

*****May 1972*****

This is B.C. #2 published by Railee Bothman, 1300 West Adams, Kirkwood, Mo. 63122 and Leigh Couch, #1 Cymry Lane, Rt. 2 Box 889, Arnold, Mo. 63010 -and I wasn't so sure we would actually do it! It still remains a personalzine published because we want to and we don't accept money for it. Letters, and trades are most gratefully accepted. We are warning you again that you will probably receive several issues until we decide that you aren't interested in us, and some of you who are on our permanent mailing list, would have to ask to be dropped. If you know me (Leigh) and are in town, my phone number is 314-296-7929.

Readers Guide: And I totally blew it last time, anything by Railee will have her first name, and anything by me will have my first name.

Leigh: We were so surprised! You wrote, you actually wrote! Many thanks. Life is change. Yes. Spring is here, inevitably. The signs are everywhere. There are more dead animals on the highway: skunks, opossums, raccoons just out of hibernation, dogs and cats out to enjoy the fine weather and ending up gut-smeared on the highway.

The garbage trucks are stronger, much stronger! Jefferson County is St. Louis' and St. Louis' County's garbage dump and I drive with my windows further open now.

"Killer Smog" hangs over us about two days per week making my throat hurt and my eyes water. Boys are throwing rocks through windows and shooting at anything that moves. Kids of all descriptions are tossing beercans and soda bottles in my driveway (the better to flatten your tires with my dear), and married couples out for a drive are leaving plastic bags of garbage and trash in my woods.

Some sportsman shot a Llama on the Busch Estate, and St. Louis has had its usual spring tornado which killed one, injured 17 and did about 2 million dollars worth of damage. Ah, spring!

But the greening Earth does offer me consolation. My trees are all leafed out now and the highway can no longer be seen. I have my warm-weather isolation back again. We have 7 kittens and one sleeps on his back with all four paws in the air. The expression on his face reminds me of a smiling Buddah. Flowers bloom, grass smells warm and sweet, butterflies drift about my back yard, and humming birds visit my red honeysuckle bush. The usual. But this is only temporary, because the bull dozers are coming to get us! The Mo. Hy. Dept. is lusting after half our land, and those boys get what they want, by damn! Just one mile further in toward the city, 33 duplexes are being built on 23 acres, and subdivisions are popping up everywhere. I feel as if the enemy is over running us. We moved here when it was real country; and Arnold was a country town, but that was 15 years ago. Now, sorrowfully, we are going to have to think of moving again. Subdivision life is not for me, I would feel jailed. We think about 4 more years here, until Michael gets out of college, and then, off to somewhere. Somewhere south I think, I don't like winter and I'd like to live somewhere where winter never comes. I wonder how full Florida will be four years from now? Carolina maybe?

"We were their gods, and that was that."

Nine Princes In Amber

Roger Zelazny

ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST

In which Leigh continues to assault your eyes and ears. Background music provided by The Jefferson Airplane.

This past year it has become ever more plain to me that the world is an uglier place. Not just the buildings or the cities or the cars or the plastic everythings, but people. I find myself growing nostalgic for the '60s when the world seemed about to be re-born, and everyone was young and loved one another.

Where have all the flower children gone? I miss them. I mourn their absence. I suppose it is true, every eight years (high school and college) another historical epoch.

The young people I see now are drab and mostly dull and hard-eyed. Sometimes I see haunted, fearful eyes, but not often. These young people today are somberly dressed and seem to have an outlook to match. Blue jeans and work shirts are their uniforms. Long hair is mandatory, and on many of them it is esthetically unpleasant. Nothing looks stranger to me than an obvious jock-type with flowing locks.

Kurt Vonnegut said that the young have suffered a military defeat. He may be right. Perhaps they are in hiding.

Music seems to be stuck somehow. I miss the excitement of the Beatles at their peak. I miss The Blues Project, Dylan (raspy voiced - not sweet and gentle!), the old Jefferson Airplane, and Crosby, Stills, and Nash.

What I hear now seems repetitive and stale. I keep waiting for someone or some group to come along that doesn't sound like a re-run.

The only ones who seem to have anything to say to me are the single performers, such as Nillson, Cat Stevens, Carole King, Chris Christofferson and Gordon Lightfoot.

Why is it that the creative few are always doomed to be copied and diluted to stinking mediocrity by the great mob at large? Perhaps creative people should hide what they do. I hear that now some are. But no, I'm sure that wont work. Madison Ave. will search them out and sell what they do, or think, or make to the dull crowd. That crowd just seemingly waits to be told what to buy next, whether it be a life-style or a record.

A strange dullness seems to lay over people now. I wonder if it is the result of the uncountable multiplicity of problems and hassles that face all of us.

Will tomorrow be any better? For the great mass of people, I don't think so. That is my cynicism surfacing. But for most people, their minds have been sold down the river re the old slave saying, years ago. Change is probably not possible for them any more.

Change is uncomfortable, you know, and to be avoided. The routine track, worn into a rut, is good enough for most people.

Sometimes I envy people like that. I know that they have answered the major questions like who am I? what am I expected to do with my life? where am I going? what about death? They have answered them sometimes by osmosis and the questions have not really surfaced. Parents and culture have presented ready-made solutions for all these worrisome topics and so, they are spared the pain of thinking about them. It must be nice to be a "Mom, God, Apple Pie, My Country, Right or Wrong" type. Much less hard on the nervous system!

