

FOCAL
POINT

INSURGENT FANZINE GROUP

VOL.

3

NO.

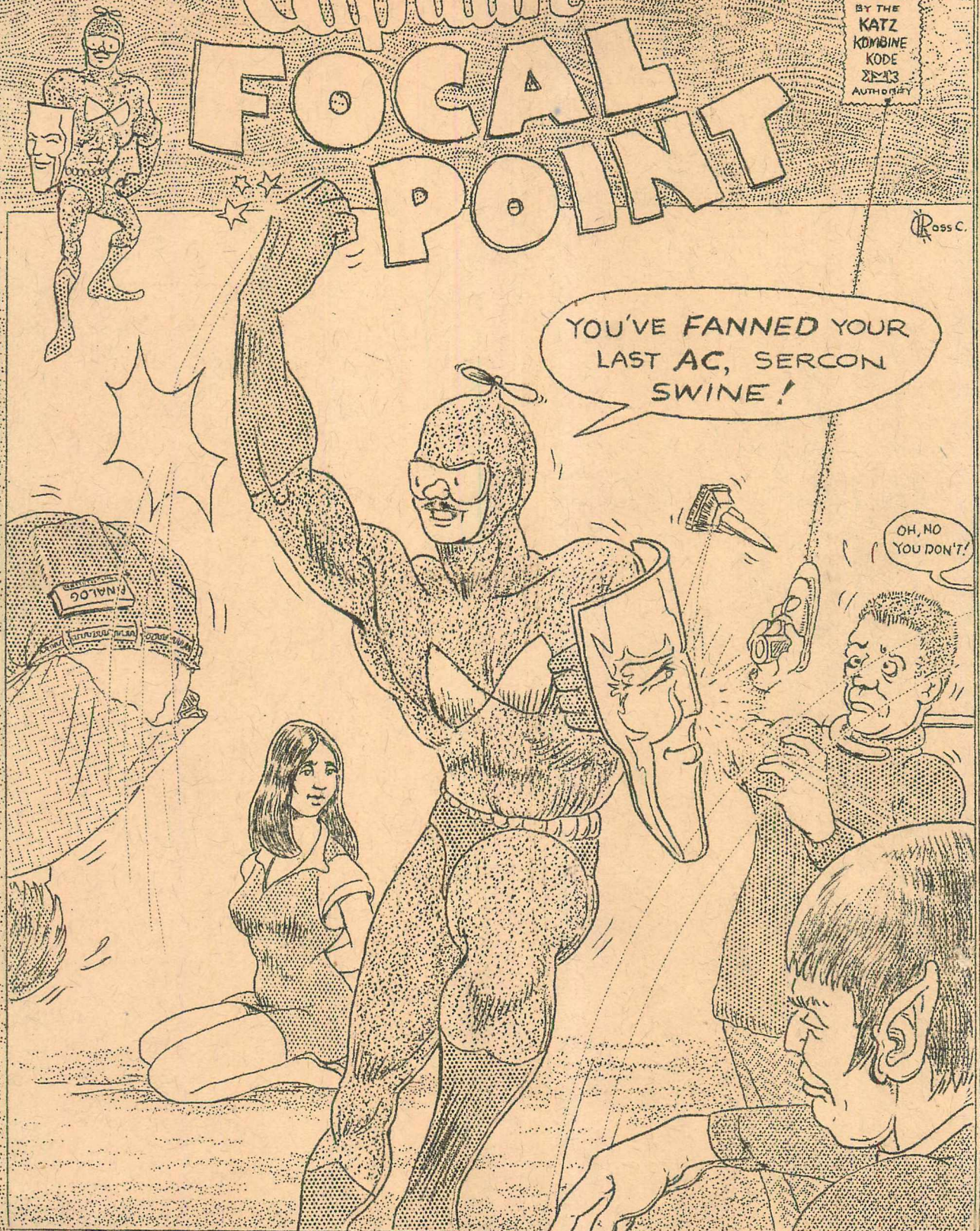
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JULY 1972

APPROVED
BY THE
KATZ
KOMBINE
KODE
ΣΣΣΣ
AUTHORITY

Captain FOCAL POINT

Ross C.



