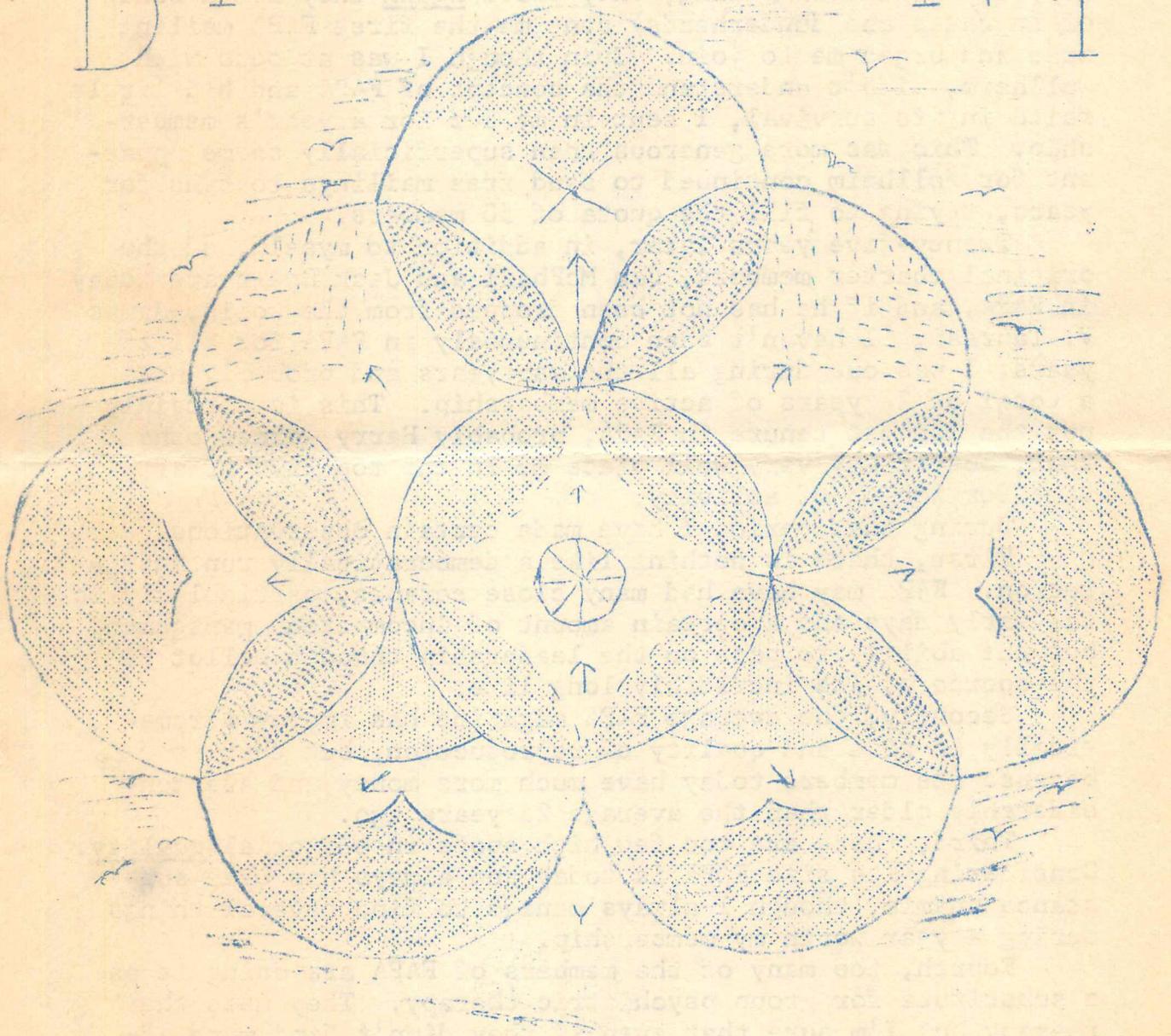


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AFTER 25 YEARS

By Sam Moskowitz

The Summer of 1937, Donald A. Wollheim, Father of FAPA (and if the organization doesn't send him a complimentary copy of the 100th mailing, they prove again they are a bunch of ingrates and dunderheads) sent me the first FAPA mailing free and urged me to join. Even though I was at odds with Wollheim, didn't understand the concept of FAPA and had little faith in its survival, I sent in my 50¢ for a year's membership. This was more generous than superficially seems apparent for Wollheim continued to send free mailings to fans for years, trying to fill the quota of 50 members.

Twenty-five years later, in addition to myself, of the original charter members, Dan McPhail and Jack Spear are today in FAPA, and if he has not been dropped from the rolls, James V. Taurasi. I haven't been continuously in FAPA for all 25 years; I was out during all the war years and probably have a total of 20 years of active membership. This is certainly not the longest tenure in FAPA, probably Harry Garner owns that, but it may very well place me in the top five of all time for length of activity.

During that period I have made certain observations.

First, there is nothing like a democratically run institution. FAPA may have had many close scrapes, particularly in the early days and a certain amount of incompetent management but the ability to pass on the leadership through ballot is the source of its incredibly long life.

Secondly, the average FAPA magazine has improved dramatically in size and quality of reproduction, but that is because its members today have much more money and are considerably older than the average 25 years ago.

Third, there are too few high spots in editorial quality. Considering its size FAPA is today and always has been substance anemic, though I always manage to find several things during a year worth my membership.

Fourth, too many of the members of FAPA are using it as a substitute for group psychiatric therapy. They need the therapy but I'm sure that even if they didn't find more effective treatment outside of FAPA, they would certainly be more comfortable releasing their neuroses from a couch than cranking a messy old mimeograph.

My recipe for enduring membership: You must pay your dues regularly, fill your activity requirements on time and own a strong stomach.

