



This is B.C. #1 published by Railee Bothman, 1300 West Adams, Kirkwood, Mo. 63122 and Leigh Couch #1 Cymry Lane, Rt. 2 Box 889, Arnold, Mo. 63010 principally for our own amusement. It is a personalzine of absolutely no pretensions or importance. We are doing it because we want to. Our mailing list consists of people we like. No money is required to get this zine but we would like to hear from you. We don't dare suggest trades, but we sure would like to get any fanzines you might feel like sending. You will probably get several issues from us before we decide that you aren't interested. Some of you are on our permanent mailing list, like it or not. You know who you are!

Readers Guide: Anything by Railee will be prefaced with a B, and anything by Leigh will have a C at

the beginning. Now let's see what happens.

B. I have this picture in my mind of authors staggering up from their mailboxes with armloads of mail from admiring fans and so many letters that they can't possibly answer everything and still have time to earn a living. At least this is what Harlan Ellison told me at St. Louiscon.

It is so very frustrating to a reader to just have to say something about a particular story, and one writes an impassioned letter that vanishes into the depths of the post office never to be heard from again.

I've got a solution, I think. Whenever a fan writes a letter, include a blank self-addressed post card. If the author wants to show that he has received the letter (maybe even read it!) he can just shove the card into the next outgoing batch of mail. If there is time, or he is in the mood, there is even room for a note.

I'm going to start doing this, and hope many other people take up the practice. What do you think about this idea?

OFFICIAL NOTICE: No. 1 Cymry Lane has absolutely no legal status. It is a joke on the post office, the Highway Dept., and rules in general. Please use it on any correspondence to me (Leigh) but include the Rt. etc. The road I live on has no name, just a number, and only one house, mine. I think it would really be funny if it somehow became an official designation. My battered, hand-cranked A.B. Dick mimeo is named Cymry Press, und zo.....

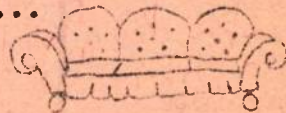
C. Off The Top of My Typer
It's all my fault of course. If I hadn't suggested it and talked Railee into it, you wouldn't be reading this piece of trivia. But I have had the itch to publish for some time.

Once a fan publisher, always a fan publisher.

I never even really considered publishing anything all by myself. I tried it once and it lasted just one issue. I don't even like to talk about it. But with Railee for company, I have the courage to try again. Sort of like two kids in an old dark house who hold each others hands for comfort and nerve.

Why publish anything at all? What reason is there for a personalzine? In my case, I think I have some reasons, at least they satisfy me. There are so many of you I would like to keep in touch with and my time is so limited (it really is; sad and mournful details upon request). I see it this way, if I send you this thing and you send a post card or don't even send anything at all, at least you have heard from me. Some of you will get copies whether you want them or not, so you will have to tell me to stop or use this to wrap the garbage in.

Then again, this may turn out to be a one-shot (although we don't plan that), I've been in and out of this fannish cosmos enough to know that the stayers are few. I wonder why that is? I have been told that the average life of a fan is three to five years.



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I believe Alexei and Cory Panshin were the last ones to mention that in their very fine article in F. & S.F. One ex-fan told me that he had grown up now and felt it was time to enter the real world and put away childish things. Hmpf! I felt only mildly annoyed by that. If that's the way he sees it, okay by me. I couldn't help but wonder if he is going to turn out to be one of these super-serious dudes who will retire with a gold watch and a life-time pension.

Another fan who is drifting steadily away told me that she saw fandom as escapism. This did annoy me. Everyone has some means of escape. It might be alcohol, golf, drugs, chasing women (or men), or what-have-you. I can think of many really destructive things people do to avoid reality. If fandom is escapism it's a great escape. I have never had any urge to put fandom down. I really like fans with all their quirky ways and quizzical attitudes and future ideas. They don't bore me. Most people in the mundane world give me a screaming case of boredom.

