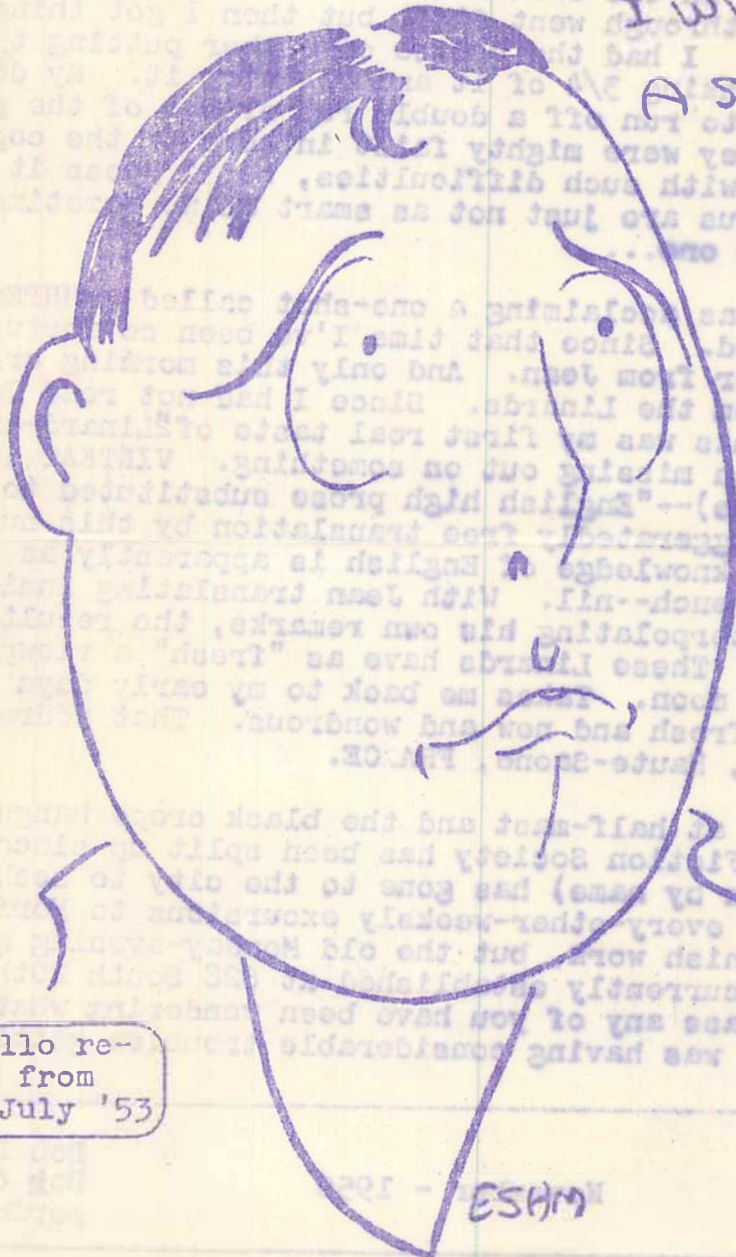


CONFAB

FINAL

ISSUE



I WIFE
A SIMON

Cover illo reprinted from MOTE #7-July '53

ESHAM

CONFAB 14

NUMBER 14

THOSE crazy mixed-up pages in the last issue drew almost as many comments as the N3F discussion. They were referred to as almost everything from "a maze to test the intelligence of ~~the~~ readers" to "an adventure". Apparently the maze wasn't too difficult, as most everyone seems to gleaned some measure of intelligence from the letters. Though it was no doubt obvious, I want to hasten to assure you that the "unusual" page line-up was unintentional.

A couple of issues back, you may recall, I was complaining about my troubles with "off-set" with my ditto. Well, I had the brilliant idea that if I'd run off one side of each sheet--every other page--first and then go back and fill in the back sides I'd save myself some of that trouble. First time through went fine, but then I got things fouled up but good--somehow. I had the choice of either putting the mag together as I did or junking 3/4 of it and re-doing it. My decision was obvious. I did have to run off a double run of two of the pages, which explains why they were mighty faint in some of the copies. This was my first trouble with such difficulties, but I guess it just goes to show that some of us are just not as smart as we sometimes think we are. Sort of humbles one...

IN THE LAST issue I was acclaiming a one-shot called MEUHPÉON by Lee Riddle and Jean Linard. Since that time I've been so fortunate as to have received a letter from Jean. And only this morning arrived a fanzine, VINTKAT, from the Linards. Since I had not read Jean's earlier mag, MEUH, this was my first real taste of "Linard-ese"---and I can see that I've been missing out on something. VINTKAT is Annie's mag with--(and I quote)--"English high prose substituted to my french high prose is all exaggeratedly free translation by this husband of mine", since Annie's knowledge of English is apparently as extensive as my knowledge of French--nil. With Jean translating Annie's French into English, and interpolating his own remarks, the result is highly interesting reading. These Linards have as "fresh" a viewpoint as I've run across in many a moon. Takes me back to my early days in fandom when everything was fresh and new and wondrous. That address is 24 rue petit, VESOUL, Haute-Saone, FRANCE.

