

*****June 1972*****

This is B.C. #3 published by Railee Bothman 1300 West Adams, Kirkwood, Mo. 63122 and Leigh Couch #1 Cymry Lane, Rt. 2 Box 889, Arnold, Mo. 63010 - and we are getting it together in time for Midwescon. We are still enthusiastic about this personalzine and no money is required for it. We think Ed Cagle is a true fan because he sent us stamps. Thanks Ed! Next issue we are planning something rather fancy and it may be awhile before you get it. We have been delighted at the response we have gotten, and a letter or even a postcard is enough to keep some of you on the mailing list for many issues. Fanzine trades are very much appreciated, we love 'em. But we will be asking a few of you to let us know that you are out there and alive and well, etc. After several issues we begin to wonder.

RAILEE - THREE VIEWS

I. Read' Is A Four-Letter Word: Some people read for enjoyment, some for information, but in our family reading is a vice. Reading becomes a vice when one reads at any available time, also unavailable times like cooking, dressing, housecleaning, etc. My father used to read at the dinner table. My brother and I considered it highly unfair that we had to eat without the comfort of a book, but my mother was determined to teach us good manners. It must have worked - meal times are the only reading-is-forbidden times in our family. We don't mind too much - we're too busy trying to out-pun each other. There are a few other times when Joe and I kick the reading habit, but I'm not allowed to say when that is in a publication that uses the U. S. mail.

People who say they don't read because there just isn't time just aren't thinking efficiently. There is time to read when walking, baby-feeding, sweeping, watching TV (during commercials, or if you are a commercial fan, during the program), children to be chauffeured, etc.

In our house it was no trouble to toilet train our four girls. There were special picture books that could only be read on the potty. Sometimes I think they were just

faking to get to the books. Through the years there was usually some little girl running frantically around the house screaming, "Where's my book?" (Translation: I have to go potty.) A little later came the reading all night period. They would spend the evening secretly collecting black clothes to put over the blanket, then crawl in with a flashlight and read under the covers until dawn. Tarzan tastes much better that way.

With six of us in a little one-bath house there was constant knocking at the door, and the standard question, "Are you doing anything, or reading?" Now we have the luxury of two bathrooms, with bookcases conveniently built in.



Hardly ever lose a book into a water-filled tub any more.

Since growing up doesn't mean loss of ownership of young age books, we have quite a collection in quadruplicate. Would you believe four copies of Cat In the Hat?

One difficult part of living here is that there are half-read books all over the house. One has only to pick a book up, to have it snatched away by the original reader, and there are some noisy and bitter discussions over who started which book first, and who is going to get it NOW.

Last summer, after three years of planning, we took daughters #3 and #4 to Europe. Of course we took plenty of books - you can always re-wear clothes if space is short, but books are a necessity. The girls' American Express bags were lined with books. Each girl made a little nest in the back seat of the car, and Europe was ignored.

"Stefanie, look at that walled city!"

"Don't bother me now, they're unpacking the grandmother!"

"Pat, look at that castle on the hill!"

"Don't bother me now, I'm right in the middle of Lummo's trial!"

Mr. Heinlien and Mr. Bradbury - it is all your fault and I think you owe me money. We could have saved a terrific sum by leaving them at home, supplied with books and soda and snacks. We wouldn't even have been missed. I could have bought each girl a complete set of Heinlien and Bradbury, and still had enough money to go shopping in every big city for some more books.

Reading is such a vice in our home that between paper-back book costs and library fines, we can't afford to get hooked on anything else.

VIEW TWO

Well, I made it through the winter, and I didn't really expect to, so life looks pretty good to me. There are still about a million problems around that I can't do much about, so I'm just trying to tackle a few of the little ones.

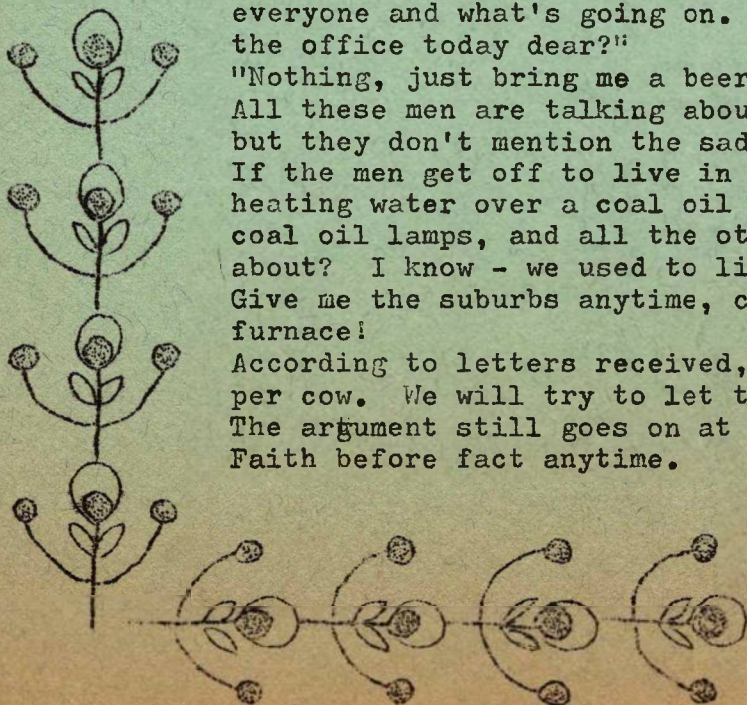
There are people who say they'd like to go back and be young again - not me, no way! My girls have grown up to the point where they are human beings who are satisfactory to talk to, and who stand on their own feet, causing no worries for me. (Pat is solo-ing the car today, and I'll be chewing my nails to the elbow until she gets back). Joe is doing what he enjoys and making a living at it - what more could anyone ask?

