

It occurs to me that I have never written very much about the Fanoclasts' Resident Ghoddess. I suspect this is because, deep down inside, I remember what it was like in 1952 for me, when Shelby Vick, Walt Willis, and Lee Hoffman were (to me) the High Ghods of fandom, so far above me in fact that in the long run I was more or less intimidated when I thot of my own insufficiencies as a fanzine editor. Shelby Vick I was most familiar with -- I received a number of issues of CONFUSION, and Felice Rolfe (then Perew) knew him personally, so that, since I was dating her at the time, Shelby seemed almost as a familiar figure.

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Willis I knew as even funnier than ShelVy, because I saw his hilarious preview-trip-report in several fanzines of the time. Somehow, tho, because of his immense writing skill and wild hilarity and all, I never thot of him in total awe.

But LeeH...

I had never seen an issue of QUANDRY -- hell, I don't think I dared to even write and ask for a copy, even to offer Sticky Quarters. I knew it was Legend, and that was enough for my awed mind. And the fanzines I was reading, tho suffused with the echoes of her personality and wit, and often with her stick-people-art, never seemed to have much written material by her, as if QUANDRY were her focal point (hm) of activity and absorbed most of her work. I don't know if this were really the case (I never got any Keasler zines either, as I recall, nor, for that matter, any Willis zines *sigh*), but it seemed that way.

Consequently LeeH became to my mind the truly towering figure in fandom of that happy idyllic period before Birdbath Fandom, vast, perfect, awesome, and inconceivably unapproachable.

☐☐ Then she started coming to Fanoclasts meetings. And FISFTA meetings.

And she laughed when I said something funny, just like swell ol' rich brown, and if you don't think having a vast, perfect, awesome, and inconceivably unapproachable Resident Ghoddess laugh at my jokes gassed me out of my mind, you don't really know too damn much about me...

Not only that, she Wrote Me Up in her FAPA zine, and pointed out that I have an unfortunate habit of throwing out my punchlines and casual remarks almost inaudibly, so that most people miss them. This bit of insight really got to me, and since then I've *become a loudmouthed jerk* decided that if *Lee Hoffman* thinks my little phrases are as funny as I do, why, maybe I'll take a chance and not throw them away so casually. LeeH and rich are still the only ones who laugh, but...

☐☐ Yes, but that was not what I was going to talk about. I was going to explain why I've never written about LeeH before, thus cutting her out of a good deal of well-deserved egoboo.

Actually, I think what I said above pretty much gives the line on why I've not written before -- fundamentally, I still regard LeeH with a

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kind of primal superstitious awe, on the fannish level, which is the level at which I usually operate, hm, when putting out FIRST DRAFT. As a consequence, the possibility of actually referring to *LeeH* in a fanzine of mine never really reached the conscious level of my mind.

On the other hand...

A few months ago, someone brought up the fact that the fourth issue of SCIENCE FICTION FIVE YEARLY will be coming up soon.

"There's another legend," I mentioned, almost under my breath. LeeH looked at me questioningly. "I've never so much as seen an issue of SFFY. I sure didn't get around much in my first fannish incarnation." LeeH looked inscrutable.

Then everybody started talking about what great stuff there was in SFFYs of the past. I sighed to myself.

□□ The next Fanoclasts meeting, I was sitting there listening to Ted play Mingus or something, when Lee came in. She handed me an envelope.

"These are the only ones I cd find," she said. "I don't have any of the first issue."

I opened up the envelope and started to ask "of what?" when I saw the second and third SCIENCE FICTION FIVE YEARLYs staring me down, and under them, the first three issues of SELF-PRESERVATION...

"The FAPA zines are sort of a consolation prize because I'm out of the first SFFY," she said.

I contemplated trying to say something to indicate the vast Sense Of Wonder and gratitude and appreciation and all that was sweeping over me, but something inside me told me it wd probably come out "Fleebl fleebl fleebl," or something equally uncommunicative.

"By the way, other than my file copies those are the last ones I had," Lee observed, as I sat there transfixed with one of those sensations of pure delight one experiences perhaps once every two or three years. Or maybe five.

I don't know whether I ever did actually get around to thanking her. Or ever will. I get a very definitely choked up feeling whenever I think about it (tho I don't intend to get sloppy about it...), because underneath my diffident exterior, I begin to suspect I'm more Insecure than I thot... And more incoherent. I hope maybe this FD'll indicate my feelings, tho. (But, boy, do I feel my prose style has been Regressing back to about 1952 as my thoughts while writing were concentrating on my '52 illusions; well, I guess I've still got one of 'em left.)

□□ I haven't read those SFFYs yet, by the way -- though I hope you don't mistake my meaning. I've been reading in them, dipping in here and there, allowing myself only a rationed amount of the goodies, trying to make them last...at least until the fourth issue comes out. In the meantime, if anybody wants to sell me a copy of SFFY #1, well, what's your price? □□ I do hope I didn't get too maudlin up there, hey; next week I'll try to return to my old stolid self. And in the meantime, I'm hoping you are the sane...