THE FLAGS ARE flying at half-mast and the black crepe hangs everywhere. The Norfolk Science Fiction Society has been split up since 50% of the members (Ray Thompson by name) has gone to the city to seek his fortune. True, he still makes every-other-weeksly excursions to Norfolk to spur me on in my fannish work, but the old Monday-evening get-together are no more. He is currently established at 628 South 20th, Apt. 3, Omaha 2, Nebr. In case any of you have been wondering what happened to his mag ECLIPSE, Ray was having considerable troubles getting his mimeo

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November - 1956

Bob Peatrowsky
Box 634
Norfolk, Nebr.

forwarded to his present address. At last report (Oct.28) the stencils and everything was in readiness, awaiting the arrival of the mimeo which apparently was somewhere in transit between Norfolk and Omaha. We will continue to interrupt our regular material to bring you any further developements which may occur.

MY PSYCHO*ANALYSIS of the fanzine-editing business in the last editorial hasn't as yet been either proven or dis-proven. Further issues of PEON and UMBRA have not yet arrived so I can't tell yet if these mags are really going to undergo any changes or not. As for my own case with CONFAB--I'm not going to reveal any thoughts which I may have on the subject just yet. I still haven't decided how I feel about the whole matter, although the cleverer among you may note that this issue of CONFAB is no different type of mag than the previous issues were. If you wish, you may jump to your own conclusions

* * * * *

SEVERAL weeks have passed since that above paragraph was written. Not really a long time, yet numerous things and thoughts have occurred, all of which have helped me decide how I feel about CONFAB. Or perhaps it would be more correct if I said "the way I don't feel about CONFAB.

The truth of the matter is that find I really don't have any feelings toward the mag. I neither like it immensely nor do I dislike it to any degree. It has become a strictly impersonal thing to me. I suppose it has achieved its objective. It has been a letterzine of, I think, moderate success. In these several issues since CONFAB has been revived, response has been most gratifying. There has been all sorts of material for an ambitious letterzine editor to use. But I'm afraid the bright glow that once covered me whenever I was working on "my very own fanzine" has all but gone out.

At one time practically all my spare time was consumed with reading science fiction mags and publishing a fanzine. Since then I've discovered that there are other ways to spend my spare time besides s-f and fanzines. These other "mundane" interests and activities have waxed and waned/close relation to my periods of gafia. Now, I fear, has come the ultimate.

This, then, is the final issue of CONFAB.

This will also be my retirement from the fan-pubbing game. I now have not the slightest urge to resume fanzine publishing and if such an urge should arise in the future, I'll resist it firmly.

I have not lost complete interest in fandom and s-f however. There are a couple of fanzines which I'd like to continue receiving. A cash subscription will solve that problem, and keep me in touch with most of fandom's happenings. I cannot sub to all the fmz. If you don't get a sub from me and continue to send me your mag, you are indeed a Good Man and shall be regarded as such in my most secret thoughts.

And now, as they say, I'm an old fan...and tired.

Bob Peabody

THE READERS REPORT

CLAUDE RAYE HALL, 3228 McCart St., Fort Worth, ~~76102~~ TEXAS

CONFAB #13 arrived without spider. Yet, I noticed in the letter section that this yankee upstart from Minneapolis--Redd Boggs--got HIS with his 12th issue. It's hardly fair, Boggs getting all of the extras like that...

With you giving out typically fannish gifts like spiders with each issue of CONFAB, I predict a startling swelling in circulation. Shouldn't be too long, Bob, until fen will be just dying to get CONFAB.

If you ever run out of spiders, I know a mountain out near Carlsbad, New Mexico, that's covered with "thousand legs." I might be able to herd up a desert schooner load for you the next time I'm down there. Of course, postal authorities being what they are, they'd likely insist that you include a pine box at least six foot long with each "thousand leg." I can't help you out concerning those pine boxes. We haven't any trees in TEXAS you know. And more dogs have gone psycho lately for unexplainable reasons....

Bob, I was very disappointed to learn that your readership response on CONFAB is so low. Probably because of the fact that MUZZY was always much of a rabble rouser, I generally received 30 to 50 percent response (letters and postcards) for each issue. My circulation was always about 80 issues, with about 30 or 40 issues extra for write-ins. MUZZY #7 was a complete sell-out. That's why I chopped off some of the fen on my old mailing list. Hell, Boggs (the ornery cuss) only responded to one issue anyway. Tucker never had written. There were a few others that I dropped. I sent their issues out to English fen. It was muchly a wasted motion. None of those blimey English fen answered either.

And, in case anyone is wondering, the comment on MUZZY was very favorable except for a few fen. I used to be able to name them on the fingers of one hand. Now it takes two hands and two or three toes thrown in. Comme ce, comme ci!