We have a situation that's a little unusual today, except maybe for writers and farmers, a working-at-home husband. Our downstairs holds Joe's offices (architectural), darkroom, and workshop. Everyone uses the front door upstairs, so I meet all the clients, salesmen, etc. That way I get to know everyone and what's going on. Sure beats that "What went on at the office today dear?"

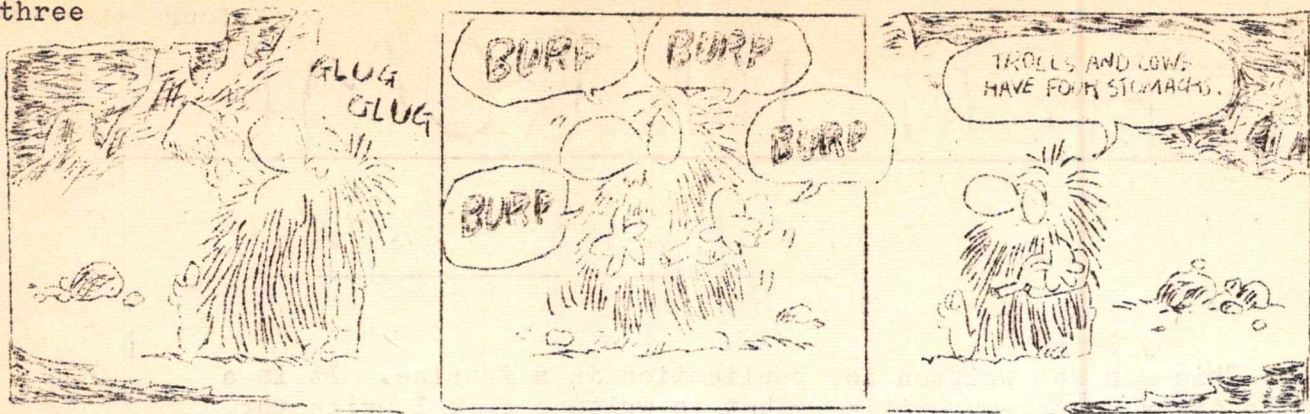
"Nothing, just bring me a beer so I can relax."

All these men are talking about how horrible the daily grind is but they don't mention the sad little wife imprisoned at home. If the men get off to live in the wilds, who gets the bad part - heating water over a coal oil stove for washing, cleaning the coal oil lamps, and all the other little jobs city people forget about? I know - we used to live in a country cabin summers. Give me the suburbs anytime, complete with flush toilets and a furnace!

According to letters received, the majority vote is four stomachs per cow. We will try to let the cows know, if they are interested. The argument still goes on at the hospital where Pat works. Faith before fact anytime.



three



Should I write a little about me? I thrive on tension (I'm writing this as Leigh is on her way over to pick it up). I'm the second in three generations of hot-needle seamstresses. That means starting a dress a couple of hours before I need to wear it. The trick is to end up exactly when it's time to dress, and sometimes it's a pretty close race. Joe should have been warned when he would call for me for a date, and I would be standing on the dining room table, all dressed to go, while my mother hemmed up the bottom edge. He didn't learn, though, and after almost 30 years he still gets upset when I finish up the sewing for a trip in the motels along the way.

Our oldest daughter is carrying on the tradition. While the photographer waited, she stood in her wedding dress while her bridesmaid hand-sewed in the sleeves. I couldn't help - I was busy hemming my dress!

I do almost every kind of handicraft that doesn't involve the use of vibrating hand tools. With only art school training, I've received most of my education from reading, especially anthropology, archaeology, and, of course, SF. Where else but SF could you learn to count on your fingers in binary system and also be introduced to general semantics, let alone genetics and about a million other disciplines?

We are a very square family - rules, curfews, and absolutely no democracy. Dinner often lasts two hours while we pile pun on pun, so the system seems to work for us. Maybe we are just lucky.

Fandom for me is one way to exchange ideas with other adults (an adult is someone who can talk intelligently, it has nothing to do with chronological age). The other freedom from alone-ness is a marvelous studio I belong to. Equipment and supplies for about any hand craft you could name, plus a bunch of women who are not hung up completely on the school-kid-house circuit. There is helpful advice and criticism passed around, as well as new ideas. A day at the studio or an evening with fans is the best medicine I know of for lowering blood pressure.

VIEW THREE

Living on the edge can bring excitement if life is dull. See how long you can run the car after the gas gauge says empty. My best record is 2 gallons left. Joe has overdone it a few times and run out. The ultimate was when he had a car for a few weeks and it sputtered to a stop. He calmly said, "Now I know how long it will run on empty", and coasted into the nearest gas station, but not quite to the pump. We were all laughing like maniacs and the attendant watched from the safety of the building before he ventured out. Joe said we'd need a little gas before we could pull up to the pump, and the man said, "Sorry, I just sold the last of the gas." Joe will hear about the last of this by 2072.

In our family, it really isn't considered fair to steal gas from the tractor if you can't start in the morning-you have to take your lumps and get someone to take you to the station for a can full. Maurine gets an exception there, as no one else is willing to get up at 6:30 a.m. if she is out of gas. I just thought of something, our neighbors keep horses. Wouldn't it be terrific if we could ride one up to the station for a can of gas?

WHEN IN ROME

or: How To Co-Exist



by Leigh

Note: This was not written for publication in a fanzine. It is a sample of my "chicken" writing. That is writing that I write for some specific publication, and then don't have the courage to send it. It's partly serious and partly in jest, but I'll be damned if I can figure out which is what! Read or skip, as you are moved.