THE MOST
FANISH SUPERHERO
OF THEM ALL!



Katzenjammer ::: editorial ::: Arnie Katz ::: 4
 The Infinite Beanie ::: column ::: Terry Carr ::: 8
 Cheese Sandwich ::: column Calvin Demmon ::: 16
 Stuff & Fanac ::: column ::: John D. Berry ::: 20
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Art Credits:

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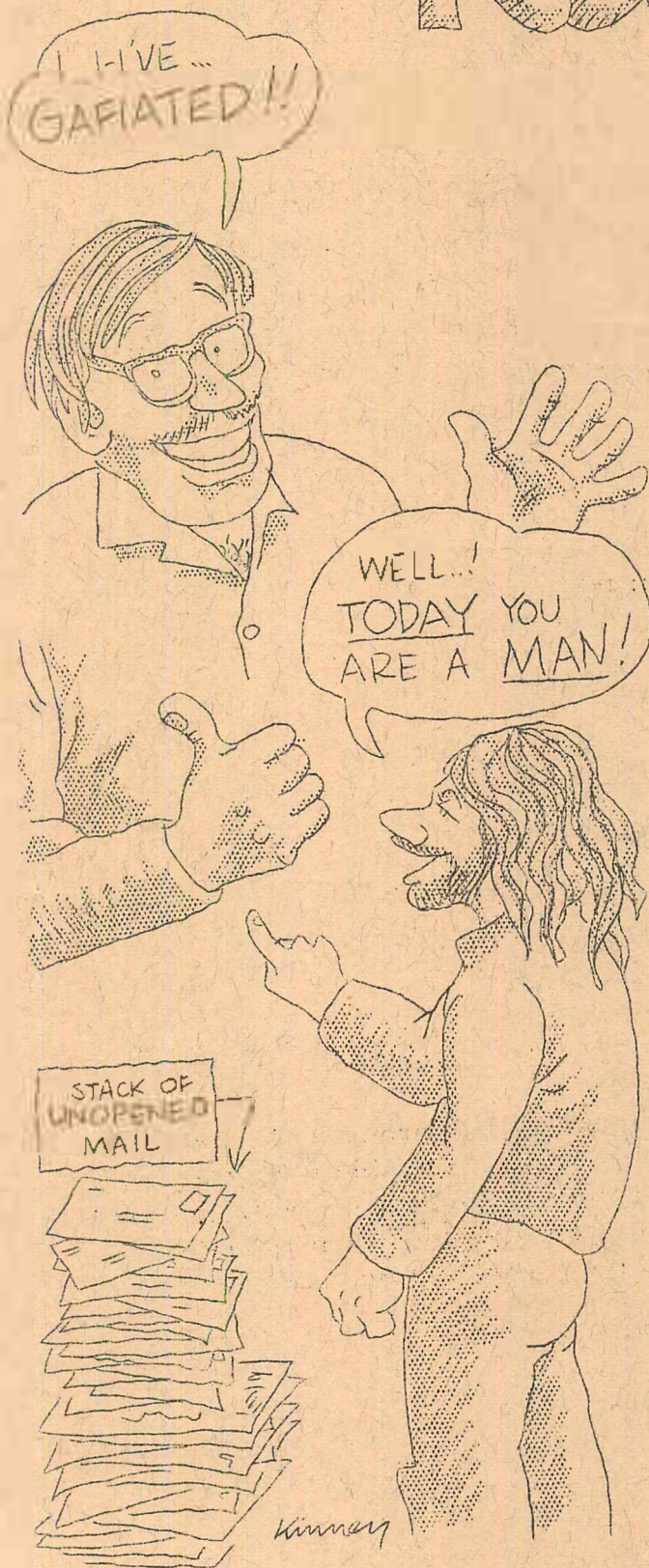
Ross Chamberlain: Cover, 8, 11, 13

Jay Kinney: 3, 4, 5, 16, 17, 22, 30

Bill Rotsler: 19, 24, 25, 29

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 59 Livingston St., Apt 6B, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, monthly. Available for letters of
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 uable help provided by Charlene and Bill Kunkel, Joyce Katz, Ross Chamberlain,
 Jay Kinney, and Brian Burley. 29 July 1972. Next issue out in about four weeks.