'Why is a Fan' - circa Seacon

At the Seacon one of the more interesting discussions was the question period following the "Why is a Fan" panel.

Panelists were Wrae Ballard, Bill Evans, Bob Pavlat, Ted White, Boyd Raeburn, Walter Breen and Jack Speer (who arrived near the end). The moderator was Earl Kemp.

Originally Frank Dietz had planned to transcribe the entire discussion, but upon reviewing his tape he found the reproduction of the formal portion of the panel to be barely understandable, but the question and answer period to be fairly clear. He was kind enough to allow us the use of this portion of the program to reproduce here. Where we could not clearly reproduce the discussion or identify the speaker, we have so noted it in the transcription which follows.

The formal portion of the program consisted of the panelists giving their opinions as to why people became "Fans". Jack Speer's handicap theory was discussed at length, i.e., that people entered fandom because they had a handicap of some type - physical or mental - which kept them out of the usual pursuits open to "mundane unhandicapped" people.

Following this the panel was opened to questions from the floor. The exact transcript follows.

* * * * *

Earl Kemp: Now we would like to know if there are any questions from the floor.

Elinor Busby: I think I know the main reason this group objects to the handicapped theory - I agree heartily that practically all fans have some sort of handicap, whether it is a physical handicap or something as tenuous as being born and brought up in a small town. However, does anybody know any non-fan who does not have a handicap?

Kemp: (repeats the question)

Ted White: I think the major difference is that fans realize they have a handicap, even subconsciously. The mundanes are not interested enough to realize it. They are more content to have a job.

Kemp: Jack, do you want to say something?

Jack Speer: I just wanted to say that there are an awful lot of people that I know that are mundane whose handicaps I don't know and I think probably a great many of them don't have any handicaps.

Breen: Are they complacently accepting the rules as they find them?

Speer: Yes.

White: That's a handicap.

(Laughter)

Speer: A handicap is a handicap if you yourself think of it as that.

Kemp: This gentleman right here.

