the total be?③

Richard Geis says he can live on the proceeds of his fanzine. LOCUS has an income of \$1,000 a week. QUANDRY made \$62.50 a month.

Prodom has increased accordingly. I recall that last year the membership of the SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS OF AMERICA was over 500. Ted White complains about a ghetto.

Who else can remember 1946?

In that year, there were only about two dozen S.F. writers.

That was all. Except for an occasional Huxley, all that was written was written by these few writers. Not only did the true fans know the names of the total community of writers, he knew their pen names and the publisher's house names as well. If a fan could afford to travel, he could have met all the S.F. writers that there were.

Who can remember 500 names?

It was the rare fan who, thirty or forty years ago, dreamed of academic recognition of Scientific-tion. Behold! In this new age, we have a college journal dedicated to us. It's the SCIENCE-FICTION STUDIES published by the Indiana State University. However, there is a fly in this bowl of cherries.



In those Eisenhower years, who would have prophesied that its editors would be solidly Marxist. They judge authors by how closely their stories approximate ideology.

In Volume 1, Part 3, Spring, 1974 issue of S.F.S. was an article S.F., OCCULT SCIENCES, AND NAZI MYTHS by Manfred Nagl.

Josef Lanz, "one of the 'grandfathers of Fascism and National Socialism,'" is presented to us as a "legitimate ancestor of modern S.F." And all this time you thought S.F. developed from H. G. Wells and Hugo Gernsback. Herr Nagl's doctrine, one warmly embraced by the editors of S.F.S. is this: 1) America is in the last stages of capitalism, 2) The divine Stalin said fascism is the last stage of capitalism. Therefore S.F. as a branch of U.S. literature, is fascist.

As an example of an Occult science S.F.S. gives us Entropy. A footnote (No.3) on p. 230 of S.F.S. #7, Nov., 1975 reads, "Entropy is, of course, a very characteristic late - 19th - century bourgeois myth (e.g., Henry Adams, Wells, Zola). See for further justification of this type of interpretation, my "In Retrospect," S.F.S. 1 (1974): 272-76."

A coming issue plans to dismiss Asimov's Foundations stories out of hand because their author is not a believing Communist. Its title, ASIMOV'S FOUNDATION TRILOGY: HISTORICAL MATERIALISM DISTORTED INTO CYCLICAL PSEUDO-HISTORY.

It may not surprise you to learn I have let my subscription to S.F.S lapse.

I met Bob Tucker about 1945. At that time, he had glossy black hair. By 1955 I noticed his hair was turning gray at the edges. He must be completely gray by now. If not, he is dyeing his hair, or what is more likely, he is wearing a toupee.

When I first met Tucker, he seemed very old to me. Golly! He must have been nearly 40. In those days, I couldn't imagine that the day would come when I would be almost 40. That I would be 40. That (Sob!) I would be over 40. God, but these kids have some nasty shocks in store for them!

The composition of fandom has changed while it has grown in size. In 1946, boys outnumbered girls in fandom by at least ten to one - more likely twenty to one. By 1963, Don Porter tells me, the ratio was nine to one. Since then, there has been a revolution. The latest fan polls show women are now one fourth of fandom. Will this trend continue? In fifteen more years will it be three females for every male? Forty years from now, will it be nine to one the other way? Will packs of femfans prowl convention corridors looking for any available male?

The relation of Fandom to its environment has also changed. In 1940 the second industrial revolution had not begun. Robots, computers, TV, space ships, atomic energy were either inconceivable or any respected authority would put them in the realm of fantasy. This affected how people viewed the typical S.F. story.

The master symbol of scientifiction was the space ship. My two eyes have seen a space ship in all its fiery glory. It was a night time moon shot - the last one, I believe. I watched the preliminaries on TV. When the ship was launched, I went out into the night and looked North. I soon noticed a large bank of clouds tinged with orange. Was that the ship? Would a space ship light a whole quarter of the sky? Perhaps it was just the light from Palm Beach? No! There was a streak of orange light rising through the sky! The exhaust was the same color orange always shown on covers of PLANET COMICS and THRILLING WONDER STORIES. John Campbell had been wrong. ASTOUNDING had always shown space ships as giving off a blue-white light, like an acetoline torch. As I watched, the comet trail gave off a spark just like the illos of FLASH GORDON. This whole scene was of great satisfaction to me.