KATZEN-



A funny thing happened on the way to the monthly FOCAL POINT. There I was, happily turning out issues of this fanzine on a regular monthly basis, when disaster struck. Now, I know what you're thinking. Your saying to yourself, "uh-oh, Arnie's gonna tell us another damn story about his mimeograph." No, I promise. This is not a story about how my mimeo did or did not work. That is all in the past.

Anyway, there we were sailing along smoothly with FP, POTLATCH, CIPHER, and RATS! all coming out like clockwork, when we Brooklyn Insurgents let our confidence get the better of us. The mid-winter holidays were approaching (I know this, because Joyce and I had already handed each other our first Chanukah presents). We discussed the matter and decided that we'd stop publishing for a while and give ourselves over completely to rapturous celebration of the holiday season.

I should point out that historically speaking, fannish fans have never been overly enamored of rigid schedules. In fact, if you'd asked me about the subject several years ago I'd probably have disdained such highly organized fanac just on general principles.

In the specific case of the Brooklyn Insurgents, however, scheduling succeeded admirably. Each fanned knew his appointed place in the publishing rotation and worked toward his publication date diligently. Each of us understood that if we missed our appointed slot, we'd run the risk of having to return to the end of the line as our more dedicated associates saw their zines run

jammer

off on publishing Saturdays. The story of the ant and the grasshopper became the emblem of our group. Everyone wanted to be an ant, while there was, of course, less interest in being one of the grasshoppers. While the original fable didn't mention it, it is a well known fact that the grasshopper went without letters of comment and died for want of egoboo. This kind of self-coercion is vital when dealing with a sybaritic group such as the Brooklyn Insurgents.

I always hated the commercials that strove to convince the viewers that Joy made dishwashing "almost nice" so I won't attempt to persuade you that our cooperative publishing sessions made mimeographing and collating unendurable pleasure infinitely prolonged. But with so many hands to do the work and Joyce's bountiful meals to fuel us, we found that we could turn out two genzines on a publishing Saturday, completely addressed and mailed, and still have time for a lot of enjoyable socializing.

The nicest part about our publishing scheme was that since everyone worked on everyone else's fanzine, no one ever felt that he was slaving in anonymity for someone else's glory. Spending a day turning out an issue of CIPHER didn't trouble me in the slightest, because I knew that Chris would be working equally hard on FOCAL POINT about two weeks later.

There was another positive aspect of our publishing binge that wasn't commented upon in print at the time, I think. We found that our spree fed on itself; the more we published, the more we wanted to publish. Chris would turn out an issue of CIPHER, and right away Joyce would get excited over the idea of publishing another issue of POTLATCH. When POTLATCH was run off, Bill and Charlene would get anxious to do another RATS!, and I'd get cracking on an issue of FP.

We just didn't realize how well things were going, I

guess. We took a vacation from fan publishing and somehow never did get untracked. Other complications set in, such as financial straits, the Kunkel-Komar wedding, and an unsuccessful attempt to launch a newsstand publication. We got out of the fanac habit. Without our beloved publishing schedule, "manana" became the motto of the Insurgents.

My period of retirement didn't pass completely unnoticed. "When may we rejoice in the next magnificent issue of that wonderfully Fabulous Fannish Fanzine FOCAL POINT?" people asked me from time to time. They shuffled up to me on street corners and in empty subway stations, kissed my ring and humbly begged to be allowed to witness the unalloyed miracle, the transcendental mystical experience, that is a new issue of FOCAL POINT.

Actually, that never happened. That was just me trying to sound like the editor of one of those graphically obsessed fanzines I get now and then. You know, the ones put out by the gang who think it's the height of artistic brilliance to draw boxes around everything. Such adulation as I alluded to in the preceding paragraph is not for humble toilers in the fannish vineyards like thee and me.

No, the truth of the matter is that people have been saying things like, "Katz, you lazy bastard, you've had my contribution/art/loc/money too damn long already. When are you gonna get off your ass and publish?"

In my heart, I knew these people were only concerned with my welfare and well-being, but I was powerless to heed their words. The tendrils of gafia held me fast.