(There was a lengthy remark by a fan from the floor which, unfortunately, is mostly indistinguishable on the tape since he was speaking in a low voice. He was discussing the fact that you might consider people who are Dodger fans as having a handicap.)

Kemp: They find security with a majority group.

(There were then some remarks from a fan in the back of the room, again too low to be intelligible but who thought the handicap idea was very good and then who discussed some stories and theories that had been mentioned in Analog. The rest of what he said was completely indistinguishable.)

Kemp: Christine, I believe you're next.

Chris Moskowitz: I'd like to ask the panel in general what makes them think that this group as a group is

actually any more unique, or different, or handicapped, or introverted or whatever term you want to apply to it, than any other group in society which is a selective group, whether it is rock collecting, whether it is bird watching, whether it is a sport of some kind, whether it is photography, stamp collecting, coin collecting, etc. I don't think, really, that fandom, per se, is actually any different than any other group except inasmuch as it does its talking more on paper in a literary sense, not in the people that are in it but merely in what it does. I can't see that fandom, per se, is any more different than any of these 101 other types of hobbies or whatever you want to call it that you can get into. I certainly know a lot of odd people in photography. I mean there are as many oddballs that we get into our photography club and the Photographic Society of America is an organization at least 4 or 5 times as large as fandom, with many people in remote areas who go into photography because they can do it on their own so this doesn't make fandom unique. I know a lot of people that go in for rock collecting and making things out of these rocks because they have physical handicaps or they're confined (and they might be confined in wheelchairs) who go in for doll-making, weaving or some other handicraft because they are handicapped physically. Mentally, I know of a number of individuals who go into a sport because they are not too bright but they're good at the sport so I want somebody on this panel to see if they can convince me why they think fandom is any more unique in itself than any other group.

(Applause)

Kemp: I believe that was essentially Alma's question which we worked over very well, I think.

Walter, do you want to add something to it?

Breen: Yes. If they don't find this fandom, they find some other one. I think what distinguishes our fandom from most of the others is this is a far more self-conscious, self-analyzing group, in person and in fan clubs and are far more closely knit, more closely integrated.

Chris: You've never seen a photography group in action then.

Breen: That's right, I haven't. But there are probably other....

Chris: Let me tell you something, Maybe you're not aware of it but, for example, in photography I belong to 2, what we call portfolios, which in a sense are the fan magazines of photography. Now what a portfolio is, let me just explain this. It consists of a group of photographs, and some sheets of paper on which you criticize everybody else's photographs and what they call, well, just a notebook or actually it is a fanzine.

Kemp: O.K., it's a fanzine; everyone to his own fandom.

Chris: And they criticize each other and actually get into quite a bit of personal interest, telling about their daughters falling out of the crib and....

(side remark by Ted White caught on the tape - "You mean they're not being creative?")

It may be about their jobs and so on. This is a fan group and they are, they're criticizing each other in photography just as fans criticize each other's literature.

(side remark by Walter Breen caught on the tape - "So there are sercon groups in photography fandom, so what?")

Chris: So I can't see that sf fandom is any different.

Breen: I think probably if you were more deeply immersed in it , you might.

Kemp: Walter, what we are deciding here is what fans are, not what they have that nobody else has which I think is a probable cause. Basically, I don't think fandom is that unique. I think Christine is right in that respect but we're trying necessarily to isolate fandom, the unique properties that make a fan of one person that no one else would have. I tend to believe that there aren't any such. I think it's a happy coincidence of factors.

Evans: I think there is one difference in fandom as we know it and the rest of the fandoms and several others. I collect books, I collect stamps, I

collect coins....

(Breen - "Do you get Coin Worlds?")