In the old times, say about 1950, after a meeting of the Washington (D.C.) Science-Fiction Society, we would ask each other if we would see space travel in our life times. I believed in it intellectually but not emotionally. What about you, Bob Tucker, did you think in 1950 you would live to see a moon shot? Robert Lowndes, did you really expect TV and atomic energy in 1940?

I remember when I first became convinced space travel was coming soon. It must have been after 1950. On a street corner in Washington, D.C. was a large

magazine store with many technical magazines. Looking around, I saw a journal for the air frame and missile manufacturers. Its cover was a closeup photo of the moon. I knew!

I fairly danced down the street. "We are going to the moon." "We are going to the moon," I said in my mind. I looked closely into the dead eyes of passing mundanes, "You don't know it, but we're going to the moon," I told them silently.

Then space flight was achieved. My attitude changed. Now plumbers and C.P.A.'s and bus drivers and lawyers were talking space travel. It made it all seem rather vulgar. I liked things better when we fans were the only true believers, keepers of the flame, acolytes.

The first World Con I attended was the Philcon in 1947. By now, you have read the Midamerican Progress report and know the attendance (of the Philcon) was a miniscule 200. No one at that time thought it was a tiny con. I heard, on every hand, satisfaction at the large turnout. Nor did anyone think cons would grow vastly larger over the years. They have increased on tenfold, but twenty fold. The Midamerican committee has plans for four overflow hotels! "The mind falls fainting away."

By now, you know how loosely organized a con was in the late 40's. They were literally improvised as they went along. The '76 con had an elaborate organization chart. Do you hear that Roscoe! An organization chart!

John Millard, in Midamerican Progress Report #4 says "We could think of the cons as show business." In the late 40's they were more like family reunions.

He goes on to say, "In the early days, convention members helped to provide their own programming, but this is not true today." The trend set in long ago. In 1955, Mari Wolf wrote in the prozine, IMAGINATION. "More and more programs are being put on for fans, but no longer so much by fans." "Fan participatoin in the program seems to grow less each year."

Mari also noted the loneliness of the neofan. She had this to say: "A lot of the younger fans especially come to see people, both pros and fans, nad if everyone immediately vanished to every corner of the hotel (private room) the young fan is likely to feel left out indeed." Her solution? Not one neofan room, but several rooms, open all night, where pros and B.N.F.'s could hold parties and the neo meet them all.

I say again, this was published in a prozine so it was widely distributed through fandom. It took the worldcon committees 21 years to meet this need. Roscoe! Aren't we swift on the uptake! Aren't we nimble on our feet!

I remember, or think I do, two speeches from the '47 Philcon. One by Willy Lay, predicted a future oil shortage. He said gasoline might go as high as a dollar a gallon. A pro writer (I think it was Lester del Rey) predicted a world population explosion.

Both these topics took the mundane news media by surprise about fourteen years ago. The Philcon scooped them all by over a quarter of a century. Attend world cons and thirty years ahead of the times!

Such people already put on STAR TREK conventions. What is their attitude towards fan conventions? The NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE quotes promoter Albert Schuster as saying, "There is no such thing as altruism." He holds that the principal purpose of the "Trekkie cons" must be "to (exploit) the series commercially."

I think it was Linda Bushyager who reported that fandom was divided 50-50 about the possibility of S.F. EXPO '76 and no one seemed very excited about it.

Things would have been different in 1950. Fandom would have been indignant. Eighty percent of fandom would have been opposed. Fanzines would have urged a boycott. I think we can say today's fandom is more passive than that of thirty years ago. (5)

THE FIRST PAPERBACK

I remember the first STF paperback to be published.

It was in the late 1940's. You rotten kids should understand - in that era no SF was published in pocket book form. There were none on the stands. No,

not one! Suddenly I saw a picture of futuristic skyscrapers with rocket ships in the background. STF! It was THE POCKET BOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION, edited by Donald A. Wollheim. Hurrah! Hurrah! It cost 25¢, as they all did. If it could be done once it could be done again. I looked forward to seeing them published one at a time every two or three years.

I never dreamed of seeing a day when such books would fill a substantial portion of every news rack or that special pocket book stores would have rack on rack of them, including reprints of rare, old time books.

LIBRARIES

I live in a small southern town. The county seat of an agricultural area. Recently it has doubled in size because Mid-Westerners, mostly farmers, have retired here. It's not common to see a person about 30 or 40 or to see a child.

One block from where I live is a pasture with a horse in it. I have heard roosters crowing in the morning. Yet, even in this remote area, both local libraries, the town's and the county library across the bridge, have large sections devoted to STF. (I wonder who reads them?)