By the time we'd dug out of our financial hole, married off Bill and Charlene and realized that the backers had skipped out on us, we were thoroughly out of the habit of publishing. You see, we through ourselves into our gafiation with the same gusto that we had displayed for publishing. Fanzine fanac drifted from our minds until it was almost as if we had never been publishing giants. On what had formerly been our publishing Saturdays, we sprawled about the livingroom in a semi-commatose state, rousing ourselves only sufficiently to stagger to the table for meals.

We had drifted slowly, almost imperceptably, from the paths of trufandom. Bill developed the interesting delusion that he was James Forsyte (of "The Forsyte Saga"), Joyce began displaying real enthusiasm for reruns of "Father Knows Best", and I developed a rather nasty predilection for diet Dr. Pepper.

We were sitting around one evening late in June, Charlene, Bill, Ross, Joyce, and I, when someone said, "Hey, you know what we oughta do? We ought to publish fanzines!" There was some confusion about this at first, but eventually Ross succeeded in reminding Joyce about fanzines.

"Yes, yes," we all said, showing animation for the first time in months, "we must get out there and publish!"

It's not as easy to come back from a long layoff as some might think, and it's much sim-

pler to say "publish" than to actually do something after a few months of idleness. In fact, I found it impossible to go directly from the lassitude of winter to the hoped-for crifanac of summer. The little things I used to do almost automatically took more effort than I had imagined. The other Insurgents were rusty, too.

It was then that I suggested that the Brooklyn Insurgents take a leaf from baseball to get our fanac on the right path. "You mean we should have a faneditors strike?" Joyce asked.

"No, of course not," I said. "I think we should go into Spring Training for fanac." There were a few grumbles as I organized the wind sprints (the first thing that goes in a good mimeographer's devil is the legs, you know). Soon, however, my fellow Brooklynites became convinced of my wisdom. After several days of two-a-day sessions of limbering up callisthenics, they could see the improvement, feel the energy and vitality surging through their sloth-wasted bodies. By the end of the first week, we had all improved to the point of being able to stand up for extended periods of time, up to two hours in some cases.

Once our bodies were toughened sufficiently, we swung into the real business of spring training for fanac. There were no more boring and repetitious exercises as we struggled day after day to hone our fanning skills to the sharpness inspired fanac demands.