But I've never answered those questions. I've always lived in "Edge City", mentally and emotionally. Not a comfortable place to be. Out there, nothing much is sure and things have a habit of changing suddenly, the ground repeatedly drops from under my feet. Ah well!

I continue to be dissatisfied, uncomfortable, and troubled by longings for

"In deepest Brooklyn, perhaps, amongst whose labyrinthine ways an army of surveyors could scarce find their own stakes?"

The Sources Of The Nile Avram Davidson

something better.

The quality of my life is certainly declining, along with the planet's.
How about yours?

IF YOU LIKE CHARLIE

- MCNEED'S ~~A DOGS~~ LIFE (1918) SHOULDER ARMS (1918) THE PILGRIM (1922)
First National Films
- CITY LIGHTS (1931) with Harry Meyers 80 minutes United Artists
- MODERN TIMES with Paulette Goddard Chester Conklin Harry Bergman
89 minutes United Artists
- GREAT DICTATOR (1940) with Paulette Goddard Jack Oakie
128 minutes United Artists
- LIMELIGHT (1952) with Claire Bloom 145 minutes United Artists
- KING IN NEW YORK (1957) with Dawn Adams 116 minutes Independent
- MONSIEUR VERDOUX (1947) with Martha Raye 123 minutes United Artists

Charles Chaplin, known the world over as "Charlie" was born 82 years in London. His parents were music hall performers and Charlies early life was spent touring England. Eventually, he became a dancer in music halls. He made one detour, at age 14, to play in the legitimate theatre in "Sherlock Holmes" with the great William Gillette. Returning to vaudeville, Chaplin joined Fred Karno's Company and accompanied the Karno troupe in America, at which time he was starring in principal comedy parts. Chaplin soon entered the motion picture field (1913) and within one year became a world-famous star.

Certainly, Chaplin is considered one of the most controversial figures of our time. He is also the most famous living personality. His immortal "Tramp" character is known in every corner of the world. More books have been written about him than any living actor. Books of essays on his films have been translated into almost every language. He is acknowledged as perhaps the greatest genius of the world of film. As producer, writer, director, actor, and composer, Chaplin is without equal in the annals of film history of versatility and contribution to the motion picture art.

As a comedian, Chaplin has no equal; he is the greatest living international drawing attraction. Chaplin's productions throughout the world have grossed five times that of any other American film. (Second only to "Gone With The Wind") Re-issues of his films have met with more success, on all continents, than most recent productions, both critically and financially.

Chaplin is a star, author and director of over eighty films, and composed the music for his full-length productions. He has enchanted and enriched the lives of over six generations of moviegoers. In an era that has seen the birth of the word "superstar", Chaplin outshines them all.

This piece of press-agent blurbery was cribbed entire by me (Leigh) from a local theatre program - the Magic Lantern. But, you know what, I believe it! I recommend "Charles Chaplin: My Autobiography" Simon & Schuster 1964 I read it while I was spending six weeks in the hospital in that very long ago time. This man knew everyone! Albert Einstein accompanied him to the premiere of "City Lights". A complete listing of his films is given in an appendix.

"Norwegian and Sudanese?" THIS WITCH by Wilson Tucker

****four*****

HEREBY ANNOUNCING PERSONA ON FIRST COME FIRST SERVED BASIS

NO MORE THAN THREE PERSONA ALLOWED

SEX CROSSING IS PERMITTED

PERSONA IN THE FILE:

Albert Einstein	Willy Ley	Ben Franklin
Leonardo Da Vinci	Louis Armstrong	Jimi Hendrix
H. G. Wells	Christopher Columbus	Lydia Pinkham
H.P. Lovecraft	George Washington	Babe Ruth
Janis Joplin	John Kennedy	And many more

Observe caution in making your choice in regard to compatibility between yourself and each persona, and the compatibility of the three together, if you decide to take the maximum.

Once assigned to you there is no erasure, as described in Silverberg's TO LIVE AGAIN, a novel which led to this present reality.

Persona of person's still living may be assigned only on an option basis for recording later.

Each such option reduces your immediately possible persona recording by a like number.

Duke Ellington is not available for option having already been optioned to the President of TO LIVE AGAIN, Inc.

Send your name and up to three persona, marked clearly either immediate or option.

Do not enclose a check; we will bill your world-wide credit account.

Prices run by the inch of recording at \$10.00 per inch, plus \$100.00 for leader and packaging.

May be self-recorded on any standard tape recorder or deck accepting earphones (stereo).

ADDRESS ALL ORDERS AND INQUIRIES TO:

TO LIVE AGAIN, Inc.
 Office: Regional General Archives
 Supt. Mellinex
 Earth

Non-human mark inquiry Section D.B. No. 1455

Liscensed by : Galactic Social Engineering Board Rigel II

TO LIVE AGAIN, Inc. President and Founder Donn Brazier

HOW MANY STOMACHS?

One quiet night while at work when the nurses, Inhalation Therapy and I, the unit secretary, were sitting around and gabbing, the question came to life about how many stomachs a cow has.

Well, being no authority at all, I said I was SURE that a cow has three stomachs.

Some of the nurses said two, while Kurt, from Inhalation Therapy, said four. From there the argument took off.