Perhaps you don't see what a revolution this is. In the 1950's, no library, not even the large metropolitan library of Washington, D.C., had a SF section. They did not even buy and display such books as the semi-progress published. The Library of Congress had no STF classification.

At that time (1950's) I was determined to read ever SF and fantasy story ever written. I read all the mags of course. Not too hard. FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES reprinted old storeis. I used to hunt through the basement stacks of the public library for any title that seemed like F or SF. Local fans had complete collections. The specialty press was mostly reprints. Too expensive for me at the time. I intended to vuy them second hand at conventions when they would be cheaper. If a first edition of SLAN cost \$3.00, why in four or five years it should be down to \$1.00. You see how unsuspecting I was.

I now see, in 1950 I underestimated how many stories that would be. It shows how rare and obscure such books were.

Presently a STF or Fantasy book is published everday. Only Don D'Amngssa even tries to keep up with the torrent.

APAS

On the back cover of MYTHOLOGIES #10 was a call for new fans to join APA 45. In this announcement it was described as "one of the oldest" apas in fandom. Shock! Amazement! I've never heard of it!

I come to you, gentle reader, an encapsulation of the ideas and attitudes of the 1940's. To me FAPA is the old apa and SAPS is the new Apa. What a sensation of unreality I had when I first saw SAPS, along with FAPA, referred to as old apas. When I was a member of SAPS we thought of it as a new apa. A daring idea at the time! In the 50's I somewhat feared for its collapse. If you had asked me then what the future held I might have predicted only FAPA would exist in the 70's. Now I understand there are dozens of apas. Dozen of apas! Roscoe save us!

WORLD CONS

In the early 50's the auction was a high point of the world cons. It was held at good time of the day. Everyone attended. Nothing else was programmed at the same time. Everyone was a collector, the friend of a collector, or had a commission from a non-attender to bid. Manuscripts, proofs, books and mags were sold.

Art work was all from publishers, mostly ink. Color covers had been given away by the mags as prizes. (ASTOUNDING did not contribute.) No fan or pro contributed new work to the Worldcon. Prices for art were really too low. Now, I hear, big exhibitions are held and prices are sky high.

DE CAPIO

How would I sum up the changes in fandom between the 50's and late 70's? It's the changes that occur when a small town grows into a city. The one big family feeling fades away.

Consider! If you went to a worldcon in the 50's and met 20 people (Aldous Huxley says 20 is the largest group that can retain individuality) you would have personally grown acquainted with one tenth of the entire con. A noticeable proportion. Today that would amount to an insignificant one percent.

If you were moderately active in a local club one or two or three members would belong to both SAPA and FAPA. They would talk about mailings at club meetings. On visits you could read some of their leading zines. A really important article, like Milton Rothman's analysis of the state of world cons, might be read out loud at the club. Even a non-member had a good idea what went on in all the apas. Today he would not know how many apas there are.

Members of different clubs corresponded, met, subscribed to each others fanzines. Just by listening to talk, a fan would learn of the leading personalities in all the clubs (there were only six), he would know lf local feuds and could judge which club could hold a worldcon. Now he wouldn't even know how many there are. Do you?

If the 50's fan subs to 10 fanzines he gct $\frac{1}{4}$ of all the zines that were published. How many would you have to get today to equal that?

I deduce, there are more fringe fans proportionately today. And they are more active. I take it - it's they who support the semipros.

① Being somewhat younger than Robert, I don't recall any of those names from the time he speaks of. However, interested as I am in the history of SF fandom, I recognize all of them. Joe Kennedy was quite well known as the editor of VAMPYRE, which was about the third best zine of that era (after Hoffman's QUANDRY and Tucker's LE ZOMBIE) and also as a prolific letter hack in PLANET STORIES. "JoKe" was his fannish name, a contraction of Joe Kennedy. I'll be reprinting selected articles from VAMPYRE in future issues of...AFP. Sargent Saturn was the pseudonym that the editor of STARTLING STORIES used to answer letters in that magazine until readers begged him to drop it for being too "childish."

② A few definitions: "FAPA" is the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, one of the oldest APA's and the most prestigious. "SAPS" is the Spectator Amateur Press Society, "FANAC" is short for "Fannish Activity" and OUTWORLDS and ALGOL both excellent and popular zines in their time, have stopped publication.