No, I'm not that deeply in it, thank goodness. But the difference, I think, is that fandom as we know it is not what fandom started out to be. Fandom started out 20 years ago, 30 years ago, 35 years ago, in 1926, as a hobby fandom, like photography, like coin collecting, like collecting anything. It was a hobby fandom. It's grown into a multiple purpose group which is not focused on one central thing. Coin collectors are coin collectors first; the other things sort of come along. Stamp collectors are interested mainly in the stamps; they're not all interested in the same stamps but they're interested in stamps and I might point out that they make friends through that. They're friends not because they are stamp collectors; stamp collecting is an introduction. In fandom, people are friends in fandom because they are fans. They don't get into it now because they're sf readers especially. This just happens to be the hook that gets people in. Once they're in, it's no longer a hobby group focused on a particular hobby. It's a hobby group focused on 20 different hobbies at once.

Kemp: There are 3 hands - are these comments or are these questions?

Sam Moskowitz: Mine's a comment. If the others are questions, you can take them first.

Kemp: A question might change the subject. Maybe you'd better make your comment, Sam.

Sam: The idea of fandom not being concerned with science fiction is an absurdity and ridiculous.
(Laughter and applause)

Because if you're not science fiction fans, what the hell are you? You're nothing and let's face it. You're either interested in some facet of fantasy - you may not be interested primarily in collecting or primarily in reading or primarily in illustrating but you're interested in some facet of it. If that's not your focus, I will sit here like

the Rock of Gibraltar and watch you drops of water flow out to sea because you're moving past me; I'm not moving past you.

(Laughter and applause)

Panel Member: I just had a quick comment on that. Sam's entitled to his opinion but in FAPA recently, he and Christine were outvoted about 60 to 1 on this question.

(Laughter)

Sam: I mean, those fans are dying. (Laughter)

(Unknown voice caught on tape - "They're dying happy.")

Kemp: Sylvia, have you got a comment or a question?

Sylvia White: Mostly comment.

Kemp: Make your comment. Come here, you can't talk very loud.

Sylvia: I think that one thing that hasn't been mentioned that science fiction fans seem to have more than all of these other fandoms, coin collecting and all these other names, it is because what they are fans of is mostly the printed word. Fans are more interested and more able to communicate by the printed words, therefore are more able to publish fanzines. I've seen fanzines of many of these other types of clubs. None of them has a real communication the way that fans do in their fanzines. I don't know how this coincides with, say, the Baker Street Irregulars and other things but I think that, generally speaking, fandoms that are fans of the printed words in some respect have a much stronger bond of communication between them through these fanzines and thereby have much more tightly knit organizations.

Kemp: Christine, do you have a comment or a question?

Chris: I'd just like to point out that I doubt very much that this young lady knows anything about the other groups, therefore how can she speak about them?

(White or Breen in an aside caught by the tape -
"Oh, nonsense!")

White: Now, are you calling her ignorant?

Chris: I'm not calling her ignorant; I'm merely saying
I don't feel she's acquainted with those other
fields. Unless she's actually been in them, how can she...

(interruption by White: "How do you know she
hasn't?")

Chris: I believe she hasn't because if she was as I
am in photography, she would know that photo-
graphy has just as close bonds as fandom, if you go into
the heart of it. I know many people who've met and married
in fandom in photography.

(aside by panel member caught on the tape - "So what?")

(another aside - "I know people who have met in
mundane and gotten married.")

A photography convention is quite a thing just as fan
conventions are for making friends and what have you as any
other group. In the clubs, in the close-knit clubs, there
are even factions, there's even feuding.

(aside by panel member caught by the tape - "Oh, nooo!")

.....