BOOK SURVEY

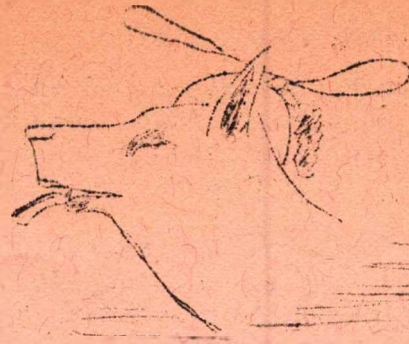
In the local Book Emporium Dianetics is a very big thing. Don Blyly and I counted 36 (or was it 38?) titles, ranging from hardbacks to a sleazy comic book for 50¢. The other prices ranged from \$1.25 for a collection of testimonial letters about the "changed lives" due to Dianetics, to hardbound handbooks for up to \$8.00, wow! I really didn't realize how profitable the whole thing was. Nor (my husband) works with a girl who is into it about \$800.00 worth to date. I'll quote her exact words, "The whole thing up to Registered Clear will only cost me about \$4000.00 and I would pay that for a car and this will change my whole life." No wonder people go into the God business.

R. When Leigh said which conventions she was going to, I asked if I could go along and hang on her skirt, so I could meet lots of important people and go to parties (Gosh! Wow!). A little while later Leigh suggested that we publish a fanzine, so at least someone would have heard of me. Do you think she was trying to tell me something? Anyway, it's going to give me a chance to get a few things off my chest - much better than talking to myself.

L. I haven't been telling her any lies, I swear on my collection of Thrilling Wonder Stories! At least, not very many. At this present moment I plan to be at Midwescon and Pecon. It saddens me greatly to miss another Worldcon, but it was not meant to be. I am in school again and that's expensive as hell. Need I tell you? This semester I got lucky, I am taking a course called Drug Abuse at the St. Louis College of Pharmacy and it isn't costing me anything. It's paid for by some sort of grant. Being a teacher, I'm supposed to learn all about "killer weed" and all those other evil substances and then go back to the classroom and convince my students not to try them. Fat chance.



FRITZ



R. It seems that most fans are cat people but we own (belong to?) a 125 lb. left-handed German Shepherd named Fritz.

Fritz is about as mild as a dog can be, and adores being petted. A two burglar team could easily clean out our house - one to load up, and one to keep scratching Fritz's behind.

Next door lives a Sheltie a year older than Fritz. He considers her his teacher and leader - everything she does can only be right. She has taught him to play tag, and find his way around Kirkwood.

Also next door lives a Great Dane, a very large goose, and a tamed wild duck. The Great Dane has turned out to be a wanderer, so he has to be penned up and the fowl let out. This is very nervous-making for all of us. Fritz sits in front of our door watching the fowl until one crosses onto our property. Then he takes off, mouth wide to grab, while people explode from all our doors screaming, "No, Fritz, drop it!"

It wouldn't be so bad if he catches one of the fowl and takes it into the woods to eat, but he would probably eat it at the neighbors front door.

Almost everyone - even cat lovers - makes friends with Fritz. One neighbor came to say that Fritz was part of a pack of dogs who are upsetting his trash and garbage cans. All the time he's sounding off, he's also patting Fritz.

Our biggest problem is that Fritz is tearing up our road. He likes people to throw things for him to chase, such as fireplace logs and large rocks. Now they're used up - I think chewed up - so he worries at the asphalt until he breaks off a piece for someone to throw. I know there are a lot of rock collectors, but a dog that collects driveways!!!!

L. At present I have no dogs. The three I had have all gone to that big backyard in the sky where it is always spring with a temperature of 63 degrees, new green grass, and a slab of sun-warmed concrete out of the wind. The bones last forever there, the drinking pan is always full of cool, clean water and friendly hands for scratching behind ears are located at convenient places. Fleas are consigned to the lowest, hottest pits of hell.

I remember being told long ago by some authority figure that there were no animals in Heaven. I decided immediately that I didn't want to go there, said so, and got lectured and punished. I haven't changed my mind.

But cats. Oh, do I have cats! Presently residing on my 15 acre hillside are Muffin (14 years old and Lesleigh's first kitten), Catnip (9 years old and brought home by my mother as a very small blue-eyed kitten), Tabby (8 years old and nobody liked her for years except me), Debit, Licorice, Katmandu, Khat (do you know what that is?), Tethys (Do you know where that is?), Bozo, Amy (all white and was given to me by Margie Boese when she had to move to a new apartment - she was a city cat and mistrusted grass and dirt for a long time), Ophie and Casey (they are black brothers), Ronnie (named after a kid at school because he asked me to), Jane and Muffin II.