③ I've often wondered about that too, and my best opinion of the number of the fanish cadre is based on how you define "fan." The most traditional of fan is one who attends conventions, joins clubs and reads or publishes a fanzine---probably numbers less than 4,000 in America. If you broaden your definition to include all SF readers, the total might soar to 20,000 to 30,000. Add everyone who follows SF movies nad TV shows, and you must be talking about half a million or more. Anybody else have an opinion on these numbers or on the "proper definition of a fan?"

④ One can but hope.

⑤ S.F. Expo '76 was a "biggest, bestest, SF convention ever," only it never really happened. Lots of advertising, lots of hype, lots of money promised, all this over a supposedly "professional convention." Due to hotel problems, the con was cancelled only a few days before it was to open, which was far too late for many attendees who showed up anyway. Needless to say, there were some hard feelings.

SUPPORT
PUBLIC RADIO

TALK OF THE TOME

Letters of comment in the first ish? Well, you see, I ran most of this material in Myriad 116 (an APA that I'm in) last month and a few pertinent comments have already come in. I hope that next issue I'll be able to print a much bigger lettercol. That, my dear readers, is a hint.

LYNN HICKMAN
P.O. Box 6
Wauseon, OH 43567

An impressive zine. A few mistakes here and there such as in Ralph Roberts' article on Talmage Powell; he mentions "in the heyday of the pulp magazines (from the late forties to the early sixties)". That wasn't the heyday of the pulps, that was the period when the pulps were dying. The heyday of the pulps was from the middle teens until (World War II) started...I published one of the best Nolacon reports in my zine TLMA in 1952. I remember the con well. I bought a new Mercury convertible to make the trip from Statesville, NC to New Orleans. In fact I was the first fan introduced at the con by Harry Moore...Can't remember when I first met Bob Briggs but I used to stop in at some of their meetings in Washington. If I remember correctly, at that time they were held in the Transportation Building. Haven't seen Bob in years and would certainly have fun getting together with him and talking old times. I have thought of reprinting that con report, "When Fans Collide" by Richard Ellsberry in Hickman's Scrapbook if they don't use it in the NolaconII Progress Report. However, if they don't reprint it and you would like to, it would be o.k. with me. I could send you a copy...

Yes! Please do! The legend of Nolacon has always fascinated me. If I ever get to travel in a time machine, I intend to pop in on that party in room 770 at the St. Charles Hotel. Ralph Roberts seems to have been thinking of the boom in digest magazines in the '50es. I'm not sure if he understands the distinction that collectors place between pulps and digests.

BRIAN EARL BROWN
20101 W. Chicago,
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Detroit, MI 48228

This is a nice issue of your fanzine. I hope you can continue to do it. It reminds me of JoeD Siclari's zine FANHISTORICA...I wonder how Ralph Roberts can say that the heyday of the pulps was in the mid-50's when the pulps all died in the late 40's and early 50's...I skimmed a couple pages of

BATTLEFIELD EARTH once and can't imagine anyone reading it. It was 30's medocrity, but the summary of THE INVADERS PLAN sounds kind of cute..."They want out planet--later on, so they're fixing it up now..."

JoeD Siclari has published a number of invaluable fannish things, like Harry Warner's sequel to ALL OUR YESTERDAYS entitled; A WEALTH OF FABLE, and at least two volumes of reprints of Lee Hoffman's QUANDRY - surely one of the best fanzines of all time. I had been suscribing to FANHISTORICA but haven't heard anything from JoeD in over two years. He may have gafiated. Pity. I read BATTLEFIELD EARTH and really liked it, and I'll bet that if any name had been on it except "L. Ron Hubbard" a lot of other people would be saying the same thing. Of course if Hubbard's name hadn't been on it, that 500,000 word monster would never have found a publisher.

MARY KAY JACKSON
6166 Deewood Loop W.
Columbus, OH 43229

Very much enjoyed ...AFP. I've been in fandom nearly 10 years but really know very little about the history. Mostly out in the Southwest the rest of fandom is no older than I am. (She's 33 & 1/3, folks...-ed.) We had no roots back into the older era. Most of what I know I have gleaned from hanging out with Tucker, but much of that is hazy... I'd like to mention one thing I would not like to see (in ...AFP). I think if I have to read one more article about the infamous worldcon that wouldn't let some folks in, I'll puke. (Rats! There goes half of the next issue!) Got several giggles out of the Tucker article. And Harry Warner's article about southern fandom was interesting but I do beg to differ with one statement. "It's indisputable that the South has the only U.S. fandom which thinks of itself as a geographical entity." Oh yeah? You ever been to Texas? Texas fandom--a commonly used phrase in the Southwest--is definitely a thing unto itself. Thank God. And I rather think the midwest thinks of itself as a geographical entity... Has anyone taken up Warner's suggestion and tracked down the Columbia Group? I'd be interested in hearing their stories. Especially why they gafiated so fully and finally...The typo in the 5th paragraph of the Briggs article creates an interesting image--werefans!! I suppose most of us are werefans, living in Mundania as 'normal' people through the week and emerging on the weekends as fans.