Kurt finally decided that the only way to settle the whole thing was to get an answer from someone who had SOME knowledge on the subject.

He then proceeded to call the Humane Society of Missouri. When he called, he could not say that he and some friends were having a discussion and simply ask how many stomachs a cow has. Oh no! Not him! Kurt had to identify himself as calling from a hospital. Our hospital.

At this, the entire staff of the Surgical Intensive Care Unit (better known as SICU or THE UNIT) burst into laughter and/or groans of embarrassment.

The upshot of calling the Humane Society of Missouri was that they did not know, but, obviously, thought Kurt was a bit weird.

About this time a few of the doctors came into the unit and everyone proceeded to ask the doctors, all at the same time, how many stomachs a cow has.

The doctors went into a huddle for a while and decided that they thought two. Kurt was still not satisfied and was trying to think of some authority he could get hold of.

The dictionary does not tell how many stomachs a cow has, so that did not help us at all.

We thought about calling a veterinarian. But, alas! As luck would have it, it was getting on to quarter after eight and none of us knew of a vet that stayed open late.

Then I came up with a brainstorm. The vet my sister calls for her horse stays open late, but I did not know how late, or his name.

So, I called home to get the name. When I called the vet I got a recording saying that the office was closed, but to call the veterinarians exchange. I did not even know they had an exchange!

After I finally located the exchange number, I called it only to find out that it was only for emergencies! Foiled again!

While I was going through all of that, Kurt thought of calling the slaughter house; figuring that they would surely know.

Meanwhile, the vote stood at one for four, one for three and about seven for one. Clearly Kurt and I were out-voted.

Well, Kurt calls the slaughter house and again says he is calling from the hospital. More laughter and/or groans of embarrassment.

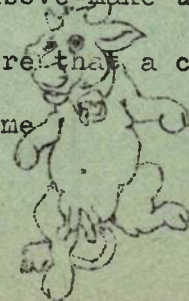
The slaughter house thought he was a) drunk b) crazy c) pulling a joke d) high on something e) perfectly normal or f) none of the above-make up your own.

When we finally got an answer, they said they were pretty sure that a cow has two stomachs.

Kurt had to be satisfied with that answer because by this time it was getting late and besides, we had run out of people to call. To this day we have not asked a REAL authority and I do not really think that Kurt is really satisfied with the verdict of the slaughter house, doctors or nurses.

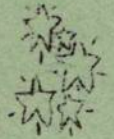
I still say three stomachs to a cow.

pat bothman



STARLIGHT * STARBRIGHT

SCORPIO the scorpion. October 24 - November 22 (also Scorpio Ascendant) Element: fixed water. Influence: Pluto Sign of holding people up when they are creative. Curiously, all other signs would be symbolized.



In these months of hunger and motion being satisfied in force and creative symbols, you are gathering, "gluing" your public or partner forces and desires. Bucolic loyalties are somehow projected. A woman's magnetism or a man who is exceptionally creative is flowering in rich and determined soil. You are vastly important to this, and it to you. In a sense, your "hour" has not yet come, but theirs has and perhaps you with them. It is complicated in a state of motion meaning. New life in work and health brain blazing. You're projecting beauty.

SAGITTARIUS, the archer. November 23 - December 21 (also Sagittarius ascendant). Element: mutable fire. Influence: Jupiter.



Sign of the "burning" to help Scorpio hold creative people up. You've had a peculiar absence of creative and social vitality (late sixties fired), yet these weeks have been "noisy". Chatter and perhaps even genius brain vitalities. Cultivation is always complicated, whereas the natural or wild growing is simple--at least schematically. Now the world has these complexities, and the natural and the cultivated are expressed in your life through your work and health strength. Projecting affluence in work is a magnet; work appearance is more color-light nourishing. Further changes and creativity are in the home. Service to romance is warming.

Railee gave me this. She is Scorpio. I am Sagittarius. Xavora Pové wrote the above. I have no idea what publication it is from. It is amusing to speculate about it. Railee and I both would like to be twin Madame De Staels and we are both very stimulated by creative people.

St. Louis fandom continues to change. The comics oriented people now seem to have a very active group going. I think their energy will continue to build. Whither OSFA? I really don't know, not having been to a meeting in a long time. The club seems to be losing enthusiasm, but I may be wrong.

Sue Watson's Slan Shack is now shut down. Visitors and company are welcome, but no more permanent people. It ran for about two years and, from what I know about fandom, that's about the usual length of time for such fannish communes.

Ray Fisher is still disinclined to re-enter fandom, but lives a full and busy life from what I hear.

Railee and I would like to keep some publishing activity coming out of St. Louis while we wait for better days.

Railee is tremendously important to us. Without her hospitality, and her husband Joe's fantastic equipment, "Sirruish" wouldn't be published at all, probably. I will be interested to know what Railee considers to be her "hour" when it comes.

It is true that I have had an absence of creative and social vitality, due to conditions beyond my control. I would like to think that my life is a mixture of natural and cultivated growth. Anything else would seem very strange for surely this applies to everyone. The balance effected between the two is the important thing. Change I welcome. Romance? I welcome that too!

"We are all obsolete." The Macauley Circuit Robert Silverberg

B.O.A.C.ing

by RAILEE

In 1970, my husband was chairman and I was ladies - chairman of a national model - railroading convention here in St. Louis.