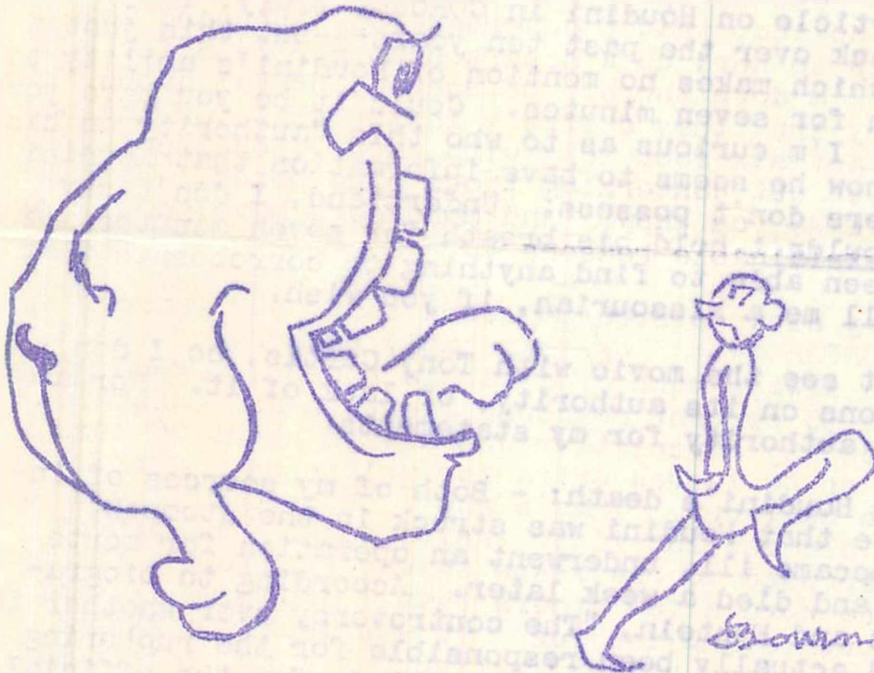
Seemingly, you scoff at my statement that Houdini could hold his breath for seven minutes. It irritates me when this sort of thing happens; when someone invariably doubts my statements. I'm thankful that it only happens with strangers. My friends have learned to take me at face value.

Houdini could hold his breath for seven minutes. CORONET published the most complete biography on his life several years ago. The book length item was separated over a span

of two issues. It was written by an authority on his life. Not only could Houdini hold his breath seven minutes, but he could also exist over half an hour on the air remaining inside an air-tight coffin under water. He performed the stunt easily to reveal a faker.

And, since we're on the subject of Houdini, the movie which starred Tony Curtis can hardly be accepted as accurate. Houdini did not die in the "Chinese Water Torture" trick because of a burst appendix. Houdini had, for several years, offered a hundred dollars to the man who could slug him in the stomach and make him wince. He had hardened his stomach muscles tremendously and could stand a blow that would kill a normal person.

That night, while (I forget whether he was leaving a matinee performance or entering for the night's performance) in front of the theater, a man suddenly stepped out of nowhere and hit him violently in the stomach. Houdini, caught off guard, did not have time to flex his stomach muscles. In the movie, they had Houdini conveniently die of his appendix rather than a rupture from an unexpected blow.



Did you ever hear the one about him where he would swallow some thread and some needles and regurgitate them and the needles would be threaded on the thread?

Or what about his elephant stunt on the stage of the once-famous Hippodrome?

Several of Houdini's illusions died with him. But a successor in the field of illusions is this Ricardi from Peru that appeared on the Ed Sullivan show last week. It's obvi-

ous that the girl was suspended by wires--but how? I'd like to see him do that trick out in the open.

You know this already, but I'm going to tell you that your pages were sure messed up just so that I can have my say. I finally pieced things together though and managed to read all of Riddle's letter. Most interesting of the group.

As for the N3F, I can remember when I was a member. It took six months for me to get my first zine and junk. I don't remember that anything they did for me or I did for them was worthwhile. Nan Gerding welcomed me in with a poem on a postcard. I think that was the most important item I got out of the N3F for my dollar membership fee. I

was only a member for one year--thank God.

((No, Claude, I wouldn't say that I was scoffing at your statement that "Houdini could hold his breath for seven minutes." It just didn't seem to jibe with my own recollections on the subject. Since then, I dug out my copy of THE GREAT HOUDINI by Beryl Williams and Samuel Epstein and reread it, but it failed to mention his breath-holding record. The local public library then supplied me with a copy of HOUDINI, HIS LIFE STORY by Harold Kellock, "From the recollections and documents of Beatrice Houdini." This biographer states that "...he could stay under (water)...for more than four minutes without grave discomfort. His high record was four minutes, sixteen seconds, in a public test." (The underlines are mine.) This is two minutes, forty-four seconds short of seven minutes!

I was unable to locate that biography in CORONET that you mentioned. The library's Guide to Periodical Literature does list an article on Houdini in CORONET (July, 1955)--- I checked it back over the past ten years---but this just a short article which makes no mention of Houdini's ability to hold his breath for seven minutes. Could it be you have your mags mixed up? I'm curious as to who this "authority on his life" is, and how he seems to have information that Houdini's other biographers don't possess. Understand, I don't say that Houdini couldn't hold his breath for seven minutes. I just haven't been able to find anything to corroborate that statement. Call me a Missourian, if you wish.

I didn't see the movie with Tony Curtis, so I don't have any opinions on its authority, or lack of it. Nor am I using it as an authority for my statements.

Regarding Houdini's death: - Both of my sources of information state that Houdini was struck in the stomach, subsequently became ill, underwent an operation for acute appendicitis, and died a week later. According to biographers Williams and Epstein, "The controversy over whether the blow... ..had actually been responsible for the rupturing of Houdini's appendix was finally settled--for the official record, at least--when Houdini's insurance policy was paid according to the double indemnity rate permissable in accidental death."