The typo was my fault. Probably a Freudian slip. Even so it does seem appropriate, doesn't it? You admit that your knowledge of fannish history is hazy and although your LOC is very interesting some of your points beg discussion. Looks like we need a letter of comment from Harry Warner next ish. Harry?

I had been complaining about the influx of media fans into traditional fandom in that some APA and these next two letters address that topic rather well, I think. More on the same subject nextish.

DAVID SCHLOSSER
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You ask about the why and the effect of the change in the type of fan around these days. An interesting topic. Somehow I would have to think that the why of it relates to the teaching patterns of a few years back (at least in some areas). You constantly hear about students who are passed from grade to grade without really knowing how to read. I obviously don't know the full extent of this problem (ie: how many people and how severely affected) but this likely has some influence in all reading related areas of interest. There's also the influx of large numbers of "media" cons that have a tendency to advertise more so there's an easy access route for the person who likes SF but doesn't read the prozines. (I only rarely read the magazines, spending most of my time trying to catch up on books and if not for finding the SF club at college I might never have wound my way into fandom. Or at least, it would have been some years later.) While not reading the prozines isn't the same as not reading, there is rather little advertising of SF clubs or cons in other of the print media. The future of fandom vis-a-vis this, I think, depends at least somewhat on those of us who are still strongly into written SF. If we want that orientation to hold up, it might behoove us to spread a wider net for potential fen of that orientation. Altho none have yet attended, I have passed on LASFS information to a number of people I know who might be interested.

I should also point out that there is an implied assumption in your question - that this "change" in the makeup of fandom is not a good thing. Depending on how extreme things get, that may not be the case at all. I know a number of fen who, for various reasons, don't read much SF. This does not make them illiterate or unintelligent or anything else. They're fun to talk (and otherwise communicate with, witty, knowledgeable, ect., just not into the literature of the stars. So who can say what such a change will bring? Not me, and I won't even try.

I'll agree that one does not have to be an SF fan to be human ('tho grudgingly) but let's you and me go to any SF con sometime. For every fan there that you can show me who is intelligent, witty, and fun to...er, communicate with, I'll show you 10 who are total fuggheads. (I wonder what fuggheads call us normal fans?)

PAUL KING
P.O. Box 18727
Denver, CO 80218

I wouldn't lose too much sleep over all of the media fans that have been such a nuisance at conventions the last few years. Pretty soon some new form of instant gratification will come along and that'll be the last we see of them. Let's face it, after enough of their expensive ray-guns have been broken by irritable old farts that they made the mistake of assaulting, they'll crawl back into the holes where they belong, or at least they'll quit bothering people who have no tolerance for their malarky. I'm more concerned with those people who do read but flock to the garbage cranked out by so many of the more prolific of our contemporary writers (Piers Anthony, for instance). These people flock to conventions, hoping to meet new writers of various mindless series, and have so swollen the ranks of convention-goers that many old-time fans don't want to deal with the crowds and stay home. And writers, who have in the past been so generous with their time, stay hidden from view so as not to be inundated.

Even as short a time as I have been involved in fandom, I have noted, though to a lesser extent, many of the trends commented upon by R.G. Briggs. Why, at the first convention I attended (MileHiCon 6) there was still a very closed feeling to the fannish community. Fanzines were still significant back then ...fandom, in my reconning, consisted largely of people who were social lepers for one reason or another. Fully one percent of the people were dwarves (not related to each other), and there were few people who could be considered (by even the most generous) as good physical specimens. Those people who were not physically impaired or grossly overweight were really strange people. It was easy to see why so many of them had foregone the usual pleasures of youth in order to confine themselves to their rooms to read escapist genre fiction. One did not have to be a trained statistician to determine that fandom did not represent a normal sampling of society. In spite of the many problems one would expect in this society of misfits there was one great redeeming quality: 95% of all the convention attendees read a lot. It wasn't as if you could mention an author's name in a crowded room without at least half a dozen people knowing the work of the author in question. Of the 5% that didn't read a lot there were some who were so involved in fanzines that they didn't have time to read science fiction, a situation that I found very confusing. So where has fandom gone in the 12 years that I've been active? Well, the illiterati have been making great headway. The proportion of fans at any general convention (excluding such cons as Karval Kon and Corflu) that do very little reading has increased to at least a third (possibly twice that). Needless to say, very few have the excuse