Because of a varied and uninteresting set of reasons, our youngest daughter - 12 years - had to be home alone during one day and half of another.

She was not very ecstatic about this, as she couldn't go out of hearing of the phone. To relieve her monotony, she was phoning me about every 50 minutes. As the phone was on the wall next to the BOAC booth touting next years convention in London, I was soon getting friendly with their reps.

The man in charge asked if we were going to London, and he was so serious and working so hard at being charming that I slipped my gears completely. I said, "We're definitely going, but we have a little problem -- where do you put luggage for four in a Jaguar 2 + 2 ?"

"Are you getting one while you're in England? he asked.

"Well, everyone told us not to bring our Toronado because it's too big for the roads."

Little pause to digest this, then "You can pack in plastic bags and tuck them in nooks and crannies."

"That would never do - I just got my new Hartman luggage."

This conversation went on a little further after each phone call from Stefanie. I never once lied.

We would love to buy a Jag if we had enough money; a pen pal in England did say the roads were too narrow for a big American car, and I did have the new luggage - one small suitcase, anyway.

In our family this is now called BOACing. We mostly do it to people who are pompous and impressed by a big front (Stefanie says I'm big enough to impress anyone.)

Like - I say to some mink - dripping woman, whom I detest, at a party, "I've stopped wearing my mink, they've gotten so common - don't you think?"

I do really have a mink stole - Joe's aunt left it to me when she died 10 years ago, and it wasn't new then, so I'm not lying.

BOACing is very good for answering Xmas mimeographed letters telling all the wonderful things that some family has supposedly done all year - everything mushy sweetness and light.

The main thing is - you musn't lie - the inference has to be in the mind of the listener.

One of my favorites - recently we went to splurge at a Jewish delicatessen for supper. The woman who waited on me said,

"How's your daughter?"

"Which one?" (I have four)

"The one who married the Catholic." (stab! cut!)

"You mean the young man whose uncle is head of General Motors."

Ever since, the service has improved as if all this really had something to do with me.

Sometimes we spend the whole suppertime BOACing a subject to huge proportions, until we are laughing too hard to swallow. If you have been reading fact articles in SF magazines, you can talk with expertise on a lot of subjects you know practically nothing about. When you're asked what college you studied at, you can say - at least I do, "I went to art school and got my education from science fiction.* Try it, it's wonderful for pen-pricking balloon heads.

(*This is almost BOACing, but I am just adding it to give an SF flavor to BC)

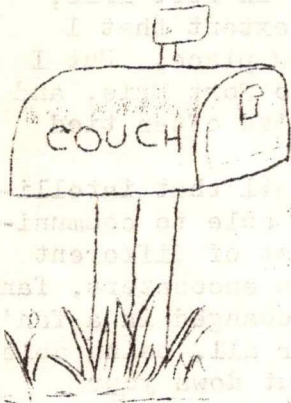
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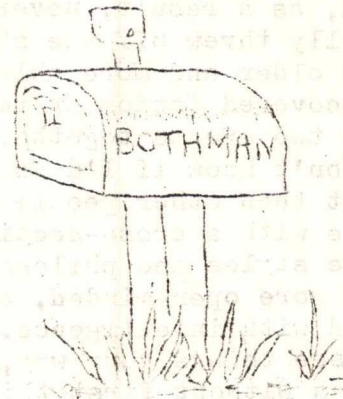
for



DUFF



LETTERS



R.&J. COULSON Route 3 Hartford City, IN 47348

Why did you and Railee switch from using "B." and "C." to using "L." and "R."? And without a word of warning to your faithful readers...you're sure there aren't four of you putting out that fanzine? I bet it was a wild collating party....Have you thought of changing the title to "Alias L and R"? I'm glad you listed me as one of the unconventional fans. That page kept irritating me, largely because none of the fans in our circle are socially inept, or conventional, and very few of them are noticeably either introverted or extroverted, though I suppose they show tendencies one way or another. And, since one tends to judge fandom by one's own experiences, I kept coming out of my chair snarling "fans are not neither like that!" (And that's a hard phrase to snarl, believe me.) I'm probably less socially ept with outsiders than most, but that's from choice; I functioned pretty well in the big outside world for 25 years before discovering fandom. Now I don't have to, aside from getting along with our landlord and keeping my job, so I don't bother. Morals; Juanita insists I'm a Puritan, but I'm a tolerant Puritan. I'm not even a frustrated writer any more, except for wishing this damned bronchitis would go away so I'd have enough energy in the evening to work on a novel instead of letterhacking ~~xxxxx~~ fanzines. Reading my second paragraph and suddenly realized that I don't bother being socially ept with fans, either....I guess my success is due to my overwhelming charm....

I hope someone wises Railee up about trusting fans more than people in general.. I know fans I wouldn't trust with a wet Kleenex.

RAILEE: Terrific Stationery! It isn't that I trust fans more than anyone else-- it's just that it gives me a common ground to start from. The young cab driver who took my daughter #3 home the other night was reading Analog and they plan to go out riding the first time their days off mesh. But I still want to see him first.

LEIGH: I'm the one who blew it Buck. All the typos are my own too, Railee doesn't type. I think I just can't be on anything but a first name basis in fandom. But of course we all love you because of your charm, what else?