I didn't see Ricardi from Peru on the Ed Sullivan show, but gather from your comment that he performed a levitation. A few months ago I did see a magician (I don't recall his name at the present) perform a levitation out on a California beach on the tv show "You Asked for It" in answer to a wish just like yours about "doing that trick out in the open".

Incidentally, all this research on Houdini has roused my interest in magic sufficiently to dig out my old notebooks of magic for a little rereading.))

BOB TUCKER, Box 702, Bloomington, Ill.

Tentative definition (revised): Fuggheads are people incapable of second thoughts. (This is a second-thought.)

Latch on to NEWSWEEK for Oct. 15 and read telepath item on page 35. I say to you sir, WILD TALENT is two years ahead of the newspapers!

And I may as well tell you that WILD TALENT has been sold to the movies. Be on the alert to avoid it.

((.....!!))



DICK ELLINGTON, 299 Riverside Drive, Apt. 11A, New York 25, N. Y.

Most pleased to see another copy of CONFAB taking the place of your Robin-Hooding for awhile.

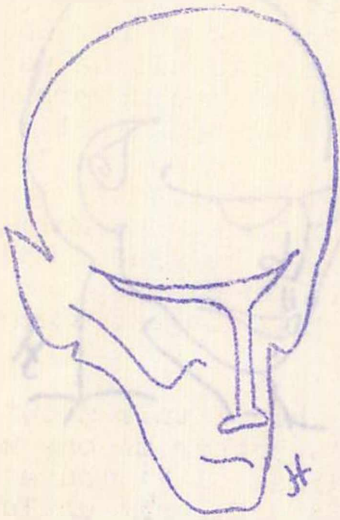
Er, -uh, the vacant lot for practicing... I mean, uh, if you don't have a backstop don't the arrows tend to sort of fly out beyond the vacant lot? Or does it overlook a stretch of open country securely fenced off from wandering vagrants? Or does one get some kind of a prize for hitting passing pedestrians accidentally? Recollect around home (Seattle) there's an island where gun-hunting is verboten but where during the appropriate seasons, deer may be potted with bow and arrow. All the amateur archers turn out in force but the deer are relatively safe. The hunters, I am sad to say, are not equally safe. Several of them usually come back looking like victims of a medieval war. Like Tom Lehrer says, "Two game wardens, seven hunters and a cow...."

Con report? I'll be looking forward to this. Have heard all sorts of mixed remarks on the thing from horrible to magnifico. Didn't see hardly any of it myself due to being stuck behind a registration type desk during most of the doings.

I agree with you on swimming. Water is for fishes. Or to paraphrase Asimov, "If God had wanted men to go in the water he would have given them fins!" I faunch to go someplace near the Dead Sea so's I can lay around and really float without worrying about sinking.

Teenage fans? Sure, some of them are a problem. So what are we supposed to do, make fandom a closed club to teen-agers? Hardly. Don't let those back near us who have made an occasional boo-boo (Ellik is a case in point there). Again hardly. Forget about the whole silly argument? Might as well.

Ghod, after this last idiot hassle of theirs, I wish the N3F would quietly go into whatever dank, dark hole they live in and rot away from shame. What silliness. Even common, garden variety fen aren't guilty of some of the arrant assininites they pulled off with their "political" campaigning.



((To set your mind at ease, Dick, that was a big vacant lot on which I was practicing my archery. Eight lots, actually. And on the edge of town, with open country on two sides. So it was perfectly safe.))

G. M. CARR, 8325 - 31st NW, Seattle 7, Wash.

Before engaging on any endeavor to "destroy NFFF" it might be well to stop and take another look--- the poor old 'Dying Monster' (as it was publicly labeled way back in 1949) seems to have a pretty tough constitution. It might take a bit more doing than you think to destroy it. In fact, the club has survived mismanagement which would have destroyed most organizations but still seems to hang on and keep on making promises which it never gets around to fulfilling.... Another thing to take note is the affectation which it seems to engender in the fans who are active N3Fers... The gripes, the complaints, the carping criticisms and suggestions to 'kill it off' always seem to come from the non-members, or from the inactive ones. The fans who have most reason to feel disgruntled--those who have been worked to a frazzle, milked of their dough to pay its bills and keep it solvent, and then when too broke and too worn out to work any longer are tossed to one side with loud screams of vilification at not having accomplished more than they did--those fans are not the ones to holler for N3Fs annihilation. Not they.... They lick their wounds in silence for a while, then drag themselves to the sidelines and cheer the efforts of the others that are still hanging on. If the defalcation of unstable officers, the dwindling membership (down to 75 from the over-400 of 1950), the lack of tangible results, the lack of inter- leadership can't kill it--no ganging up of non-members can possibly do it. Go ahead and try....but mark words, it'll be a losing battle. N3F will be around as long as fandom is.

That was really something new in page format, Bob...it lent an air of adventure to reading this issue--a sort of treasure hunt with clues. But it was well worth the effort--especially to see that long letter from Redd Boggs (who has been silent too long from FAPA) and the word from Chas. Middle who has been absent even longer. I miss them, even with all the present Fapish brilliance of Grennell Bloch & Tucker. A new star has also risen in the Fapish firmament, but so far I have not seen him elsewhere--one Andy Young. You wouldn't recognize the old apa, Bob....