If you travel almost any good tourist guide will tell you something about the customs of the country, and how to keep from being "the ugly American" by offending the citizens thereof.

If you are over 30 and have any association with young people, these thoughts and suggestions are being written for you. You need a guide, believe me! I have learned many of the things I write about the hard way, and perhaps I can make things easier for you.

I should tell you that this is definitely not a put-on. I am deadly serious in writing this for you. But then, it's only the way I see it. There are many ways, and you may have a better one. Take what you can use.

I'm not really fond of straight young people because they are little editions of their elders, my generation. I'm bored to death with my generation as it is, so I certainly don't want to associate with their young apprentices.

Also, beware the week-end plastic freak! A straight soul lurks under that hair. If you encounter young counter-culture people in any official capacity, forget about any honest exchange. They will shuck you as a matter of course. Why not? That's what happens to them times out of mind.

If you meet them socially, you had better have impeccable credentials, the proper people to vouch for you, etc. and so forth. After awhile they may begin to see you as a real person, faintly and dimly. It's hard for them to believe in you. You will get a very thorough looking over for some time. The first rule is, don't say much. They have to listen to too damn many pompous adults as it is, and most of what it might occur to you to talk about doesn't interest them. You will probably be at least six months out of date about what interests them, so if you have any idea of talking "on their level" you will sound like last years underground newspaper. Wait, have patience, they will talk about what is happening in their world now, probably not to you, but if they accept you on the edges, they will let you listen.

It may be that you are a cultural ancestor of theirs, a beat, or a bohemian, but don't say anything about it. They will probably not believe it. They may figure it out from what you say, but let them do it.

Of societies different ones who came before them, the only ones who are real are Kerouac, Gertrude Stein, Guthrie (Woody, not Arlo), and Josephine Baker. Even when they ask you, a lingering aura of scepticism will remain.

If you drink, don't drink Martinis. That is so establishment it's even worse than scotbh. Also, don't drink wine. For me personally, this is most unfortunate. I love wine and have loved it for almost 32 years. But I can only drink it with the young people I know best. Those I know slightly consider it an imitation of their life style and feel that they are being ripped off.

"Buck Coulson would notice a fly on the cieling of St. Peter's."

Railee said that.

If you do dope, don't do it with them. They won't believe that at all! Most of them don't even know that marijuana was once legal. This is changing a bit since they are digging into old music history like reading Mezz Mezzrow's Really the Blues and Billie Holiday's autobiography. There is an old W.C. Fields movie with Cab Calloway and his band doing Reefer Man, and some of them know about this. But be careful! Need I tell you, you have a lot to lose. If you like their music, keep that a secret. They consider that almost perverted. I can understand that. I could never really believe that any adult liked Stan Kenton in the long ago. Buy the records or tapes and play them in the privacy of your home as I am doing now (Crosby, Stills, and Nash - Four Way Street).

If you really want to go to a concert, go alone and sit in the back. You will be taken for a narc anyway. At the Grateful Dead concert I got a friendly smile from the cop at the door and a lot of hostility from the people going in around me. The Dead were worth the bad feeling I got out of this, but I don't try it too often. I'd advise you not to. I was lucky at the Airplane concert, I went with 7 young people and they protected me. You may just get lucky too. I wish you such joy.

Next topic: clothes. Don't dress like young people, you will only look ridiculous. If you can't go for the middle-class bouffant hair bit, there is a happy medium. Wear straight leg Wrangler jeans and canvas shoes and plain shirts or blouses. Or skirts and sweaters and low heels. Keep your hair inconspicuous and your jewelry nondescript. Don't wear peace symbols or Indian beads.

You are expected to pay! Never forget this! All adults are rich to them. They can't conceive of you being tight for cash. If you can't pay all, or most of the bill, don't go. Remember everybody pays for their interests, and if you are interested in young people, pay. Most of the counter-culture is really broke and scraping along. I can't stress this enough. If you are the kind that gets upset about footing the bill, find your social contacts elsewhere among your financial equals. I don't have any problem about this because it's only money, but if you do, stay away.

Don't use their language. It's theirs and you have no right to it. I learned this from associating with blacks years ago. I was told that it sounded like shit in my mouth. If you say "groovy" or "right on", it will sound the same to them. Talk straight English or use the colloquialisms familiar to you. They may laugh at them, but at least they are yours and you are entitled to them. Otherwise, you will resemble a Yanqui tourist in Juarez speaking high school Spanish. Besides, you will be six months behind again on the language. You know, I hope, that one purpose of the language of any minority group is to keep the majority group from knowing what they are talking about, and so, rapid change.

Don't get into heavy discussions, listen don't talk. Remember that to them, you bear the guilt of your generation and so you can't possibly be right about anything. A new social order is forming and it isn't your business to say anything about it. If you try it, you are going to find yourself counseling patience, moderation, and hopelessness and they aren't going to buy that. You have been smashed into these attitudes by years of oppression and the fact that you have to survive, they have no such problems, yet! So, just shut up.

Sex!!!! This is just about the ultimate no-no. In this present culture, no one is supposed to have any such feelings after 30, excepting dirty old men. You will have to be a sexless creature. To admit that you have any such feelings or interests, will only be to make yourself a figure of fun, or else slightly disgusting. Remember that only young bodies are beautiful, and the old body is completely ugly.

When In Rome...cont.

So what could possibly be worth all this submerging of yourself? What could you derive from this, probably, hypocritical pose? Well, the energy and optimism of the young is one of the most beautiful things I know. Just to be near it enlivens me. Maybe I have vampire tendencies, or only know how to live off someone else's life force. I know the young are interesting, provocative, and very much alive. Most of the rest of society is phony, corrupted and dead to a greater or lesser degree.