WILL STRAW 303 Niagra Blvd. Fort Erie Ontario Canada

B.C. is the type of thing that I'm enjoying more these days - small and quiet, not claiming to be anything more than it is. I've never been able to really decide whether fandom has made me less introverted than I was previous to entering it - while I'm certain that I grew to be more outspoken and comfortable with other people about the same time that I began to get involved with fandom, I think there were so many other things going on at

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"With my slipstick, or on it." Waldo Robert A. Heinlein

****ten*****

the same time, that fandom is, at most, only a very small factor. I moved around almost every three years or less, before settling down in Fort Erie, and, as a result, never grew established in one place to the extent that I really threw off the shell anyone puts up when moving to a new place. But I was older and more able to make friends faster when I moved to Fort Erie, and discovered fandom at roughly the same time as that move, so I've often tied the two events together.

I don't know if I'd go so far as to say that fans are really all that intelligent than other people - I do think that as a result of being able to communicate with a cross-section of the human race than includes a lot of different life styles and philosophies, far more than the average person encounters, fans are more open-minded, and that open-mindedness is often interchanged in a fan's mind with intelligence. (Intelligence to most people, is after all, being able to see things your way, and because fans are less likely to put down your ideas without first thinking them over or trying them out, they come off as more intelligent.

I'm impressed by the Columbia area Resurgence of late. I don't think I could say I'm actually excited about it in the way that the New York Insurgence (sic) of about a year ago excited me, but the Columbia fanzines are things I enjoy. With the Brooklyn zines there was that feeling of getting caught up in a Movement, but Columbia fanzines are just quietly enjoyable and thought-provoking without any pretense of trying to change fandom.

LEIGH; I think you are moving on Will and are leaving Fandom behind. You show signs of gafia to me. Columbia is separated from Arnold by approximately 120 miles, actually Railee and I live near St. Louis. But, wheels within wheels, (or maybe mimeo druns?) there are certain relationships between the three areas that are not known to everyone. If I had to choose between intelligence and open-mindedness, I think I would take open-mindedness. There are a few very intelligent fans whom I despise.

DONN BRAZIER 1455 Fawnvalley Drive St. Louis Mo. 63131

I checked out the local Dianetics studio (in line of duty as a scientific investigator) and came away unimpressed The proof of the pudding is to ask the guy who is giving you a spiel: "Are you a clear?" When he says he is, look him over and judge for yourself. Is he a superman worth spending the \$4000 in order to emulate? It's the same magic that permitted a runty, black-haired spell-binder to convince the country that he was a fit ruler of a race of Aryan supermen - oddly, tall, strong and blonde. Goering didn't do bad either in the country of the supermen. Apply the Emperor's Clothes diagnosis. I can't count the clicks on the phone either. I've decided that you are not supposed to count; you're to "feel" or is it "grok"? Like the printer who picks up a sheaf of fresh paper, riffles it, and says, "There's 97 sheets here."

RAILEE: Specially good - the paragraph on Dianetics in this area. About our Oral Collage - suppose we start the tape recorder going one evening - after the first bottle of wine?

LEIGH: Yes!

ALJO SVOBODA 1203 Buoy Ave. Orange CA. 92665

One question to the C. part of your fanzine. Exactly what relation do you bear to Chris and Mike Couch and Lesleigh Luttrell, sister or mother? Your in-print personality seems to be almost a combination of the two...which is pretty strange believe me...

Lys 35 minutes

Against The Fall Of Night
Arthur C. Clarke

I think fans (or at least a majority of them) gaffiate after a comparatively short time when they can't stand the pressures and responsibilities of being different. Those who stay longer than that five years or so, you mention as the average tend to stay in until something really major, like marriage or death interferes. They're the people who are "their own people", like you say, who don't care what the neighbors think...what do those mundanes know anyway? You may be mouthy, but your description of what a fan is, is the best I've seen so far, except for Rick Sneary's, which was perfect. Fandom is an alternate life-style, whether you view it as a hobby or not. But I disagree with your definition of a "fake fan". The reading of sf is really a pretty superficial quality, and if Grampa Wells and Grampa Verne and Unca Hugo hadn't come along, I'm sure something else would've brought us together. No, a fake fan, from my viewpoint, is someone who at first glance seems to have all the qualities you mentioned, but in reality, is only pretending he has them. For what reason I don't know. Maybe because they're lonely...and you don't have to be a fan to be lonely...or maybe because someone they like is a fan, "Where thou goest, I goest."

LEIGH: I am their mother and it is pretty strange, I know. As far as I know, we are the only total family of fans. My husband reads SF extensively and really digs conventions, but he doesn't like the work involved in publishing. But you know how strange fans can be! I think Rick Sneary is perfect, and I've thought so for years. I send B.C. to a real cross-section of fans, both new and long-time ones, and I think your comments may draw some fire. I hope so. That makes for interesting reading. I really like what you said about different. See my ramblings at the beginning.

ANN CHAMBERLAIN 4411 Van Horne Ave. Los Angeles CA. 90032

Whatever it was,--must have hit us both at the same time. I have dropped Welcome Committee work, which was a special interest of mine for so many years. Stan very kindly lets me have the title of N3F Recruiting Officer, and only one person has asked if he could have my approval to do recruiting. So I filled him in on why we do not go after a big membership. I think you already know.