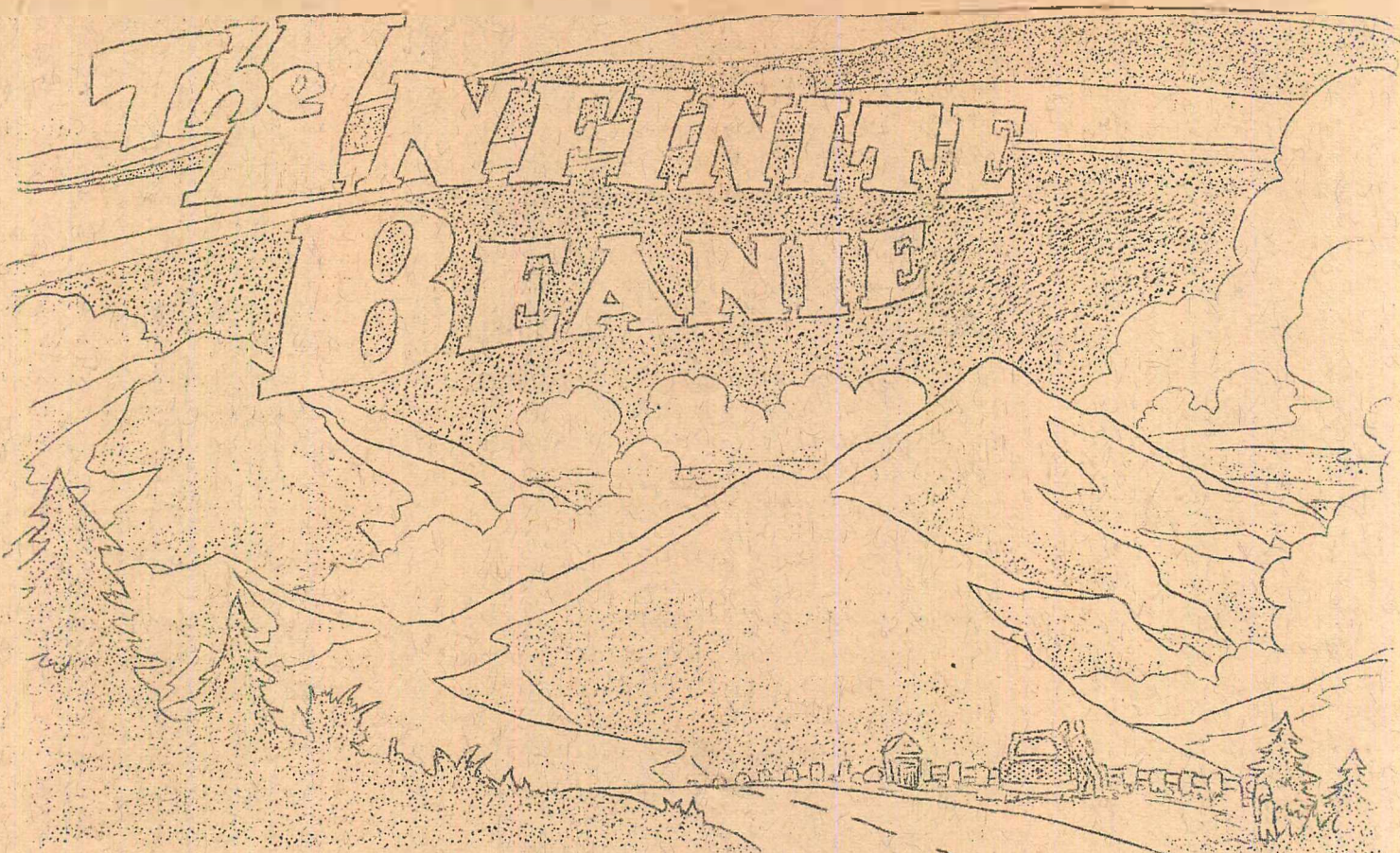
Wily veterans like Charlene Kunkel strove side by side with promising rookies like Dave Emerson to achieve that split-second timing so necessary for fast collating. We were worried about the collating crew, there's no denying it. We'd shipped all-start collator Chris Couch to the Columbia organization for 60,000 stencils and a neofan to be named later, and he'd been the backbone of the assembling operation. We knew that we had to find someone to fill that crucial spot in our lineup. Dave Emerson had shown excellent speed and manual dexterity in the high minors, and we were giving him a long look to see if he was ready to step into the starting line up of the big club.

I drove myself as hard as I did the other Insurgents. I took extra mimeographing practice on both the Rex and the Gestetner and worked hard at refining my technique as a switch-handed mimeographer. I'm still a bit better with my right hand, but my left is coming along satisfactorily.

Spring training is, of course, not an end in itself, and at some point, the phantom collating drills have to stop and fanning in earnest begin. The fanac season started three weeks ago, when we published the FANNUAL with the results of the 1971 Egoboo Poll. Two weeks ago, we shifted into high gear with a session that produced the 60-page "Incompleat Terry Carr Volume One", RATS! and a BREET for Dave Emerson. Last week, fanning was called on account of lightning, but this weekend we're getting out the first issue of FIAWOL, a new newszine Joyce and I are publishing, with FOCAL POINT to follow closely once that's out of the way. Ross and Joyce are having a little trouble getting into full tilt fanac this year, but both are working away, respectively, on FANGLE and POTLATCH.

Now, as the cry of "Crank Duper!" is heard throughout fandom, look to your mailboxes, the Insurgents are comin'!

-- Arnie



As promised not too long ago, here I am back live, writing from Berkeley. Carol and I arrived here safely late in September, found that California hadn't yet slid off into the sea, and all are doing well to this day.

I'm a Berkeley fan again, for the first time since I folded FANAC and INNUENDO and wandered off to New York. I didn't notice any clap of celestial thunder as I re-entered the City Limits, and the heavenly choir was hushed, but John Berry did come by one afternoon and watch me in case I might say something significant. I was dismayed to find the N3F hadn't yet placed a plaque in the sidewalk outside Barrington Hall, where Ron Ellik and I were roommates during an eventful year. I was appalled to see that the rooming house where Dave Rike and Carl Brandon would both have lived if Carl had been real had been torn down and replaced with an office building. There's no statue outside Bill Donaho's old house from which he published HABAKKUK the first time, and Chamber of Commerce guidebooks don't list the address where Ron Ellik and Jim Caughran roomed together in 1960. On the other hand, Tony Boucher's house doesn't have an eternal flame burning in front of it, so maybe those other oversights can be borne.