This portion of the panel was reported as follows on
page 13 of Fanac

"During the audience-question period, Elinor Busby
punctured the Speer handicap theory by asking if
anyone (panelist or audience member) knew any nonfans
altogether free of handicaps. No hands were raised.
Speer said that he knew many mundane types without
known handicaps. I asked him: "Are these people
complacent acceptors of the world as it is?" Speer
"Yes". Ted White: "That's a handicap." (Laughter)

Christine Moskowitz then harangued us at length about photography clubs (which sound like another fandom, the way she describes them) and then asked us why we thought our fandom was "more unique" (sic) than any other special interest group, or for that matter more handicapped, introverted, etc? I replied that our fandom was far more self-conscious than others I knew of, and said that its entirely likely that there are many who would be in it if they knew of it -- but if they don't find our fandom they go into another one which has the features they need. Evans added that coin fans are interested almost exclusively in coins, photo & stamp & carfans similarly, etc. (ChrisMos shouted denials on behalf of photo clubs) -- but that our own fandom has no such overwhelmingly central issue. SaM thundered "If you're not S.F. fans what are you?" (Scattered applause) Sylvia white "Str fans have more common interests than do other such special interest groups; perhaps we might be called printed-word fans, communication/idea fans" ChrisMos shouted: "She's ignorant!" Ted bridling a bit, rushed to her defense with "How do you know she hasn't been in them?" Ella Parker went on about the Sense of Wonder popularly supposed to satisfy at very early ages --

.

Kemp: We will now change the subject. Ella, do you have a new question?

Ella Parker: Well, actually, all of you at one time or another have mentioned sense of wonder and how much that fans seem to have lost. For quite some time I've held a theory about this and I would be interested to see whether the panel agrees with it. The fact that the initial sense of wonder has been lost within you because a lot of you began reading science fiction when you were very young. How many of you have gone back now and re-read the stories that fostered the sense of wonder in you and did it revive your sense and did you still feel they were wonderful stories or did you think they were crud?

(interruption by a panel member - "Some were good and some were still crud.")

Ella: My theory is that you come into fandom, pretty young, all gosh wow about these stories. You've got your sense of wonder but as you mature you read the stories less for enjoyment than to see whether you can pick holes in them. If you're going to read something from this point of view, how can you sit and wonder at them.

Panel Member: That's the point that Marion Bradley made that I quoted and I think that it isn't quite as applicable as that. I think there's much range, more variation in fantasies than you would attribute to them.

Another Panel Member: It is not so much that people read them to pick holes in them but when you first hit science fiction, every idea is a new idea to you; every story plot and so forth. After you've read 20 stories with the same idea, you're no longer reading for that idea, you're reading for what story values there are beyond it and, of course, so much science fiction hasn't got it. You're aware of it because in one sense you're simply jaded; in another sense you're more informed.

Kemp: Dave, do you have a new question?

Dave Kyle: No, not really, it was just a comment on the previous comment concerning the sense of wonder.

(Panel Member - interrupting: "Comments on comments on comments?")

(Laughter)

Kyle: We should also remember that we as readers are not just the ones who were concerned with sense of wonder in our early days of reading science fiction. The authors too have a sense of wonder. The question should be raised, as the reader changes, so doesn't the author change? The sense of wonder does not necessarily

mean in its loss something that the reader has lost; it can be that it is a reflection of something that the author has lost.

(Applause)

(At this point there was a comment by a fan from the back of the room about fringe fans but it was indistinguishable. There was also some additional discussion about fringe fans, most of which is also indistinguishable.)

Kemp: Ed, do you have a comment or question?

Ed Wood: I want to answer his question by my own example, my own life. I first started reading science fiction in 1936. I didn't write my first letter until 1944 and I didn't attend my first convention until 1952 and if I had seen Ellison in one of his more maniacal moments I probably never would have come to a convention. Now let me ask you. Let me say why. When I read this Sargeant Saturn in a silly publication, I thought it was incomprehensible. I thought they were maniacs, stupid, idiots. I read all the science fiction magazines I could. I wanted to learn about this thing in every possible way I knew how and I learned something about science fiction fan magazines. About 1948, or 1947 or something like that, these diabolically printed or manufactured pieces of paper came through, looked like the scribblings of lunatics. These were fan magazines, these were telling me something about science fiction. But there was no science fiction in them. They were talking about photography, Communism, politics, music, jazz and the whole works and there was nothing about science fiction in them. The people who are these fringe fans stay away from fandom because of the fact that fandom doesn't attract them because fandom has strayed away from its true source - that of science fiction. They are too wise to get into these other activities which are entertaining but are meaningless in terms of fandom.