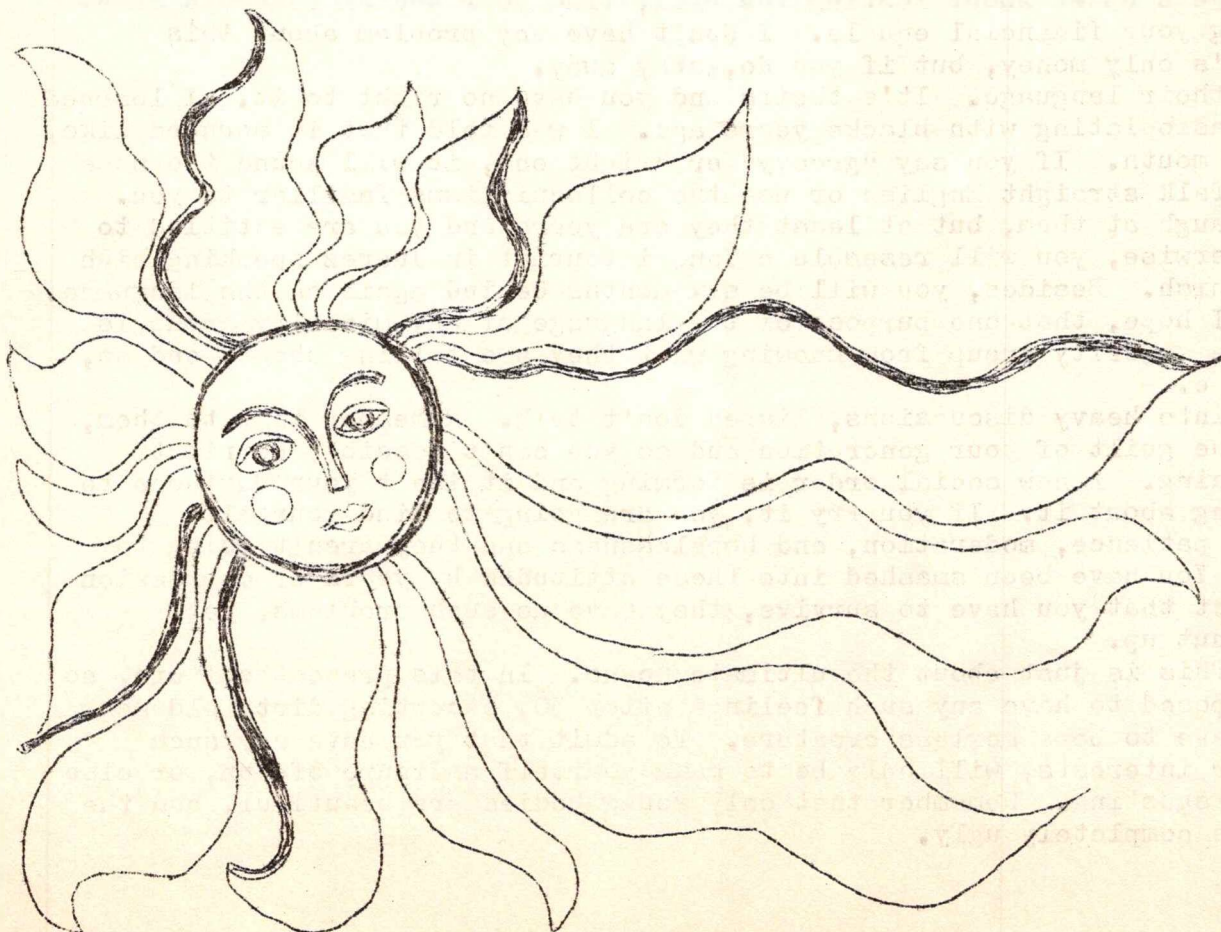
The young people are the movers and shakers of a stagnant and partly mad culture. They represent change, experimentation, and just maybe, something better. We could all use it.

I forgot to add don't criticize or preach, they have had years of this at home before they left. They will automatically shut you down and out.

Most of them really are beautiful people. Some of them talk to me and some of them even listen to me a little. I love them.

Second Note: If you are now saying, "Yes, but...", or, "No, not at all...", that's ok, but please go back and read the first note again. If you want to comment on this, I would really like to know what you think of the writing first, and subject matter second. If you think it stinks tell me, that would be the best thing you could do for me. If you think it is mediocre, tell me so. If, by some wild chance, you think it shows a glimmer or promise, tell me. But lie me no lies, you'll save me a lot of lost sleep. Thanks.

I'm trying to learn to stencil (you noticed!) and most of what appears here is my practice material. If it turns out that I can't do it, I'll stop.



*BOOKS

by LEIGH

and magazines and records and fanzines and anything else that has been taking up my time.

Follow my recommendations at your own risk!

Saturday Review - I'm fairly tight when it comes to magazines (except SF) and I will usually go to the library after school and read them free; such publications as Psychology Today, Scientific American, Theater Arts, etc., but I took one of those cheapie subs. I wish I hadn't. The mag is not worth the time it takes to sift through it in search of something interesting. It's gone very slick.

Ramparts - Where else can you learn how to make free long-distance telephone calls? Being utterly law-abiding, I wouldn't do it of course. I can keep up with the life and times of Dick Lupoff here. I like it. I learn things.

Crawdaddy - My judgement is based on one issue. Crap!

Rolling Stone - The best one since Downbeat. I read it mostly for news and for thinking about things, rather than the record reviews, because I don't buy many records now.

Audubon Society Magazine - This always depresses me because it's the world's obituary column. It keeps me informed on what species of life has bit the dust lately, or is about to.