LEIGH: It was beautiful hearing from you and, yes, I do know why you don't go after a big membership - you get a big pile of deadwood mostly. I especially wanted your name and address in B.C. because I'm afraid some of your friends may have lost touch with you or not seen the COA in Locus, which is how I caught up with you. You are permanent mailing list, of course, for as long as we keep going.

SANDRA MIESEL 8744 N. Pennsylvania St. Indianapolis, IN. 46240

Couches to the right of us! Couches to the left of us! More Couch-zines. Any discussion of qualities common to fans has to mention their overwhelming preference for cats. This may be one of the few safe sweeping declarations which can be made about fandom. I can think of only three active fans who dislike cats. Our claim to conformity is Pussycattus (also known as Darling Pussums, which designation my husband finds abominable), black, beautiful, and very, very dumb. She's not nearly so fannish as the LaVells' cat, Gummich, though. Usually hides during ISFA meetings. In my opinion, at least, fans are misfits--many misfits through no fault of their own, because they happen to live in an uncongenial location--who find great comfort in the company of other misfits.

"Up on your feet, you ward heelers, you courthouse loafers! Two minutes to show a bare back--then I shoot!"

The Puppet Masters Robert A. Heinlein

*****twelve*****

I haven't been able to relate to mundania very well ever since I came back from St. Louiscon (a sort of conversion experience). Which has led to me being blackballed from joining a cooperative nursery school for a second season, among other things. But I find fans more congenial because they're varigated, curious about everything, and have minds as eccentric as my own.

LEIGH: I don't think I would want my children in that nursery school, getting their minds corrupted by mundane society. It will happen soon enough. St. Louiscon, yes. Quite an experience for me too. I lived with that conventior for two years really. Sometimes I think that the rest of society has slipped its gears and we are the absolutely sane ones.

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

B.C. (Boring Crudzine?)? was most enjoyable and could easily prompt me to as many pages of comments as it contains itself. The idea about self-addressed postcards is a sound one, especially if you live in the same country as your favorite authors. But how many people actually write letters to authors commenting on their stories? I'd be surprised if there were many. I think I've written two such letters in my life, and in both cases the authors were personal friends and the letters were part of a fairly steady correspondence. It would be a most useful idea for faneds though, and we've used it several times in the past. It gets very frustrating to ask an artist or a writer for some contribution and never hear another word from that person. You don't even know if the original request arrived! Unfortunately, the last time we sent a properly stamped self-addressed postcard to check if some important mail got through, the recipient ignored the postcard as well as our entreaties. Some people just don't answer their mail, I guess.

I too am somewhat irked by fans who leave fandom and then feel the urge to belittle those who remain interested in it. Sure fandom is escapism, but for many it's an extremely creative and harmless form of escapism. In the right perspective, it's fun, rewarding, stimulating, interesting and educational. What more could one ask? I've been a fan now for 5½ years and an active fan for 3 years. Right now, I can't imagine losing interest in fandom, but if I do, I certainly hope I won't denigrate those who remain. Even if I grow apart from it, I cannot hide the fact that fandom has given me a great deal.

To my way of thinking, by far the best way to get "known" in fandom is by the letterhack route. Publishing a fanzine is too slow a process. It takes a year or so to make a name for yourself that way. But in a couple of months of letter-hacking you can get letters in thirty or forty fanzines and be a well known name much more quickly. Susan's always complaining that no-one knows her at conventions. (Er...Susan...my wife...short, light haired...surely you've seen her?) I put this down to the fact that she doesn't write locs while I do. Of course, this is really entirely different from getting known at conventions. To do that you have to go to some, mingle with the people and prove yourself wort knowing. But being a famous letterhack (or even knowing one) sure helps you get started.

Leigh, are you really taking a course called "Drug Abuse at the St. Louis College of Pharmacy"? Few universities are that honest with the public! As a teacher of mathematics, I don't think it's my duty to persuade or dissuade my students about the evils or lack of same in drugs. Luckily, we are not compelled to do so; how does one reconcile personal beliefs if they happen to contradict official doctrine? Expediency or integrity?

I tend to agree with many of your mutual conclusions concerning fans. But the one piece of evidence that has always argued most strongly against the "fans are slans" theory is the way in which so many fans will tolerate, nay, even seek out, the company of cats. This lowliest, most unattractive of beasts seemingly has no redeeming qualities. They are noisy, messy, destructive, and nigh near impossible to educate. As I recently remarked in a letter to Joyce Katz and POTLATCH, the only possible use I can see for cats is as a source of kittens, which do make excellent meals for snakes.

RAILEE: Lots of people write to authors. They have egos too. Does one join fandom to "get known" or to meet people they can mesh with?

LEIGH: A detail you failed to mention in your way to get known by letterhacking is how to get your letter published, but your letter this ish makes one of your methods clear, figure out the editors buttons and punch 'em. With me it's expediency every time if my paycheck is involved. After all, where would I get the money to spend on my hobby? This past year the state of Mo. passed a law to wit: all elementary schools shall teach a course in drug abuse, content to be determined by the school. As a science teacher for 5th and 6th grade, I got the job. I do what I'm paid to do man, just like all them there smart atomic scientists. Seriously, you might be surprised at how I taught it. About cats, you are in interesting company. Some people who hated cats also were Alexander the Great, Napoleon and Adolph Hitler. Mohammed was very fond of them. I find your comments very anthropomorphic and they could be equally well applied to dogs or people. I agree with you that cats are "nigh near impossible to educate", but I question if you know what you mean by "educate". Cats don't make good slaves, people and dogs do.