of their fanzine involvement. Even those fans who do still read books have become fragmented. 12 years ago the fantasy fans read science fiction and the "hard-science" science fiction fans would admit to having read some fantasy. Now there are fans who only read series fantasies, only heroic fantasies, only horror, only "speculative fiction", or only works from some other sub-genre. 12 years ago there was a general lack of scientific sophistication among fans, but nothing like that which exists today. Where do I think fandom is headed? I really haven't the slightest idea. I wouldn't be at all surprised to see a general fragmentation, where media fans go to media cons and science fiction cons eliminate all media, gaming and costume functions. But this would represent an extreme position. I'd like to see a trend in this direction, but I doubt that it will happen. (In the hopes that it will, I'm about to start advertising a Worldcon bid containing the features I just mentioned.)

I generally agree with your idea of "it would be nice if conventions were like this", but I don't believe that any general SF con in America has the guts to cut out the gaming, costuming, or media aspects of the now traditional con program, simply because a convention committee invariably plans its convention to please what it perceives as the typical fan. This creature has nothing to do with the traditional fan - which you've described fairly well, I suppose - rather it is the ruddy young cyber-punk fan that you and I have been railing against. Cons don't usually aim to make money, but they have a deep seated fear of losing money, so ideals sometimes get compromised. Still, "traditional fan" that I am, I well remember when I was 14 and the tired old fans would glare at me and my friends and grumble about how our kind would ruin fandom. So it goes...

Has "our kind" ruined fandom? Can fandom survive the introspection? Can I keep you reading ...AFP long enough to find out? Catch the nextish and see!

"I told the police that I was not injured but on removing my hat, found that I had a fractured skull."
 -Daveed Lawson; Rivercon VI trip report.

CLASSIFIED ADS (in the Fannish Class, that is.) *It will be my delight to print free-of-charge, your ads so long as they are of a fannish nature. That includes ads for the buying and selling of books and magazines, fanzines, Worldcon tickets, gryphins, Dean drives; that sort of thing. No comics. I reserve the right to edit and to misspell. One insertion unless I need filler. All that follows is my ad - address on page 2.*

WANTED: Fanzines. Specifically, Le ZOMBIE, THE ACOLYTE, HORIZONS, SPACESHIP, LUNA', VAMPYRE (issues 1,2,3,4), LOCUS #45, THE ALIEN CRITIC #2,3,4, and most pre-1960 titles. Please send lists.

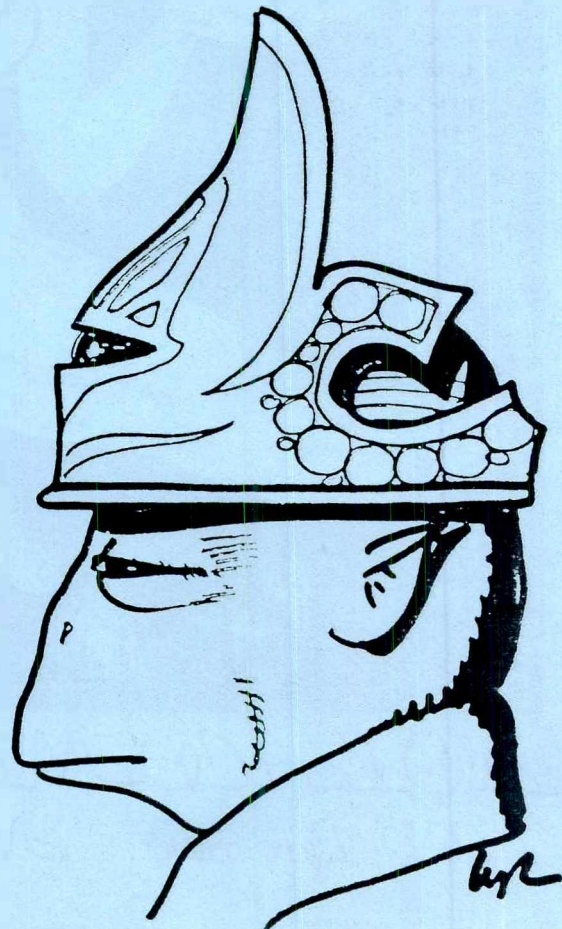
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