Flashback - This is No. 2 and it is a nostalgia movie mag. All through high school I saw every show at the neighborhood show. I went three times a week. On week-ends my friends and I would head downtown to the really big movie palaces to see a double feature, Fox Movietone news, cartoon, Pete Kelly short, and comin' attractions. Yes, I am a movie freak. St. Louis now has something on TV called The Bijou Theater that shows movies until 4:00. I saw "Dinner At Eight" not long ago. I had forgotten that Marie Dressler could act the aging sophisticate. If St. Louis had a silent movie theater I would be totally broke. One of my unrealized desires is to see Lillian Gish in "Broken Blossoms".

Laurel and Hardy DC - I don't read many comics, Big Little Books were more my speed, but I do read some of them. I enjoyed this.

The Eighth Stage of Fandom by Robert Bloch. I'm re-reading it for about the third time. On p. 80 there is something called, "Them Ain't Bongo Drums" in which Bob suggests that fandom could take over the world. I'm sure no one thought then that a sizeable part of the world would take over fandom! Bob Bloch always entertains me...."nor custom stale"....

Now for some big thick books!

Science Fiction Hall of Fame edited by Lester del Rey, Avon - Since he is a man of impeccable taste, I knew I would enjoy this collection. I was first a reader and I'm still a reader, so it was meeting old friends again. I had read every one of them in the original publication. This one I would give to someone new to SF.

A Science Fiction Argosy edited by Damon Knight Mine is the book club edition. A strong collection, but uneven in it's appeal to me. For example, I found "Consider Her Ways" by John Wyndham boring, but "An Ornament to his Profession" by Charles L. Harness is a literate, beautifully written, engrossing story about a patent attorney and the devil. I am glad that he chose "The Demolished Man" by Alfred Bester as this is one of the most exciting novels

*****eight*****

I have ever read. A taste follows for the few who may not have read it. "Here were the somatic messages that fed the cauldron; cell reactions by the incredible billion, organic cries, the muted drone of muscle tone, sensory subcurrents, blood flow, the wavering super-heterodyne of blood PH-all whirling and churning in the balance pattern that formed the girl's psyche. The never-ending make-and-break of synapses contributed a crackling hail of complex rhythms. Packed in the changing interstices were broken images, half-symbols, partial references...the ionized nuclei of thought." Sturgeon is more popular and easier to find, but "More Than Human" is one of his best. The other gem that stands out is "Four Brands of Impossible" by Norman Kagan.

The Hugo Winners edited by Isaac Asimov Book club edition again. After reading through 849 pages I'm more sure than ever that fans have good taste. It's nice to have the extra information contained here.

The Gods Themselves by Isaac Asimov You're right, book club edition again. I found it interesting that the author's name and the title were exactly the same size. Dr. A. is one of the more competent writers around and this is a very competently written book. But I still felt rather ho-hum about it. I kept waiting to get involved, excited or anything, but it never happened. Maybe he's changed, maybe I've changed, or maybe times have changed. I don't know.

The Snark Was A Boojum: A Life of Lewis Carroll by James Playsted Wood A personal portrait, or as personal as one can be in writing about the scholarly and peculiar Oxford don. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson is one of humanities more interesting products, and when I grew old enough to wonder about the person who created Alice, I found him to be as fascinating as his creations. I wish there were more of David Levine's drawings.

Victoria Through The Looking-Glass by Florence Becker Lennon This is the more scholarly of the two books I own about Lewis Carroll, and it goes into his idealized love of little girls at some length, among other interesting facets of his personality. Strange that this man could turn his crippled emotional life into delight for the world's children and others, with his problem, turn into child molesters.

The Bell Jar by Sylvia Plath I am interested in books which deal with mental illness, and that says something about me I guess. Lately, besides this book, I have also read "The Other" by Tom Tryon and "The Exorcist" ? (can't remember, and the book is lent out). This one is really bittersweet sad. I don't think she ever lived in this world, not really.

"God topples from the sky, hell's fires fade:

Exit Seraphim and Satan's men:

I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead."

"To the person in the Bell Jar, black and stopped as a dead baby, the world itself is a bad dream."

Early on in this book, I sensed the inevitability of what would happen to her. I understood her to be a person whose life force was smothered in this world, and it wasn't strong enough to keep her living here.

New American Review 11 as of this issue, being published by Simon & Schuster This issue is sub-titled movement writing, but I have been reading this series since the beginning. To me, they are like a box of chocolates. Most of the reading is a delicious experience, but sometimes I hit something that sickens me and almost causes me to toss the book in the trash. Try it and live dangerously! A poem by Marilyn Hacker and one by Sylvia Plath here.

Divine Right's Trip a folk tale by Gurney Norman This is the one that was interspersed in the pages of The Last Whole Earth Catalog. I tried to read it there but kept getting lost in the rest of the pages. It's amusing, but borrow it, don't buy it.

Tower Of Zanid by L. Sprague de Camp Good fun. I have always liked the humor this most excellent writer puts into his stories. Kept me up late.

Universe I edited by Terry Carr & published by Ace (speaking of late!) It was a dark date when Terry left Ace and this collection shows why. The best story is "Time Exposures" by Wilson Tucker, second best, "The Human Side of the Village Monster" by Edward Bryant.

The Age of Paranoia: How The Sixties Ended by the editors of Rolling Stone. The decade in review as seen by a music-culture mag of the moderate left (?). Fascinating reading. The only thing I found personally offensive was the semi-sympathetic treatment of Charles Manson, but then I am pretty turned off by violence, official or otherwise. I wonder what percentage of freaks are mentally ill and in need, desperate need, of help? A small number probably, but somewhere in this book someone claims that by the time anyone in this western culture is about 16 years old, he is a half-mad creature compromising endlessly in order to survive.

