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this *PHILLYCON* issue of The Oldest
Established Permanent Floating Weekly
Fanzine In New York (Or Anywhere).

FIRST DRAFT #139

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IS FANDOM A WAY OF LIFE DEPT: Gee, I
dunno,

but every now and then I begin to
wonder. For instance, tomorrow morning
I'm going down to Philadelphia with
Ted White. Now, this in itself is not too much an out of the way thing
-- after all, I've been to Philadelphia before. Then I got to thinking,
yes, I've been to Philly before, and almost every time it's been for
fannish reasons.

In fact, the last four times have been for fannish reasons, if you will
be so kind as temporarily to assimilate tomorrow into today. I have, or
will have by tomorrow, gone to four straight Phillycons, each time with
Ted White in one Weiss Rak or another. In fact, it was coming back from
that first one, with Steve Stiles and Calvin *Demmon and Sandy, that
Ted and I decided to enter New York in the '67 sweepstakes, as it were,
and look where that got us! (Into a lot of hard work, that's where!)

So there is something pervasive, in a way, not only about Fandom but
about certain of its manifestations, in this case Phillycons. I won't
go so far as to say all the Phillycons I've been to have produced results
as earthshattering, or whatever, as that first one I hit, but still I
find myself anticipating Phillycons a little more than most of the other
regionals, at least the ones on this coast. (We won't just now go into
the Fanoclast Tradition of attending MidWesCons and Westercons -- which
by the way is a tradition that will continue at least one more year, and
quite possibly Forever...)

Back in the early '50s, when I first discovered fandom, I never conceived
of it as any kind of a Way Of Life, tho perhaps it always has been more
than Just A Goddam Hobby for me. But after Returning To The Fold five
years ago by beginning to attend Fanoclast meetings at Lin Carter's, I
have found that it exerts the primary influence on my life today.

-- Before you all start whispering "what kind of a nut is he?", let me
illustrate. There's a fan meeting every Friday (I've missed only 2,
possibly 3, Fanoclasts meetings in five years, and none since the DisCon
unless you want to get snotty about the hypothesis that the two Treks
to the West Coast represented week-long Fanoclast Meetings; I've missed
only one FISTFA meeting since FISTFA started the week after the first
issue of FIRST DRAFT). Every two weeks there's Ted White's informal
Writers Group, which is fannish insofar as all attendees are fans. There
is the NYCon III which, as a reality, is slowly but surely taking up
more and more of my time and thought (I'll be, for instance, doing all
the offset printing except for the actual Program Book -- the three
Progress Reports, all issues of NYCON COMICS, flyers, etc.).

There are the apas I'm in -- the Cult, TAPS, Apa L, Shadow FAPA, SAPS --
which cumulatively demand a good deal of time and effort. There are the
friends I have, every single one of which is a fan or directly related
to a fan by blood or marriage. Hell, there's even the probability that
I'll be marrying a fan one of these days...

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All told, it makes quite a lineup, indicating that almost my entire life apart from work is more or less directly related to some or another aspect of fandom.

But there's more (long-time readers of FIRST DRAFT are well aware of this, but will bear with me, I hope...).

I've always wanted (and expected) to be a writer (as most writers seem to say if you press them on it), and quite likely I'd have sold something sooner or later even if it hand't been for fandom.

But because of fandom, or at least through a sequence of events totally bound up with fandom at every point, I have become a writer, with two books sold so far -- tho the finished one has not yet been published and the other one is only half-finished. A year and a half ago Ted & I sold an sf novel to Pyramid, which has now been in their hands almost an entire year but which will not be appearing probably for another six months, because of one thing and another. Then I sold another to Belmont on the strength of an outline, which I hope to submit by the end of this month.

So my first book was written with a fan as co-author, and my second one was sold by Henry Morrison; I know he's a fan, because just recently I came across a 1952 IMAGINATION that ran a letter by me, and I discovered it had one by him in it too.

Fannish serendipity, perhaps, but indicative. I don't think fandom is a way of life, in spite of the way it has been interthreading itself with damn near every aspect of my life, but once in a while -- just occasionally, you understand -- I pause to wonder about it...

IS THE NYCON III A WAY OF LIFE DEPT: For me, up until 5 Sep 67, it certainly will be. And for those that attend it, I hope they'll feel that way while they're there. There have already been some comments, though, about how the NYCon is going to be a huge convention, in spite of the fact that we'd tried to make it quite clear beforehand that we had no intentions of going for sheer size -- no radio, TV, newspaper ballyhoo and publicity beforehand, no trying to entice all the flying saucers and little monsters, none of this.

Now, you can find out all about this, if you join the convention now, because we'll be putting it all into our Progress Reports. The plates for the first one, which will be twelve pages, are being made, and the Membership Cards and the PR will be going out before the end of this month.

If you haven't joined yet, see one of us at the Phillycon and we'll put you on the list and give you your card to boot. (If you have joined, already, you'll get your card in the mail, as I said; we wd hand them out in Philly, but it wd be virtually impossible to keep track of them.)

Join -- and get NYCON COMICS. Get the 12-page Progress Report #1! Find out all about our Guest of Honor, Lester del Rey, and about Bob Tucker, our Fan Guest of Honor! Learn about what's being planned for the program! It's all there, if you simply join the NYCon III -- now!

☐☐ We're at the bottom of the page, it seems, so I'll sign off, hoping you are the sane...

-- dgV