Your comments about editors feeling themselves in a rut with regard to their fmz are very pertinent. At least, I can testify that it has happened to me a few times--which is why I am now working on my 5th Fanzine title (my new SAPSzine). I find, though, that an editor may wish to change his fanzine style but that doesn't mean he/she is going to be able to do it. You can change the name, the paper, the page size, the material layout, and everything about the zine including the color of the ink--but you can't get away from yourself. And since it

is the editor that makes the mag. It is going to be the same old stuff no matter what you call it. For that matter--look at Ray Palmer. Amazing, Other "orlds, Mystic, Search...change the name all he wants, the same old RAP-crud comes to rest inside the newly-named covers. But at least RAP did manage to produce one mag that was distinctly different--FATE. I still see copies on the newsstand occasionally, so I suppose he is still publishing it. Many people admire his taste, but I can't stomach it. I've got the first 22 ish's (when Sea Mahaffey was editing OTHER WORLDS) of his prozine OW that I'll be glad to trade for the first six issues of LONDON MYSTERY MAGAZINE in case anybody is listening. That, at least, would repay me for the dough I spent on 'em...

((Don't take me too seriously, GM, when I talk about killing off the N3F. Actually it doesn't bother me one way or the other. As long as it leaves me alone, I'll leave it alone. OK? Besides, if we abolished the N3F, what would future fans have to gripe about? Not to mention present-day fans?))

STAN WOOLSTON, 12832 West Ave., Garden Grove, Calif.

Glad to get CONFAB again, because I like letters. As such, your cover policy doesn't really interest me. What are the names of the two fans on the cover, anyway? I suppose the bearded slob is Paul Turner in a previous incarnation. I don't savvy that brilliant cartoon.

Glad you're back in sf fandom. I have a mild interest in archery, and keep it that way by not getting the equipment. I've read how to make various types of bows, and suppose I could recognize the kind used for hunting humans as opposed to the four-legged sort; but I carefully keep all my lore in books where it won't cut into my fan time.

I'm a guy who believes in compromises. George Wetzel says Ron Ellik believes fans should be allowed to use water pistols at cons. I'd go along with Ellik with one modification: that the fans be sitting in a bathtub full of water, and the tub be pushed off the roof.

Now I'm in a relaxed mood, see. You can tell from that crack. So now I'm going to say a few words about the last letter, Ed Cox's, as he specifically mentioned my name, and made some suggestions.

About N3F, he said "Let's abolish it." He said "Nobody is going to volunteer for work." He said "The boom in stf is over now." He said "Nobody loses if the NFFF dissolves."

An attempt to abolish N3F last year got 4 votes.

Right now projects in the works: a Yearbook, with 2 polls currently being made, info being gathered by quite a few volunteers on various subjects; a Memory Book is ready to be sold, dedicated to the NYORKON II (this spelling from letter WAW sent me); about 1½ years of a current Prozine Story Key is in manuscript form, and probably next to be published; and a Paper-Back Anthology Story Key with the work nearing com-

pletion (on manuscript--it isn't stenciled yet). Earlier this year a pseudonyms List was published, and Fanspeak came out. Besides this "no work" there was several issues of Postie, the letterzine, and a tradezine came out too. In about a month another ish of Postie will be published. (That's about the end of October.)

Perhaps I don't know what a boom is, but in any case possibly 5 new SF mags are in the works or out. Satellite is something like Startling: a story of about 40,000 words as lead, plus several shorts. Super Science, Dream World and Interplanetary, plus one dedicated to sex and sadism, are also probably a-coming. This doesn't indicate to my mind that SF is necessarily continuing its upward track, but then I don't think it is possible to tell by knowing the name of the current mags if SF is progressing or not. Even quantity-wise, it is possible for a mag to increase in the number of issues a year, the number of pages, or both; it could also change to less frequent publication and cut the word-length. Or it could change to a comic mag.

Apparently Interplanetary and one of the other mags is intended to be a sort of continuation of Planet. This could mean a letter and fan department, and serve as Planet did in attracting fans. Even without it, there are still letter columns that can be tapped for new potential members of fandom and of N3F. I doubt if either SF or fandom will collapse, and although imperfect, N3F should remain as well.

There ARE active members in N3F, and they will lose if N3F dissolves. I'm one of those active members. Instead of glaring generalities, I've tried to get along, by helping this group work better. Perhaps I shouldn't let Ed's words bother me, but if he was interested enough in fandom to become active in N3F, he might see why guys and gals remain active in the group.

I liked this stuff, including the two Carr's. Actually G.M. is much better located to criticise N3F, but this year she has not been an officer, and evidently didn't remember a few of the achievements--the special publications such as the Pseudonyms List.

At one time there WAS a way in N3F to compel obedience, but that was beyond my time and GEM's. The method was simple, too: you had duties--to pay dues, to vote in all elections. If such a rule was in force today it would mean ALL members would at least be active in the field of voting--and this could include answering all polls. Another possibility is to include the contribution of something to the club magazine, or activity in some branch of club activity, either a project or a "department".