"In the next few years it will be absolutely fascinating to see how the surging drive of youth to change the world in which they have found themselves will work out. Will they become part of the Establishment themselves? Will they be simplified, classified, denied, defied, or crucified? Tune in, turn on and find out." Ralph Gleason December 21, 1968

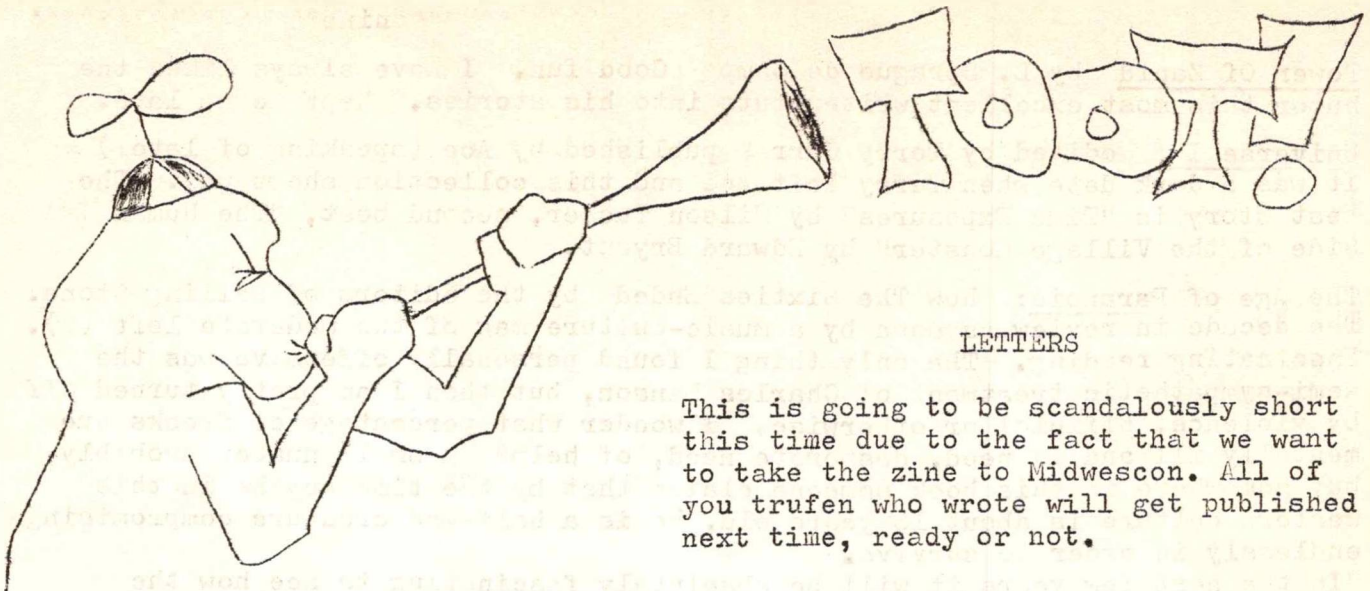
The Female Eunuch by Germaine Greer Women's Lib lit. Not as radical as Shulamith Firestone, more reasonable. I like it about the best of the dozen or so I have read on the subject. Am I in favor of Women's Lib? Absolutely! It's the first step in a new liberation of people in general. I am eagerly awaiting the publication of "Open Marriage" in paperback. The waiting list at the library is 32 names long (the mother of one of my students works there, but even that doesn't help on this particular book; the names are all female as far as she can tell).

Records: The Andrews Sisters Greatest Hits - memories; Stillness/Sergio Mendes and Brasil 66 - pop, latin, jazz and beautiful; Don Quixote - Gordon Lightfoot; This Is The Youngbloods - a double album of many of their songs; The Doors/ Weird Scenes Inside the Gold Mine - a double album and almost more of Morrison than I care to have at one time, but I got it cheap; Cat Mother - I don't really think they are all that great musically, but there is some quality they have that I really like, I just don't know what it is.

Movies: Nicholas and Alexandra It's easy to see why this won the Oscar for photography. Absolutely superb. The leads are both underacted, and rightly so. Nicholas was an ineffectual and repressed man. Alexandra was the grand daughter of Queen Victoria with all that implies. Rasputin was very well done. The ultimate in Romanoff decadence is the scene with the princes just before the Mad Monk is killed.

Fritz The Cat Very, very funny parody. It went by so fast that I would like so much to see it again to pick up all the bits I must have missed. The Crow sequence was best. The collage of Harlem with the Billie Holiday recording in the background was excellent. At the end behind the credits many photographs of New York were shown. Are these the ones that were copied by the artists for the movie? Maybe someone can tell me.

Elsewhere in this issue you will find some advertizing for Ozarkon 7 Neither Railee nor I are on the committee. We are just donating a little publicity for them. We don't know their exact plans so we can't tell you anything more than appears on the flyer.



LETTERS

This is going to be scandalously short this time due to the fact that we want to take the zine to Midwescon. All of you trufen who wrote will get published next time, ready or not.

BOB VARDEMAN P.O. Box 11352 Albuquerque, New Mexico 87112

The comments on the psychological makeup of a fan run parallel to some thinking I've been doing on the subject. A few conclusions are relatively simple to make. Fans are indeed more intelligent (by most criteria) because they read more, probably have a wider range of interests than John Q. Mundane, and most importantly, work hard at communicating with each other.

What causes this drive towards self-expression probably goes back to the average fan (whateverthell that is) who reads more than the mundanes surrounding him. I am firmly convinced that America has very strong anti-intellectual tendencies and reading instantly puts the potential fan into a slightly "different" group. It is hard trying to talk with someone who doesn't speak your language; it is even harder when the languages are the same, but on different levels.