Kemp: The young lady.

(There was a comment by someone from the back which is incomprehensible on the tape - she was discussing

the fact that she considered herself a fringe fan and was telling why she would never be more than a fringe fan.)

Panel Member: Those are some very good points. When is the first issue of your fanzine coming out?

(Laughter)

Kemp: Jack Harness?

Harness: I think this is the answer. I am a science fiction fan. I am not a science fiction fan 24 hours of the day, 365-1/4 days out of the year. Now there simply is not that much science fiction to discuss. Fans, being vocal types, like to talk about everything. If anything, they talk too much. Now so it is natural that their other interests come in too. Science fiction fans having imagination to be interested in science fiction necessarily have the imagination to be interested in other things as well. They like to talk about the reading matter - science fiction; they like to talk about the people they meet, the fans and non-fans; they like to talk about the music they like and they find that other people like this too. If some people don't like it, well, they can seek out the original fanzine that does specialize in all fiction or serious discussion of science fiction as such or read some comic book fanzines but I'm perfectly happy with the situation as it is because there simply isn't that much about science fiction to discuss in the fan press. Thank you.

(Applause)

Bill Evans: Actually, I feel I'm two fans in one. I'm a Sam Moskowitz fan type and I'm even a Ted White type fan occasionally. It depends on where I am and what I'm doing and who I'm with. If I'm talking to Sam (and I like to talk to Sam), then I'll be talking about science fiction. We'll be talking about magazines, books, illustrations and bibliographies. I like to do that. But that's not all of fandom to me. I also like to go around with Ted White on jazz in a fanzine. I like to write sagas in FAPA. I don't think I mention science fiction very much in that. Occasionally. But most

of the time it's non-science fiction type fandom. You have this split in fandom; you have this split in fans. You have the fantasy artists who are split. Sometimes they're fantasy and science fiction artists and sometimes they're just artists. You have the writers. Some of the time they're science fiction and fantasy oriented writers and other times they're just writing. I don't think that you can make a statement that fandom will fold up if science fiction is never mentioned. You always have a group who come in because they're interested in science fiction and who will continue to be interested in science fiction. You have another group that came in because they had been interested in science fiction more or less and found in fandom something odd in science fiction. A matter of communication with other people who had wide-ranging interests. That is the reason I think I am two fans in one.

(Applause)

Kemp: Have you a comment or a question?

Fan from the floor: A comment. I think that one of the things that we forget about science fiction is that people read science fiction for its content and one of the things about science fiction is that it has a very wide-ranging content so that the comments on this in fanzines are very wide-ranging. For instance, there was some critical statements about the discussion of reality in a few recent fanzines. Yet the last two Hugos for past novels went to stories which were nothing but interesting discussions of theology. (Some side comments by the members of the panel at this point made the rest of the fan's speech unintelligible.)

Kemp: (Asked a lady from the back to come up to the mike)

Lady fan: I think it is mostly a desire to meet people with creative ideas and to exchange creative ideas and, in general, discuss them with each other and if you don't have people who will exchange these creative ideas, you don't have anybody to talk to.

Kemp: Sam?

Sam Moskowitz: I think possibly it boils down to this.

That all of the people in fandom have other interests but many of us like myself have, if we are seriously interested in psychology, we will go to people who are experts in psychology and who know what they're talking about and discuss it with them and if we are interested in mainstream literature, as I am, I have access to people who have some authority on the subject and from which I can gain something but I think possibly the average science fiction fan who comes into fandom has no one to sound his ideas or theories about on subjects other than science fiction except other fans, so possibly then he is grateful for an opportunity to sound off and get whatever reaction he can. As for me, I have difficulty refraining from vomiting when 13-year-olds try to explain sex to me in the fan magazines and when they tell me they have just discovered atheism and what it is, when they try to tell me the meaning of Leninism or Marxism....