GENE WOLFE 27 Betty Drive Hamilton Ohio 45013

Happy to reply to your pet quiz. We couht at present one small grey kitten, not yet named because Madeleine is not certain of its sex and will not go for all-purpose names like Claude. One bluepoint Siamese (mother of the above impurebred) who wandered in as a stray. With a little red collar and a bell. Name: Samantha. One Staffordshire Bull Terrier puppy -- Sissy. A parakeet: George of the Jungle. A fair number of anon. fish. Snails past numbering. An unpet mouse: The Masked Marble.

Postcards in fan mail will be nice if it ever happens. Personally I don't get much, and I doubt that most authors do. A friend of mine once wrote a fan letter to John Steinbeck and got a personal reply. Harlan probably does -- not because he writes, but because he lectures and has a dynamic personality. It seems to me that the term "fan" covers a multitude of basically dissimilar activities. A collecting fan and a convention fan have, fundamentally, nothing in common, though they may be the same person -- just as a stamp collector might also be a New Year's Eve drunk.

A project for you -- ask your readers not what they have liked in the past, but what they would like -- will like -- in the future. What will the really good science fiction of the late seventies and early eithties be like????

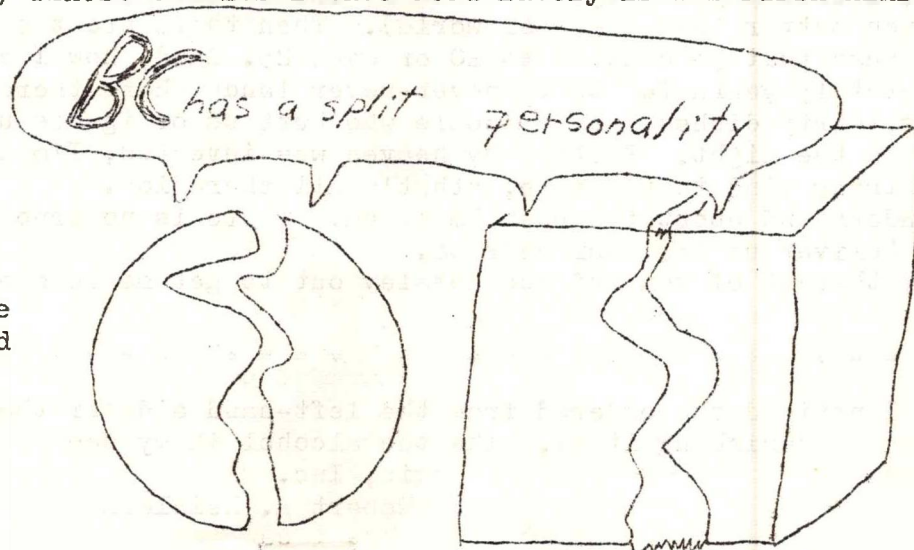
RAILEE: All I know for sure is that whatever is predicted for the future, reality will outstrip it.

LEIGH: One of the very finest stories I have read lately is THE FIFTH HEAD OF CERBERUS

by GENE WOLFE
in ORBIT
10

edited by
Damon Knight
and published by
G.P. Putnam's Sons
1972

and probably available
in paperback. I would
advise anyone to buy
it just for the sake
of this gem of a
story!



*****fourteen*****

LARRY PROPP 2413 Marquette Road Apt. C 3 Peru Illinois 61354

I put out a persoanzine for a while myself (and, I'm told, not a bad one). And strange things began to happen. Like, I said I was just sending it out to friends because they were friends, there being no ritual responses necessary to stay on the mailing list. So, as a result, there were no responses at all. I sent out five issues of that thing over the course of a year or so and didn't receive a single letter in return. A couple of people kept me on the mailing list for their fanzines when I missed a LoC or so, but that was it. Hell, I wasn't even sure the thing was being read, so I finally quit.

THEN I come to find out that everyone was reading it and wanted to damn well know when it was coming out again. *SIGH*

Incidentally, people who put out one-shots as good as this deserve to be shot. A word to the wise should suffice -- Joe Hensley and I are very good at summary proceedings.

Funny you should mention the BOOK EMPORIUM (I sort of assume you mean the shop by that name, not the generic description). The store is part of a chain of 5 or 6 headquartered in Peoria. Dad, when he was selling life insurance, wrote their group policy, and through him I found out something very interesting. They carry all the Scientology propoganda because the owner of the corporation is a Scientologist. When I found this out and talked to him, he was expecting to become a "clear" in about a year or so; since this was 4 or 5 years ago, I assume he has gotten rid of all his engrams by now.

The comment of the ex-fan about "entering the real world" is a favorite bug of mine. What the hell is the real world anyway? I always found the word most prevalent on college campuses -- one of these days we're going to graduate and join the real world, get out of this plastic exsistence, etc. Except that out there a lot of people (and I hear it all the time, from hyper-emotional clients & quasi-soused brother attorneys) that they want to give up the constant grind and find the real world. And women's lib, if its proven anything, indicates that the average American housewife wants to chuck the "American Dream, Female Mode" and find the "real" world. Which leads to one of two hypotheses, equally valid & this statement of facts:

1. The real world is a plastic grind
2. The real world doesn't exist, except in your mind as the antithesis of what your world is

Take your pick. Choose one from column A and one from column B. Mix them and match them. Pick your own hell. Who cares, anyway?