In a recent zine from Jay Cornell, he talks about working as a janitor for a short time. All his co-workers could talk about was sex and sports and then usually in four letter words. Granted sex is a most interesting topic and that various sports might be fun to watch and that four letter words are not inherently Evil - but how many fans do you know who could put up with talking about nothing but sex, sports and doing it with every second word "fuck", "shit" etc?

Personally, I prefer action to talk in re sex and most sports bore me stiff. The type sports I enjoy are not very widely enjoyed or sometimes, not even understood. I played judo for 6 yrs; I took up fencing a few months back. Football is virtually pointless and baseball is a drag. I've probably come across more people who fence in fandom and might occasionally want to discuss it, than I have in the entire city of Albq.

As to the good ole four letter words, great for emphasis but not very descriptive when you get down to fine points. Basic communications problems probably bind fans together as much as anything else.

So, fans are different and even a bit weird. But Donn is probably close to the truth when he says that fans are conformists to fandom, rather than to mundania. But this is as it should be since fans are human beings with the same needs, drives, etc. We're just better human beings, that's all.

As to the 3-5 year lifetime for most fans, a couple reasons might enter. Fandom is mostly discovered in high school or early college. From senior in high school to graduation from college is about 5 yrs. and the pressures of the real world might fafiate a lot of semi-interested people.

Then, many might drift into fandom to learn to communicate with others, overcome introversion (yes, I'm of the opinion most fans are introverts -- I know I'm one), perhaps even find their niche in society or set their heads straight as to what they want out of life.

Three to five yrs is as good an estimate for this as any. As to maturing out of sf, well, a few choice four letter words come to mind. As we SWesterners say, toro feces. (That's bullshit for you Easterners). SF has some of the deepest novels philosophically that I've ever come across. Scientifically sf may not be much, but technologically it generally stays well ahead of the field in intellectual stimulation. I'd say the "maturing out of sf" argument is to cover up something else--just what would depend on the person. Perhaps buckling under to mundane pressures about reading that crazy Buck Rogers stuff and not being willing to admit it to fanfriends.

As to fans being amoral, this implies being totally without morals. I doubt it. My own moral system is pretty complex in places and probably seems amoral to a lot of people (alas and alack, I fear Rick Sneary thinks so), but it works for me and you'll probably be free of me from messing around in your business, even if you specifically asked me to. The extent of my stealing is limited to puns and cheating on my income taxes (this last is a joke, of course ---I can justify everything.) Personal conduct depends on the situation and the people involved. In a nutshell, I'm a moral relativist. Relatively speaking.

Hmmmm, the Railee method sounds promising. While I am hardly handsome or persuasive and feel older all the time, I am both male and a fan (I try to keep my hormones from splattering all over the place, too). Maybe Railee'd consider trying her method out on me. Does Albq. qualify as a proving grounds? Do we need a govt. contract for above ground testing of secret weapons? I might remind you both that we Albq. fen are declaring a moratirium on good sense and will hold Bubonicon 4 Aug. 25-27. Pro GoH is Ted White, fan GoH is Mike Glicksohn. And we'll be a convenient stopover point on your way to LAcon. (I just got a letter from Bruce Pelz asking me to be on a panel---I survived one in October with Harlan so I suppose I'm ready for the worldcon now. Any bets on how many times I stutter or ask to leave the room?)

Leigh: I know just what Jay Cornell was talking about; I work at a country club in the summer, and, while the conversation branches out a little, it's still pretty basically along the lines you mention. We are pleased to give a plug to Bubonicon and I am wondering how many fen you will get who will be glad to stop and refresh on the long trek west. You were handsome at Baycon Vardebob, did something drastic happen to you?

RICK SNEARY 2962 Santa Ana St. South Gate Calif. 90280

Railee, I suspect that there are really no new ideas in the world--except new inventions. I imagine that some minor temple scribe, in writing to the high Priest in Ninava, sent along a soft clay tablet, with the servant delievering his message so that a reply could be easily sent... But, thoughtfull ideas get lost, in verious dark ages.. How so ever... when I was a BNLH (Big Name Letter Hack) I regularly sent penny-postal cards (which gives one an idea how long ago it was) with my letters to the editors of TWS, SS, and PS. I would even fill them in with possable responce, that could be checked off, such as answers to questions.. I still have a stack of acouple dozen of these. It always worked, and gave me the boost of actually hearing from Pro Editors. I haven't for years, but then I rarely write "fan" letters any more.. I guess the last one I wrote was to John Dickson Carr-- the mystery writer... --- Though I once worked out an idea for comming to the attention of Walt Kelly, though lacking an address, I never tried it. That would have been to write a post card each day, commenting on that days strip.. If I was sure of the address, I would not have even included a return address, to make sure that it did not seem like a small bid for comment.. But after a year of brilent and friendly comments, I would reveil what my address was, just in case he want to write back.. -- This would mean little over 300 cards a small investment if it lead to friendship with some one as valueable as Kelly... But.. our Right-Wing paper stoped carrying Pogo when Kelly pictured the Veep as a Hyena.

One of the saddest things about Fandom, is seeing fannish friends drift away.. and that all to many, when they do put fandom behind them, do the same with all those they knew, no mater how close they seemed. But, it is something that happens, and as an old campainer, it is something I've had to get use to. It is rather like mess-mates in a war.. One morning they aren't there, and there is nohging you can do.. but go on.. This is one reason why, if some one, even well known, goes silent, they don't get a flood of letters asking what happen. They may have fallen off the roof, or defeloped the plague, and in need of cheer, but no one is likely to ask or wonder.. unless they hear.. Fans care, but one can't go around crying over lost friends all day.. better to make new ones.. --as for why they leave... The idea that they are leaving Fandom for the Real World is fairly common.. For them its maybe true. Certainly there are fans who do not have any envolvment with the present and Now... But, most of the long time fans have found that balance....of involvement within the world of Fandom, and yet interest and active in the world around them... I think this is more true of Fans today, than those in the 40's and 50's..