(interruption by Ted White: "You don't have to read them!")

....I have other sources for that material which are much more rewarding than the other fans who know nothing, and possibly there is another answer too. 13-year-olds or 14-year-olds can get a hearing in science fiction with no qualifications at all. In the general world - out in the mundane world - who the hell would let a person who had never studied medicine, who knew nothing about medicine, tell the doctors how to run their businesses or tell them how it should be done.

White: Sam, who would allow a doctor to make the misinformed statements you wife made over the name of an M.D. about a drug when 5 minutes with the Encyclopedia Britannica would have cleared up any misconceptions?

Sam: I'm afraid you're not qualified to know whether she made a misinformed statement. The man who argued against her spoke to me and said that he was not fully informed; that he had made an error. I saw him in

San Francisco a few weeks ago. Now, you ought to check that.

Ted: I'm not speaking for his errors. I know she made errors. She did so as an authority. He didn't. Now, the question here, however, remains whether a 13-year-old can talk about psychology without going to an authority. 13-year-olds don't have access to authority. Sam, you are someone. You can turn to people. I don't know who you turn to but you can turn to Orville Prescott when you want to talk about mainstream literature. The 13-year-old can't.

Sam: That's just what I said. I said most of you people have no one to turn to, so you turn to yourselves. But other people do have people to turn to and if you were interested in the subject you would find people to turn to so therefore I find most of your meandering kind of nauseating and the only time I listen to you is when you speak on a subject about which you know something. Then I listen to you....

Ted: How do you know what I know anything about?

...But when you try to tell me about, even in many cases, music, I mean, I'm a little skeptical.

Ted: Well, I'm sorry you're skeptical, but I am an authority on music, ha, ha, ha.

(Laughter)

Sam: That's what you told me but no one else has ever told me you're an authority on music.

Ted: By Rogue magazine who called me a top jazz critic. That's nonsense but if you want authority, you can turn to published authority.

Sam: Rogue is not qualified to call anybody an authority on jazz.

Ted: Would you like to try Harlan Ellison or Bruce Elliot?

Kemp: The gentleman standing.

Standing Fan: If you want to consult an authority, it costs at least five bucks a visit.

(Laughter)

Don Day: You were speaking of fans and other people having a handicap. At the moment one of my most serious handicaps is that I'm not a fan. I was a fan for about 5 years but for 22 years before I had any contacts with any fans I was collecting, reading and indexing science fiction and fantasy literature. I knew about fandom from the letter columns of the magazines and frankly I thought it was the most screwball thing from the stuff that turned up in the letter columns and so on.....

Ed Wood: Bless you, Don Day!

....In 1946 I found that the Pittcon [sic] was close to my home so I went down there to see what these strange people were like. I got down there and I found not a bunch of screwballs like I expected. I found a lot of wonderful, wonderful people, many of whom I'm proud to call my friends and meeting these people showed me what there was in fandom for me aside from collecting and reading and so on and for about 5 years I was very active. Now I got out of active fandom for one reason and one reason only. It was a simple matter that I felt that the advantages I got from being an active fan weren't worth the amount of work I was putting into it so I dropped out of active fandom. But every time there is a convention on the Pacific coast, you'll see me right there, fan or no fan, to see those wonderful, wonderful people.

(Applause)

Kemp: Don, we also want to see you in Chicago. I think no more. We will wind up on the happy note that there is still a general conclusion that there are still people who are very good people in fandom and we will let it go at that. This panel is now over.

* * * * *

In connection with the portion of the panel discussing whether or not fandom is unique, I'd like to give an example of how camera bugs are every bit as vocal in writing as SF fans, and in fact even have feuds.

