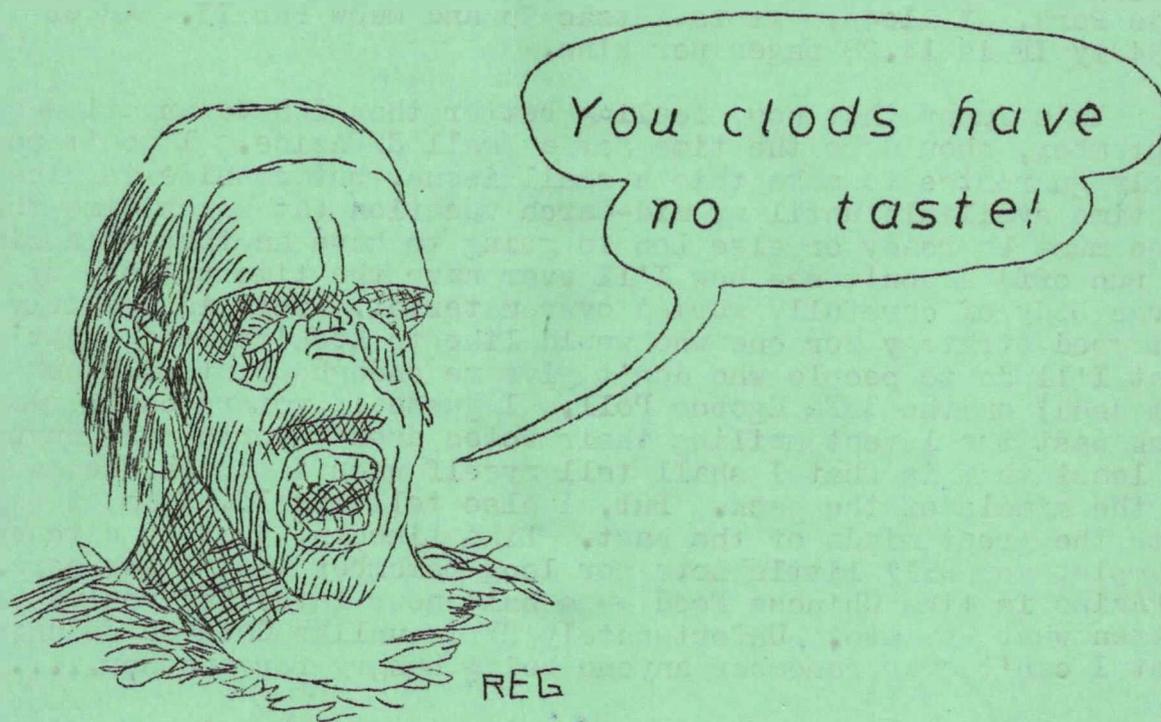


Damn Yankee

14



(Cover donated by kind-hearted Dave Hulan and Lon Atkins, Good Guys.)

TALK

The SFPA mailing came today, so I thought I would get an early start on this the fourteenth issue of DamnYankee, the SFPazine that didn't figure to get past its first issue, which is intended to be the contribution to the 24th mailing of SFPA by Arnie Katz. My address, by the time you read this, will be 98 Patton Blvd., New Hyde Park, NY 11043. It is Katzac 95 and Meow Pub 73. As of K/94 my IF is 14.28 pages per zine.

It's funny that now, feeling better than I have any time since September, should be the time for a small SFPazine. I don't positively guarantee to make this a small issue, but considering the amount of time available until my mid-March vacation (at which time this zine must be ready or else Lon is going to have another damn zine to run off) I don't see how I'll ever have the time to work up a large body of carefully worked over material. This is probably not good strategy for one who would like to kock'em dead (that's what I'll do to people who don't give me enough points...knock 'em dead) on the SFPA Egoboo Poll. I guess if voters can't remember back past the latest mailing their votes aren't worth much anyway. At least that is what I shall tell myself when I finish somewhere in the middle of the pack. But, I also tell myself, I am at one with the great minds of the past. Like Lincoln, just to cite one example, you will little note nor long remember what I say here. My SFPazine is like Chinese Food -- a half hour later and you've forgotten what you ate. Unfortunately DY is unlike Chinese Fodd in that I can't ever remember anyone being hungry for another.....