But to a lot, Fandom is like the activities of college and school...and when they get a job and family and home, they are to busy for the old gang.. So with fandom... And it is a pity... Particularlry with some bright young fem-fans, who get married and in a couple of years can write about nothing but house, kids and PTA like subjects.. Partly because they don't take the time to make the time to keep mentally stimulated.. There is one trouble with Fandom for those who are great doers...after a while you have done everything, and it gets to be the same. Pretty soon you have heard every arguement, seen every new idea, argued every theory, fought every fued, so many times that the joy has worn off... As I'm mainly an observer, and interested in friends (and not able to do much else), I stick around... Even though I think this is my third time around for everything. (And I think I was better at it the last time).

Railee - Young fem-fans often can't make time for outside things. Nothing like a few small children to put you in physical and mental prison. Leigh and I are lucky - we are at the point where our childrne are turning into adults we can talk to instead of care for.

Leigh - Rick there is so much in your letter that I am splitting it up. That is one very perceptive comment about the fans of the 40's and 50's and I'm sure you would be the fan to know. Your last paragraph above hit me the hardest because it is so true. There must come a time to many fans when they say to themselves, "What do I do now?" and realize what you have said, there is nothing more for them to do. This just may explain some cases of gafia. I prefer your reasons for remaining, friends and observing. Someday I am going to make the Westeron just for the pleasure of meeting you in person.

JACKIE FRANKE Box 51-A RR 2 Beecher, IL 60401

I've never read a personalzine before, and had wondered just what they were like. Now I know...reproed rap.

Railee sounds like the sort of gal I could talk to the live-long night.

Anyone who's a pet lover has to be a Right Sort.

Perhaps I should mention the only negative feeling I got from your zine.. no feedback. So many things I wanted to say "Yes indeedy" to, or add some comment brought to mind, but with print..it's impossible! Very frustrating.

The only writers I have ever dropped a line to are Tucker and Asimov.

And both answered immediately and with warmth, though naturally, briefly.

I've never encountered the Too Busy Arteest who can't be bothered with an admiring public. But then, again, I'm not a fan-letter-writer either.

Personally, if I came across an author who was too tied up to respong to my comments or questions, I simply would note itdown not to write to that

particular person again. Feeding egos can be enjoyable, especially when it's deserved, but it's nice to know that the crumbs are being received. A post card doesn't take much time.

Is Fandom escapism? Certainly! So is stamp-collecting, or the study of ancient Crete, or the nurturing of prize-winning roses. Anything that doesn't deal with earning your bread-and-butter is escapism, particularly when it helps turn your mind away from whatever it is you do to earn that bread-and-butter. Of course, some few of us are able to get their daily needs by doing what interests them most. But even those fortunate few look elsewhere for refreshment. At least fandom has the quality of leading a person toward life and others rather than away from them.

Introverted? Yes, I think that many fans are like that. Know that I fell in that category...still do to some extent. Perhaps there was nothing to be extroverted about. But for the person with the right frame of mind, future oriented, open minded, whatever, fandom is like finding Home after a long journey. Even people you have never met, or heard of, or until that moment never knew you existed will greet you. No axes to grind, no persuasion to sway you toward, just there and happy to see you.

Not that I'm naive enough to believe that every single person in this broad-spectrumed thing are the very salt of the Earth...but far more than I've encountered in any other grouping of humans. In the past year-and-a-half I've yet to have met one person who, stick my foot in my mouth though I do, has put me down. I've seen fans who have absolutely no use for another fan sit and listen with the utmost patience and friendliness to, what seemed to me, inane chatter. Everyone has a chance in fandom. There may be a hierachy of sorts, very casual and nebulous, but not such rigid stratification that friends and acquaintances can't be made bridging dozens of varied interestes. What status there is doesn't seem to be linked to the Power a person weilds, or even to a great extent to what they accomplish..but rests basically on just the type of person they are. If you can get along with virtually anyone, and yet remain deep in your own persoanal integrity, not become shallow and wishy-washy, you're secure in the knowledge that you can build life-long attachments. Too often, in the mundane world, it's Do As I Do, Believe As I Believe, or You Are Nothing. A Person Without A Soul. That's awful, And the biggest difference between the Fannish universe than the so-called Real one. "Do your own thing" was a fannish credo long before the new generation discovered the phrase.

Phew! Didn't mean to get so wordy. As you can see, the first blush of enthusiasm has yet to wear off. Hope it never does.

Leigh - Beautiful! I enjoyed your paean to the joys of Fandom very much. It took me way back to my first days. I'm glad a note of caution was there. You will find that there are fans who enjoy and play power games, like who will get the Worldcon? Take special note of when it goes to California again, for example. I could tell you stories. Also there are fans who take joy in starting feuds and tromping on other fans, fortunately they are in the minority. If they become too obnoxious, fandom usually finds a way to shut them out in self-defense. Some groups of fans play group within a group. Mostly because of common interests, but sometimes just to shut others out. All of this can be safely ignored and it will still be a good world if you concentrate on the fannish friends you make. You will have very little trouble in that department Jackie, you are most personable.

ART CREDIT: p. 10 is by John D. Berry and he may be surprised to see it.

Until next time - a fond goodbye from both of us.

Let's not talk about it!

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