I've liked cats all my life, even when no one else did. I used to have to look hard for canned cat food and buy tuna fish when I couldn't find it. But then butchers would sell you liver for ten cents a pound and chicken necks were free if you knew where to go begging. How do I support my cats now? Well I do it with a combination of Purina Chow and all the scraps and food I can rip-off from the country club where I moonlight. I remember when people thought I was a real freak because I liked cats. I am attracted by their beauty, their grace, their pragmatism, and their independence.

* * * * B. C. - Before Campbell ? * * * * * three * * * * *

DUCKS ARE MUNDANES

HOW DO YOU DEFINE A FAN?

Maureen Bothman asked that question one evening at Railee's house. So I decided to turn it into a question and answer session and see what happened. Donn Brazier, Railee and I were into this and here are the results. I asked if they thought fans were introverted. Donn said, "No, they are extroverted."

Railee, "They are basically introverted but conceal it from others. They trust fans more than people in general."

Me, I think they are of both species. I've met some very extroverted fans.

Next question; prompted by mention of Dianetics. Are fans gullible?

We all three decided they are gullible in different ways from the public at large. I think the majority of fans know quite a lot about how people behave and what makes them tick, they often lack the ability to put this knowledge to use.

From Maureen again, "Yes, but how do you define a fan?" Oh, right she did ask that so we decided we had better come up with a definition.

Donn Brazier: An S.F. fan is one who likes S.F. enough to want to communicate, and succeeds in communicating with other readers of S.S. thereby, through feedback, both become fans."

Railee: "You want to talk about S.F."

Leigh: "People who read S.F. and fantasy live, somehow, outside the normal culture, or frame of reference and seek similar people. They are future oriented or open to alternative life styles or social systems. It is partly a social need. Fake fans are people who fill the above description, but do not like to read S.F." Mouthy aren't I?

Next question: are fans unstable? Resounding no from all three of us. What else? We felt that if fans had managed to keep their identity and sanity and find other congenial people, then they must be pretty damn stable.

Are fans socially inept? Depends on what you mean. Define your terms and so forth. An awful lot of fans I know just will not endure the, "How are you? How's the job? How's the wife and kids, or dog, or bowling game?" routine.

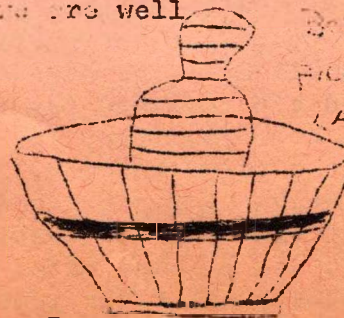
Donn thinks they are inept and doesn't think this is bad. Railee thinks a lot of them are shy and don't always have the courage to meet with people.

Are fans conventional? No pun intended. Donn, with his uncanny perception, got to the nexus of this. He said, "They are conventional within fandom, whatever fandom accepts, they will accept." I have to agree with that. I feel this is true of fashions in fanzines, conventions and, oh lots of fannish details I can't locate in my scrambled head right now. There are pace-setters in fandom as well as in straight society or the counter-culture, and imitators. I think many fans are afraid of being thought different from other fans. This is why I am so very fond of fans like Rick Sneary who is his own fan, always was, and always will be. Live long and prosper Rick!

Other super-fans who are their own persons come to mind, Harry Warner, Don Fitch, Banks Mebane, Buck and Juanita Coulson, Ted White and Bob Tucker. I admire and like all of them. Maybe you don't but you will have to admit that they imitate no one.

Are fans amoral? What a sticky one! It presupposes an accepted moral code and that is unreal, especially today when we are well into a social revolution that is touching everyone. Donn thinks that each fan has his own idea of a moral code.

Railee thinks that they are not any more amoral than any other group of people. But then, I don't know what Railee thinks is amoral, or, for that matter, Donn. My own moral code is pretty simple, don't hurt other people unnecessarily, don't cut up tender egos, keep your nose out of other peoples ways of finding love.



BOB WAS PICKLED LAST NIGHT!

R. B. after the Heidelberg party at St. Louiscon.

Leigh (still!)

I think you would call the foregoing a humanist type of philosophy, or maybe just a way to stay out of trouble.