LEIGH: Right on, brother! I'd like to amend Sturgeons Law to read, "90% of life is crap". It's the 10% that makes it worthwhile to stick around. I think when the percentage falls lower than my arbitrary 10%, people die in one way or another, either physically, or mentally (some mentally ill people like their world much better than the real world). Then there are the lucky, fabled few who may push that percentage to 20 or even 25. Gawd, how I envy them! All of us desperately yearn for that "never-never land" where thereæ are no such things as bills, dirty dishes, nasty people who hurt us or ignore us, or things that go bump in the night. That's why heaven was invented, I'm sure. It takes a pretty strong mind to tolerate, "that's all there is".

Now I understand about the Book Emporium. There is no true believer like the saved! Deliver us from our engrams.

The very thought of you and Joe Hensley out to get me is enough to get B.C. out again!

"But I noticed she ordered from the left-hand side of the menu - all vanishing items, like the alcohol in my beer."

Magic, Inc.
Robert A. Heinlein

ROY TACKETT 915 Green Valley Road NW Albuquerque N.H. 87107

I think the last contact we had was when I was CE of N'APA. and that was some time ago. Yes, indeed, fans come and fans go but, egad, in some cases it is questionable whether even death will release us. For my own part I seem to maintain a very eccentric orbit around fandom which carries me from periods of high activity to periods of minac, but I don't drift away completely.

How do you define a fan? Gee, I dunno. Years ago Earl Kemp conducted a survey on "why is a fan?" and discovered all sorts of interesting things and for the past few years all sorts of, you should pardon the expression, sociologists have been conducting examinations of fandom. I don't think anyone has ever seen the results of those examinations. I understand that Dr. whatzisname, the comic book guy, Wertham? has been studying fandom and fanzines for the past two or three years. Do you suppose that all fanzines will have to carry a legend saying, "Approved by the Fanzine Code"?

Brazier said a fan is one who likes SF enough to want to communicate. True. I've noticed some changes over the years though. Today's fans are primarily interested in SF as a literary form whereas in past years the interest centered primarily on the ideas presented in the story. It comes from the ghettoizing (Ugh!) of SF as a type of literature. Yesteryear's fans were frustrated or would-be scientists. Today's are would-be writers. Today's fans are less interesting than yesteryear's.

It's difficult to generalize about fans because they are a diverse group. Speer, I think it was although I could be wrong, said the only general statement that could be made was that all fans had some sort of handicap or hangup. After almost 35 years in orbit around this microcosm I am not inclined to disagree.

It was possible to count the clicks on older type dial phones. Not any more, though. Another of Ma Bell's improvements!

LEIGH: It is interesting to compare your comments re fans with Aljo Svoboda's in this issue. I even note that you capitalize SF, as I do, and he writes it sf. I've got to agree with you, as far as I ever agree with sweeping statements. Science is tarnished and terribly old hat and taken for granted now. The "what have you done for me lately" sort of thing. I remember, i remember, when the idea of a galaxy was mind-shattering to me, now it is just the name of a car. I didn't mind living and dreaming in the SF ghetto so long ago. I work at a country club in the summer, have for almost three years, and have worked with some of the same black people for that long. Since, as a fan, I don't have any problem relating to people who are different from me, we have become friends. They tell me that they don't like to live with white people, because white people are "jikkery". The closest possible meaning I can get out of this is jittery, frenetic, always rattling around. The black chef said, "They make me nervous. I like my upper-class ghetto." Some new fans make me nervous, Roytac, and I sometimes long for the old ghetto. But, you can't go home again, can you. Maybe that's why they seem less interesting to you. 35 years! Great blue bunions!!! That's one long time to be a fan!

Here I am at 1:40 in the morning with four or five really good letters left in my mail file and they just aren't going to get on stencil because my blister has a blister and it's the last week of school and whatinhell am I doing putting out a fanzine this week for anyway?

Typical fan! Never do anything in a rational or orderly manner! Two of those letters (or is it three?) are at Railee's house (one of the problems of having two editors) and I want to begin mailing tomorrow. Ah well.

"I think we have thought too small and been too afraid."
A Choice of Gods Clifford Simak

We received three great letters from JACKIE FRANKE, RICK SNEARY, AND BOB VARDEMAN. Those letters will be in the next issue no matter what fannish tradition says!

(Carry on Leigh, the last stencil is the hardest!)

It has been both a chore and great fun getting out this issue of B.C., but mostly it's been fun. Our sincere thanks to all who wrote to us. Railee especially is like a kid at Christmas. I am equally delighted, but in a quieter way.

We plan to get the next issue of B.C. under way immediately, in order to have it ready to take to Midwescon since we will both be there.

The artwork has been mostly homespun of steals, but one artist was kind enough to send me something and it will be properly electrostencilled for the next issue.

If you are home from college and Locus is moving, I wonder how in seven hells I am going to find you?

I'll be giving a party at Midwescon, look me up. Leigh

B.C.

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