As I mentioned above, I am feeling better than I have at any time since September. I suppose part of it is that the psychotic I shared my bedroom of the apartment with has mercifully departed lo these last three months and I am finally getting back on an even keel. I still intend to publish that article on the nut -- his name is Stanley -- either this mailing or next, so I shall refrain from regaling you all at this point with some of the little things I watched Stanley do on a day-to-day basis. I'm afriad that sometimes the effects of Stanley came through into fanac for which I'm sorry. I don't think it really affected SFPA except possibly in one instance, which I shall get to in the mcs.

I was just bringing my Katzac Index up to date last night, and I realized how my fanac has changed over the past year or so. For one thing, I published only 14 fanzines in 1966 which is much less than the totals for either of the two previous years. On the other hand, my total number of publish pages has been going up dramatically. The 18 fanzines from Katzac #76 to 94 has about double the page count of K#75-50. I guess dropping all those apas (I'm in 3 going on 2 at the present time) and resulted in my fanac coming in fewer, bigger clumps.

This previous paragraph is not very subtle in intent, but perhaps it should be spelled out further. I don't know where DaveH (or Lon) got the idea that I wasn't interested in fanzine statistics (or statistics period, for that matter). As Len Bailes might have said last mailing were he not busy missing it, I am interested in statistics. However, while statistics interest me, I recognise that, to many people, they are just so much wasted space in fanzines. I think the main reason is that Fandom, unlike Baseball, does not seem to be suseptible to analysis on a quantitative basis. I think a table of every members life-time batting average in SFPA is of as little interest and importance to the general SFPA membership as a detailed analysis of statistical trends in my fanac. I don't dislike table per se (I like yours, DaveH), just ones that don't really present meaningful statistics. I guess this means Lon won't mention me before every printing of his chart any more. Oh well.

I have gone Too Far this time. Yes, I have gone too far this time without mentioning that delightful girl Katya Hulan. The very same Katya Hulan who owes me a letter. The very same Katya Hulan whose husband owes me a letter. Anyway, I wouldn't want to let a DY go by without saying something nice about Katya. That wouldn't be the DamnYankee way and, besides, what would Staton -- lovable Arnie Katz acolyte that he is -- draw cartoons about if I didn't say nice things about Katya. I might mention, for example, that this very same Katya Hulan is the Secratery of the Pan-Pacificon Bidding Committee trying to get the '68 convention. It's got my vote and deserves yours too. Besides Katya Hulan the committee includes worthies such as Al Lewis, Bjo and John Trimble, Fred Patten, and Katya's husband what'shisname. What'shisname is Treasurer.

Y ou know, this could be a bigger DY than I thought. I just realized that I have a three page piece of fan fiction already run off at home, so things could be worse. At the very least, this will mean that this issue won't be just natter and mcs.

As was evident by numerous mentions last mailing Lon and I are now co-editing a fanzine, a specimen copy of which was in the last mailing. Though the trials and tribulations have been many, I have to admit that getting the annish was less sweat than any issue of Q except #4. I think things are going to work out. Not that Lon

and I agree about everything, but our ideas seem generally similar and we compromise pretty well. It's a funny thing, but I think there's more of me in the last issue than say the first three. Bright Ideas seem to get carried through to completion instead of dying through inaction.

But I wouldn't want you to think that I am casting aspersions on Len. He can't help it if he is a naturally lazy hobbit.

OMPA is Dead.

I don't think anyone has really wanted to come right out and say it, even though it is obviously true. I mention this because it possibly ties in with a tendency in SFPA (which I shall get to in a minute never fear) which I would like to keep from excellerating. OMPA is the first established apa to fold since VAPA -- and VAPA had had a good number fewer mailings. Considering the fact that OMPA was, just a year or so ago, accounted the equal (and in some quarters the superior) of SAPS should be ample warning against complacency.

Complacency is not caring whether your zine makes this mailing or the next one because, after all, SFPA will still be here. Established apas don't fold. Except OMPA. 9 members out of 20 is not very good, and the page count was artificially hypo'd -- by Lon and I -- into a somewhat respectable figure. What would the page count have been had Lon and I decided to goof off, friends? I won't be naive enough to tell you that you've got some sort of "duty" to write for SFPA -- if the apa's mailings aren't worthwhile, the group deserves to die even if the group has had 100 mailings. But, assuming you're members because you are interested, it sure would be keen if ll of you missing mailings out of sheer inertia or just plain flubbing the dub didn't become a habit.