G.M. suggests economic penalties might work, but where would all that interest--and MONEY--come from to get a hundred bucks to put in a promissory note. Shucks, with such an arrangement a person would have to be a fanatic to join.

((And, from a later letter....))

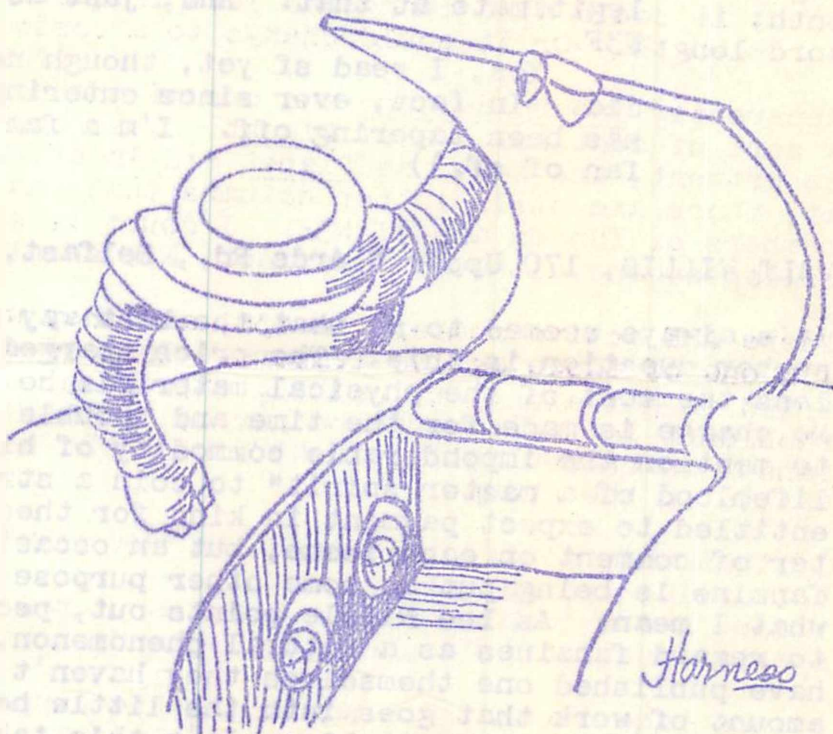
...I think the group that clusters around a fanzine, or that meets in someone's house, is a good part of fandom. Conventions are fun to

attend and fun to think about afterwards; fanzine pubbing has its attractive features, and corresponding is probably the heart of fandom, as it brings the ideas and group actions of a number of people from wide areas to a sort of focus.

But I have been interested in N3F for some time, and possibly find one of its appeals that reaching for everything approach to fandom. In fan-pubbing you correspond and organize the issues of the magazine, and get direct "payment" from the joy of seeing your mag go out and in anticipating comment. Later the comments come in, and you can enjoy that too--it's egoboo personified. A fanzine, then, can be a personal hobby, and often the editor-publisher goes far afield for subject matter. This is good, for the people who appreciate the expanse of ideas presented (or the enjoyment of the material) will support it with subs, comments and the like.

N3F can have a very direct appeal, too. Various persons are active doing definite things--publishing and editing the club magazines, which includes the official organ and a letterzine, for instance. Both pubs attract its following--its commenters-en, contributors. And they give an idea what the appeal of N3F is to those who are members.

I'm going to see you get a copy of POSTIE, the N3F letterzine, when it comes out, Bob. Perhaps it will give you an idea why there might be some fans who find N3F worth working for. I wonder...Bob, do you have any idea how many of your readers would help you with your magazine if you asked them to, and how steady they'd continue in the future? That's the big N3F problem, and I believe the candidates for next year, and other workers still going strong, will find '57 a better year than this one. I am not comparing N3F to your mag except to the extent of saying that a fan organization carries on (maybe haltingly) after an individual stops being active, and during the months you were gafiat- ing N3F continued to publish the club organ, a letterzine came out several times this year, and the Tradezine also was out. ... N3F's detractors are usually fans who aren't in on current activities of the group, and who are griping blindly, assuming that it could never improve. My friend Ed Cox, Redd Boggs and others wish to see N3F dissolved. They'll have to work by being members, and I doubt that they wish to join. Only members can dissolve it. Their cutting remarks have made the job of improving N3F much harder, by discouraging some



of the active members of fandom from joining.

Guess I feel there's too much anti-N3F sentiment for me to appreciate the letter section fully, but I've a feeling that many letters display the fannish custom--also political custom--of overstating a case for the sake of emphasis, and then believing the overstatement. Dog-gone it, maybe I'm a freak, but I still read and enjoy sf after 20 years; I read widely outside the field, especially non-fiction books and magazines. I've an impression that many of your readers dislike sf, and find it boring. Why not take an informal poll on this?

((Seems to me that you've covered your side--and N3F's side--of the discussion pretty thoroughly. Stan. Very little that I have to add, either pro or con.

Your comparison of N3F to my mag does seem pretty legitimate at that. And, just as CONFAB goes, so goes the N3F.

Yes, I read sf yet, though not nearly as much as I once did. In fact, ever since entering fandom my reading of sf has been tapering off. I'm a fan of fandom rather than a fan of sf.))

