

Alif 20

POSTMAILED TO FAPA 107

From Karen Anderson, 3 Las Palomas, Orinda, California 94563

The shit has now officially hit the fan (disclaimer or not, as you like). The 107th mailing arrived today with the announcement that Walter Breen has been blackballed by the votes of fourteen assorted hate-spreaders and scaredycats. I don't think I want to belong to a group who won't let Walter in, and I hope the success of the petition to override the blackball will prove that this isn't such a group. I spent this afternoon and evening phoning people and collecting written opinions to publish in this postmailing.

First, since as Pacificon parliamentarian he concurred in the committee's decision to exclude Walter, I'll place Anthony Boucher:

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

--Anthony Boucher (even though he knows that FAPA is none of his business)"

Now the FAPA members living in Berkeley who did not cast blackball votes:

"I don't think I've ever made much of a secret of the fact that, in person, Walter Breen leaves me pretty cold. But, like so many fans, Walter in person and Walter by letter or on the printed page are two different people. Looking at it as objectively as possible, I think that Walter has demonstrated quite satisfactorily by both quality and quantity of publishing and writing, his right to a membership in FAPA. More than this, I think Walter's ideas, opinions and ability to express himself make him a valuable acquisition as a member and I don't think 14 people should be able to keep him out, especially considering the rather perfect timing of the attacks on him. In other words, I want to see Walter in FAPA.

Unfortunately, fans being fans, it's quite possible that, though 33 of us may want to see Walter reinstated, he may not be, because enough of you might not be in the mail with your petitions. If you're one of the lazy or forgetful ones and if you're in favor of the petition, how about digging it out of the mailing and getting it off now, while you're thinking about it."

--Dick Ellington

"About five years ago the FAPA Blackball was devised. On several occasions*used effectively to bar from FAPA membership those who would destroy the enjoyment of the group by the other members. Historically, then, perhaps it has been well used. But in the case of Walter Breen, who cannot be construed even by the most actove of his detractors as one who would spoil FAPA for his co-members, it has been ill-used. Walter has shown again and again since he came into fandom that he produces consistently interesting and lit-erate material. His personal life has no effect whatever on his potential performance as a FAPAN or, clearly, on his past success (cf. egoboo poll) as a waiting-lister. No matter how you might feel about the Pacificon II committee's action, we don't see how it has any bearing on Walter's being detrimental to FAPA. Please sign the petition to re-instate him!"

-- Jerry and Miriam Knight

*it has been shd come here; sorry--ka

Walter was rated above 24 current members of FAPA in the Ego-boo Poll, including Art and Nancy Rapp, Ial Ashworth, Rick Sneary, Andy Main, Art Wilson, John Trimble, and Ted Johnstone; and tied with Bob Pavlat for 42nd place. Obviously he would be appreciated as a member.

The decision to bar him from the convention can be defended only on the grounds that the members of the committee might just possibly get in trouble on account of a California law. This is totally irrelevant to the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. It is ridiculous to blackball Walter for something he couldn't do in a fanzine if he tried.

It is also ridiculous for those Fapans who saw no need to blackball him to allow the 14 who did, to deprive us of a desirable member.

There were two petitions in the 107th mailing. The one published by Bruce Pelz is, I believe, worded better. Vote on that form at Feast; but, to prevent the differently-worded petitions failing separately, it would be better to use both.

But if you're going to vote to override the blackball, do it right now. Don't tell yourself that you have three months. That's three months to forget that you ought to do it.

ALIF #20

A FAPA Postmailing

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FIRST CLASS