The latest battle started with a columnist in Popular Photography criticizing PSA (Photographic Society of America) in Oct. '61.

Jacob Deschin's column called, "Say It With Your Camera", went as follows:

"The PSA was born 28 years ago as an association of camera clubs. Although ostensibly it has broadened its base since then to represent all amateurs whether club members or not, its character remains essentially the same. An organization of salon-oriented escapists, worshippers of technique for its own sake, and hobby riders of the trite, the bloodless emotion and the pretty-pretty sentiment. Of the exhilarating progress in attitudes and approaches toward photographic medium that has been evident all around it in the course of the nearly three decades of its existence, little has penetrated the Society. It stands today an island more barren than ever in a world of widening exploration and discovery of individual potential."

He goes on to call it purposeless, vague, confused, aimless, obsessed with organizational nonsense which has little to do with photography, pretentious in that it only really has surface concern with photography, more with organization and honors.

This stirred up a storm of letters in the readers' column, with quotes in Jan. '62 such as, "His terminology is as warped as his thinking. He terms the Society sprawling like an octopus or ungainly monster. You could say the same thing of an enemy army calling them "hordes" when actually they are well regimented into divisions, battalions, etc. "I must say his ignorance is exceeded only by another malady I would term acute diarrhea of the pen." --Frank Flaherty, Great Falls, Montana.

From a letter in Assigned Subject Portfolio #2 notebook, a letter to the group from A.F. Burnham, Missoula, Montana, addressed to me, went, in part:

"Chris -- congratulations on your exam success. I see your husband's name in some of the SF mags quite often--

really enjoyed his story "Golden Pyramid" which was in an anthology I read recently. Incidentally -- any of you 2ers who haven't read any of the 'new school' of science fiction are missing something. It is a far cry from the space adventure story which some associate with all SF stories. In my opinion it is not escape fiction. It is a challenging, imaginative, and highly provocative thing. A good story poses problems that are never answered. When I want to escape I read Earl Stanley Gardner."

Burnham is 40 years old, married, with 3 children and a meteorologist with the U.S. Weather Bureau.

Flaherty is 38, married, with 3 boys and, I believe, is connected in some way with electrical engineering.

The present notebook is about 1-1/2" thick of 8-1/2 x 11 paper containing better than 80 typed or handwritten pages of letters comprised of family news, news about other photo fans and clubs and discussions mostly about photography but I have seen discussions about aspects of radio, fishing, music, etc. At present this one portfolio has 15 members scattered from California to New Jersey.

This is only one of six different portfolios including one that is totally tape-recorded that I belong to in photography. These groups contain people of all ages and walks of life whose common ground of interest is photography, just as science fiction was originally the common interest of SF fans, and basically still is for most new members.

ESFA now has increased greatly in size with our new fine meeting facilities at the YM-YWCA in Newark. We are averaging over 25 people per meeting, mostly young people, a lot of them college students. All our discussions are on science fiction themes.

Our expanded March meeting, despite its lack of big names still drew about 75 people, (60 paid memberships at the door plus guests and members who did not pay) contrary to the figure reported in "Axe".

The Lunacon in April drew about 100 people, a most enthusiastic audience, for what proved to be an interesting science fiction (and fantasy) program.

So SF fans are still primarily interested in Science Fiction subjects, at least in our area. We have our share of people with other hobbies and interests too. So we are not an unusual group. We are just an ordinary cross section of American life who happen to have in common an interest in

Science Fiction and this brings us together. Why should SF fans want to consider themselves unique anyway? This could bring up some interesting psychological aspects, couldn't it?

* * * * *

NOTE CORRECTION: On the last page of the panel transcript, the fifth paragraph contains an error where Don Day said -- In 1946 I found that the Pitteen -- this should say "Pacifficon".

FROM:
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TO:



Printed matter

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