WALT WILLIS, 170 Upper N'Ards Rd., Belfast, N. Ireland

It's always seemed to me that the best way of looking at this silent subber question is this. The price charged by a faned covers more or less the cost of the physical materials he sends to the subscriber. No charge is made for the time and trouble expended by the faned--not to mention the imponderable commodity of his genius, the precious lifeblood of a master spirit* to coin a striking phrase--and he is entitled to expect payment in kind for these. Not necessarily a letter of comment on each issue, but an occasional indication that his fanzine is being put to some other purpose than base uses, if you know what I mean. As Lee Riddle points out, people have a habit of coming to regard fanzines as a natural phenomenon, like rain: unless they have published one themselves they haven't the vaguest idea of the amount of work that goes into the little heap of duplicated sheets they toss aside so casually. It's this taking things for granted which is responsible for the periodic depressions in fandom, like the one we're experiencing now. A really good fanzine appears, it stimulates activity everywhere and brings lively newcomers into the field, until everywhere there is brilliance and light. Gradually more and more people come to regard this as the natural state of fandom, and sit back complacently watching the fireworks, not bothering even to applaud. Then in time the little men behind the scenes get tired working for nothing, leaving the silent subbers in the dark feeling vaguely dissatisfied and cheated. They had paid for all that gunpowder and other raw materials: how dare the little men behind the scenes give up working like slaves converting them into brilliant set pieces?

So the way I look at it is that just as the subscriber has the choice between subscribing and not subscribing, so the publisher is entitled to the choice between accepting the subscription or refusing it. In practice he usually accepts it, because few fanzines have an active sub-

scription list up to the limit of their circulation, but if the time comes when he needs an extra copy for an active reader, he's quite entitled to drop a lump of deadwood. Personally, I do it the painless way, by just failing to notify them that their subscription has expired. If they notice it themselves and renew, well, good for them, and I try someone else. They've shown they're alive and interested, and that's all I want.

I liked Perry's letter best this issue, and enjoyed his diatribe against the N3F. In the old days, when nearly every fan was in the N3F whether they liked it or not, we had a plot to elect Tucker or Burbee as N3F President--we found there was nothing in the constitution to say the President had to be a member of N3F--with the idea that on taking office he would forthwith dissolve the organization under the Directorate's feet. But with old age tolerance has set in. If these people like to play at organizing themselves, why should we break it up

It was nice to see Boggs back again--we missed him. I'm fascinated by that little insect he found in his copy. Is he sure it wasn't...Yngvi?

What on earth is this fatal appeal archery has to have for fans? A week after hearing that part of the Liverpool Group has left fandom for toxophily, I get fmz from you and Ray Thompson mentioning it. There are a lot of dreadful puns lying around there, but I'll resist the temptation.

Well, it's nice to see Confab coming in again so frequently. I've always liked it and meant to say so many a time. Incidentally was that peculiar pagination a device to test the intelligence of your readers, like the mazes they put rats through? If so, send me my piece of cheese: I made it.

*Not to be confused with spirit masters.

((I've been on both sides of this "silent subber" situation. And simultaneously too, I might add. Except for the first few months, I've been pubbing a fanzine of one sort or another ever since I've been in fandom, albeit a bit spasmodic at times. So I've experienced the faned's viewpoint. And during this period, from time to time, I've played the part of the silent subber to several fanzines too--fanzines which are no longer with us. These were fanzines which I really enjoyed. I looked forward to each issue and hoped they would continue on and on. But, sad to say, I was neglectful about commenting and letting the editor know how I felt about his mag. Who knows--mine might have been the letter that would have spurred Geis on with PSYCHOTIC or Leeh with QUANDRY. Ponderous thought, that.

I wasn't aware that fans were more vulnerable to the appeal of archery than plain people. But there does seem to be some deep, hidden connection there. Right now though I've given up archery for the appeal of fan-pubbing again. After this, who knows?

The pagination maze was unintentional. I hadn't laid in a supply of cheese to give out as rewards, so I hope you'll

understand why yours hasn't b en forthcoming. This idea of using some such subtle device to test the readers' intelligence does intrigue me though...))

RON ELLIK, 277 Pomona Avenue, Long Beach 3, Calif.

...that brings up the point of SUBZINES vs. FREEZINES... I wonder if this will start another feud like "Down with Fanfiction" and "Eighth Fandom Is Here" and "No U Turn" and other slogans of days gone past... Anyway, and to wit, here are my opinions, as one who has edited and published both types.



Now, remember, fans are alternately altruistic and quite selfish. You will find many a fan who would give his fanzine away...but when he tries it he finds himself cutting down bit by bit on the amount of material in each issue--so as to save on postage. Also, you'll never meet a bargain-hunter like the fan who gives his fmz away. Always looking for cheaper paper, stencils, ink, correction fluid, staples, ink pads--always.

So let's look at the argument from both viewpoints. How does the altruistic side of a fan look at subzines/freezines? Sort of like this--

I'm not going to make money on my fanzine. I know this because everybody says they don't make money. If I were to publish for a circulation of 1500 or more and print only a few pages, charging ten cents a copy, I could make money. But I want to pub for a limited circulation of my own friends or people who would be interested in the type of material I like to write/read-- and I do not want to be limited by publication

deadlines or a small number of pages, both of which are imposed on the large-circulation fanzine.