Are fans intelligent? Me. "Of course they are. Far above ordinary mortals. After all, they associate with me." I really do think they are, and they express that very valuable facet of intelligence, creativity. I believe in slans. Railee: Concluded swiftly that they were certainly above average and much beyond the general run of the population.

Donn, "Yes." Well we wouldn't say anything else because we consider ourselves to be intelligent and we are fans.

Are fans frustrated writers? Donn, "Yes." I wish you could have heard the positive inflection and emphasis. He is certainly a frustrated writer and he has so much talent that I don't know why he isn't submitting stories to publishers.

Railee: "I'm not a frustrated writer, just a frustrated talker."

Me. I am a frustrated writer, I'm a chicken writer. I write for the trunk or file cabinet. I have written fannish material under pseudonyms. I often read over what I write and think, "How awful!", and vow never to let anyone see it. Well maybe someday

Fan Party: An Oral Collage - These are random voices from a fan get together where the wine glasses were not allowed to be empty for long.

"They went by so fast I couldn't count 'em.

Paleontology is a dead business.

I have sore ears because I have new glasses

What lives in Godfrey Daniel's igloo?

I wish I had a Mota Kar. Joe is swamped, get on his waiting list.

How do the Masons relate to Heinlein? That sounds perverse.

B.C.? Bring Cash? Bourbon and Coke? Benyo & ?

Wotinhell is a Kinkajou?

L. Did you ever try counting the clicks of the phone with your eyes closed. Doc Savage could do it. I never could!

R. As a member of the group of fans who were raised Jewish until they were old enough to ignore the whole bit, I remember that whenever I brought home a friend, my parents would always ask "Who are their parents?" As members of very large families, my parents knew just about everyone in the Jewish community either as relatives, schoolmates, or friends of their brothers and sisters. If the parents were unknown, or not the right quality, I was more or less subtly persuaded to change friends.

In our more mobile and scattered society it is not possible for me to know all the parents of my children's friends, so I have a new way. First I ask the new friend if he reads science fiction, and who are his favorite authors. Then I ask if his parents read science fiction. If either one does, I feel this is bound to be an intelligent, trustworthy family.

So far, at least, the method works fine.

L. Railee needs to go to some conventions and meet some of the handsome, persuasive, young male fans who are just bursting with hormones. Her method works here, but in New York? or L.A.? or San Francisco?

lesleigh luttrell for duff

***** five

"THE REVOLUTION OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE UNITED STATES. IT IS ONLY THERE THAT IT CAN HAPPEN. AND IT HAS ALREADY BEGUN."
without marx or jesus by jean-francois revel in saturday review

***** six *****

L. I think I have the "Februaries". This is similar to neurotic depression and is brought on by the hideous St. Louis weather and the general ugliness of everything. It's time to lose myself in The Hugo Winners and do some time traveling. When I began the book I thought I would just read all the way through, but my attention riveted on The Cold Equations, one of my all time favorites and I had to read it first. The first time I read it I remember sitting and thinking about the story for over an hour. That's a long time friends, at least for me. It came to me then that this was the way it would be sometime, somewhere, maybe many times. I thought of this story again when Apollo 13 was limping home. I was sure that this was it and they would never make it. I knew too much about space to believe in the good old murrican movie ending. It surprised the hell out of me when they did make it.

Random Thoughts While Reading Aforesaid Book: I wonder why Dr. A. doesn't like Nightfall? And why James Blish doesn't like Surface Tension? There is real magic about these two stories for me. In Nightfall it is the dramatic reversal of a basic human rhythm that goes back uncounted ages to the Serengeti plains and beyond. The story touches something deep in me and evidently in other SF readers.

Surface Tension has the fascination of size change, racial memory and the god-like father figure of Para. This particular treatment of immortality appeals to me more than most of the crap I have heard delivered on that subject. But then I have been from childhood spell bound by the very small, Alice under the toadstool, the Borrowers, fairies, gnomes, elves, etc. Also the idea of a water world - ah! On days when gravity seems to be an evil thing to me, I wonder what it would be like to be continually supported and surrounded by water. It seems a most attractive thing.

As Railee and I approach the end, I must remain firm in my resolve to go ahead and mail this thing out. We haven't engaged in any pretentions here. Here we are, warts and all. We wish you all good things whatever they may be.

Presenting B.C. with a cast of two.
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