Aren't I holier than thou now that only Staton has a longer string of mailings hit? Watch this zine get lost in the mail....

And since I've temporarily run out of things to say, you all might as well go on to the stuff on the other side of this page.

----- Arnie the K

S U P P O R T

T H E

P A N - P A C I F I C O N

I N '68!

Another Try

O R

A Maiden Voyage Into The Wonderful World of Coherence

O R

The Secrets of the Literary Masters --- Revealed

In the last mailing Dave Hulan quite rightly took me to task for my short article which was written in reply to his material concerning "good" bad writers. Ignoring the fact that, even at the time I wrote the article, I was dissatisfied enough to inject a disclaimer, I find his statements regarding said article quite accurate. It was a wretched article. Had Dave not addressed his comments more or less directly to me, I probably would've chucked the whole article. I don't know if this will be more what I had in mind -- I certainly hope so. On with it.

While the phrase "levels of meaning" is falling into disfavor in the classroom, I believe it does, in one sense, have validity. While books are not, as the term might lead us to believe, written like literary layer cakes, it is certainly true that different degrees of perception on the part of the reader will encompass different proportions of the whole literary work. That is, it seems logical enough to me that, as we see into the work more acutely, we come closer to garnering all that the writer has put into the work for us.

The best and most enduring literature seems to be that which both satisfies our visceral appetites as well as providing material for deeper and more complex reflection. Shakespeare, acclaimed almost universally as the greatest dramatist of the english speaking world, is a fine example of this appeal to all levels of consciousness.

To satisfy the groundlings, Shakespeare used bawdy humor, puns, clowns, songs; intricate plots, violence, romance, and all the other ingredients invariably found in the popular trash of any era. But I have no doubt that Dave would be the first to agree that there is more in Shakespeare's plays than just these easily perceived aspects, no matter how large a role they play in forming our initial impression of the bard's work. These aspects of his plays have been equalled and surpassed by many another writer (Sardou for example), but we do not account these other writers Shakespeare's peers. Obviously, then, there is something beyond the mere surface qualities of Shakespeare's writing that elevates it above other playwrights' efforts. I think the difference is that within the plays

Shakespeare deals with some of the most profound and fundamental human dilemmas -- "The search for identity", "the meaning of Love", "The nature of Reality", and many others equally important. And he does not deal with these questions in the tedious, banal, and shallow manner of an Edgar Guest. Shakespeare successfully translates his private world into an experience capable of being shared by his audience if they desire to make the effort to meet him halfway by perceiving the "signals" he sends out in his plays.

This doesn't seem to me to be a terribly difficult concept to grasp, and with it, I think we can easily explain the popularity of writers who are mediocre, more or less. All of the fantastically popular writers have one thing in common; they have mastered one or more (usually more) of those elements of writing which most appeal to the superficial perceptions of the reader. I think it is a mistake for the more discriminating readers in fandom are wrong to insist that ERB has no merits as a writer at all. I think this is more a reaction against those fuggheads who claim literary greatness for their hero than anything else. ERB paces his books well, his plots are filled with action (even if they are not motivated by deep underlying themes as in the writings of, for example, Shakespeare). The characters of his novels (though extremely shallow) are wish fulfillment creations whose orthodox morality, physical strength, and dogged bravery appeal to our surface consciousness. But if we try to delve more deeply into an ERB "epic", we are bound to hit a stone wall. There is nothing beyond the surface appeals.

No one has all his perceptive faculties in full use all the time -- to do so would be something of a strain. ERB's novels, with their strong visceral (and that can't be the correct spelling....) appeal are tailor made for that change of pace. I think that explains why a small number of highly intelligent people may like ERB (or some other hack who has the surface appeals that most suit their particular needs). But naturally, the super-popular writers have an audience far vaster than the group of habitual and perceptive readers. In fact, one might almost call these people non-readers. They don't even think about trying to get some real meat out of a book and are quite content with a book that caters to their surface appetites. Such a book requires little effort to encompass, which is precisely what most of the "occasional" readers who turn mediocre writers into best-selling writers are after.

I hope this has been a better explanation for you, Dave.

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P A N * P A C I F I C O N

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68