Furthermore, I'm getting sick and tired of sending my fanzine to the pros for review and, if they review it at all, getting back five or six letters with nickels or dimes inside requesting copies of the next issue, or maybe, three-ish subs. I put these names down in my little black book, and send them their copy(ies), and if I ever hear from them again it's to ask for the issue after that, no comment on the mag itself except maybe "I like YEGLURAPH, please send me the following issue." These people pay for maybe one-tenth or one-fifth (at the most) of the cost of sending them a thirty-page fanzine, and I get no pleasure out of sending it to them...

So why not cut out all this nonsense about charging for subscriptions? It's only done to imitate the professionals, and we don't sell ads to imitate the pros, so why sell subs? Besides, it involves a more complex system of listing those who get the issue, when I'd rather just keep a list of one or two pages of names and addresses, closely typed,

to which I could refer much faster than a book full of coded signs and numbers.

This way, too, I don't have to stop sending Yeglurmph to somebody just because he isn't pubbing anymore. And too, I don't have to keep Joe Whatsis on the list because he puts out a monthly rag I don't even read. I can send it to people who I want to get it, without fear of embarrassing them by making it look like I want their money. My circulation can be as large or as small as I want it, for while I don't have to send it to anybody, there's no need to "work" to increase circulation--most everybody will reply to a free fanzine, if that's all they have to do to keep getting it. So I go through the letter columns in the prozines and the fanzine review sections in other fanzines, and the club membership lists, and send out 250 copies of the first two issues, and from the letters I get in return I make up a pliable little list of maybe 100, maybe more, and answer all the letters so that they feel they're getting a little bit more than a fanzine every two months or every three months. Besides, if something comes up like a newer, tougher semester at school, or a special assignment at work which requires all my spare time, I can quietly fold things up for a quarter or two, and not worry about irate subscribers pestering me wanting their money back.

This way too, I don't need to keep a large backlog of material--or any backlog at all. Yeglurmph can be pubbed whenever I have some decent material on hand; the only stuff I'll hold for any period of time is artwork, and damned if I'll accept just ANY artwork--I'll make it a policy to send back half of what an artist sends me, and make sure I have four or five represented in each issue... And format?--I can experiment all I want, and figure out what I like best. Maybe a renovation or two here and there, a new idea in headings, a different color of ink. Sure, I'll get a lot of helpful suggestions from the readership, but they aren't running this fanzine--they get it only so long as they like it, but their liking it isn't a prerequisite to it's existence.

There you have my own altruistic viewpoints, modified somewhat for publication. I doubt you'll agree wholeheartedly...but that, to a large extent, is how FAFHRD is run.

Now we'll see how I look at it when I'm feeling Ellik-centric. . .

They aren't paying for Yeglurmph, so I don't have to send it to them unless I want to. I expect them to comment on it--after all, I'm in this thing for ego-boo, not money. I expect them to contribute once in a while --I should write it ALL? I expect decent reviews once in a while from the ones who review fanzines; after all, they're getting it free, why should they pan it and cut themselves off my mailing list? I'll publish when I feel like it, because none of them have any right to it, and certainly they can't tell me when to put it out.



But boy, it sure is a lot easier than putting out a subzine. I would-

n't go back to regular deadlines for anything--not even for the pleasure of steady staff of contributors and a backlog of material. That way, it amounted to that I couldn't pick what went into my mag--the columnists and steady contributors would send me all kinds of junk, and if I rejected any of it I stood a good chance of throwing them into a huff. Now I ASK for material, and usually get what I want. Chance contributions fill up the magazine, and I can write any kind of editorial, changing the format of the magazine to suit me...

And I needn't publish the same number of pages each issue. I can run a large number of letters, or review fanzines for ten pages--or devote a lot of space to two or maybe three important items which come up. It isn't a news magazine (like ASTOUNDING) so I don't accept anything which would become dated by a wait of three or four months.

On the whole, though, I think it would be a good thing for freezines to take over the fanpubbing field. Oh, there'll always be the newfans coming in with their fancy ideas about making fanpubbing a business proposition--these are the ones with the touch of Amateur Journalism in their make-up. There are others of a similar breed who think they will learn how to write for prozines through writing for and publishing a fanz, and others still, quite like these two, who are convinced that by publishing an amateur magazine they can learn to be newspaper reporters. But us tru-fans (you and me, and sometimes I doubt thee...), we know better. Fandom is just a goddam hobby. As somebody said in the letter column of ANDROMEDA last year sometime, "I'm in fandom for the fun of it, and I don't like anybody who makes a living out of it."

((Before anyone accuses Ronzi of being overly wordy on his subject, I should say that this was in response to my invitation to expound. I don't agree with you completely, Ron, but the freezines do definitely have advantages for the faned who doesn't always have time for a regular schedule. I particularly like the uncomplicated record-keeping involved. Hate to cut this so short, but it's time to go to press.))

CONFAB
Bob Peatrowsky
Box 634
Norfolk, Nebr.
U.S.A.

PRINTED MATTER ONLY
RETURN POSTAGE G'T'D.



Rich Bergeron
R.F.D. #1
Newport, Vt.