TERRY CARR

What have we been doing since I last wrote a Beanie, last August? Well, we went to the Noreascon first. I had a strange, marvelous time, though my interest in the program was for once minimal -- I liked the banquet, and that was about it. (I tried to get Bruce Pelz to bet against Dick Geis's winning a fan-writer Hugo, but he wouldn't bite even with odds; he wanted me to bet against Geis, and I wouldn't either. After the awards we discovered that each of us had known the results all along, through dark channels.) But the people were really very groovy at Noreascon: the Silverbergs, George Clayton Johnson, Sid Coleman, the Busbys. Bob Shaw was a delight every time I saw him, and I got to meet Jean Young and Larry Stark, and to talk with R. A. Lafferty and Harry Warner. There were many good parties, including the Lilapa ones. On the last day of the convention, my mind was beautifully blown, but it wasn't fannish enough to write about here.

"As a man, Larry [Shaw] is 100% further advanced than he was before moving to New York and the company of the Futurians . . . A Futurian education lasts a lifetime."

-- Donald A. Wollheim, in k'taogm-m #2, May 1945

After the convention we moved to Berkeley -- sent our worldly belongings off on a truck to California and set out in our Renault to spend two or three weeks sightseeing and visiting across the country. We visited Edgar Pangborn in Woodstock, had dinner and listened to Beethoven and stayed overnight and had Gilbert & Sullivan with breakfast. Very relaxed and rural and cultured. Then we headed for Bob Tucker's, but were delayed for a few hours when the Renault's automatic transmission quit outside South Bend, Indiana. We were towed backwards past the Notre Dame campus, and waved cheerily out the front at drivers following us; a fellow who was sort of a more pleasant version of Glen Campbell replaced the actuator and off we went again, heading for Tucker's. Then we got lost. We, uh, we drove literally out into the cornfields and had trouble getting out, particularly when we inadvertently buzzed three times a car in which a fellah was sparkin'; he chased us in his Jaguar down dirt roads at night, all of which gave me a very weird feeling. I pulled over, and he came out of the car all blustery: "What's going on?" Carol said, "We're lost!" He said, "Oh...where ya goin'?" So we said Hey-worth and he said You go up there and make a right and, and then we went our separate ways. (Gad, Walt, love among the cornfields.)

Walt Leibscher was visiting the Tuckers the same time we were. He tells terrible jokes, but I like him. Bob was in fine form, his hair so long he has to comb it every day. And Fern is very nice -- wow, a lot of good people. We stayed a couple of nights and enjoyed much chatter and hijinks. Bob told me every fabulous fan who'd visited his guestroom from Charles D. Hornig on, and we got to see from backstage a rock concert during orientation week at the University of Illinois, or is it Illinois State. The group was the Dean Davis Company, and mark the name well, because it's a group that you really don't want to see. Still, it was fascinating to sit in the wings and watch guitarists kicking around their wires and so on; watching the lights was interesting too, courtesy of Mr. Tucker. That same night Carol and I had a conversation with Tucker's youngest son, Bruce, who's 11. He's a very groovy kid. He said, "Do you fly in your dreams? I do. In fact, I always do. See, I got it figured out: the only chance I get to fly is when I'm dreaming, so I do it every time. I mean, it's the only chance you get." He'd also figured out something else about dreams: "I'm always the hero in my dreams, and I've noticed something: If I don't act like the hero should, the dream goes bad."

Next day we continued our western trek, and the scenery got a little dull.

About the only thing I liked about States like Iowa and Nebrasks was the sky: it's vast out there, a glorious brilliant blue and clouds that are forever impressive. The scenery as such picked up a lot when we got to South Dakota's Badlands, which are strange and bleak and beautiful. It was an overcast, windy and chilly day when we drove through or we'd have spent more than a couple hours there.

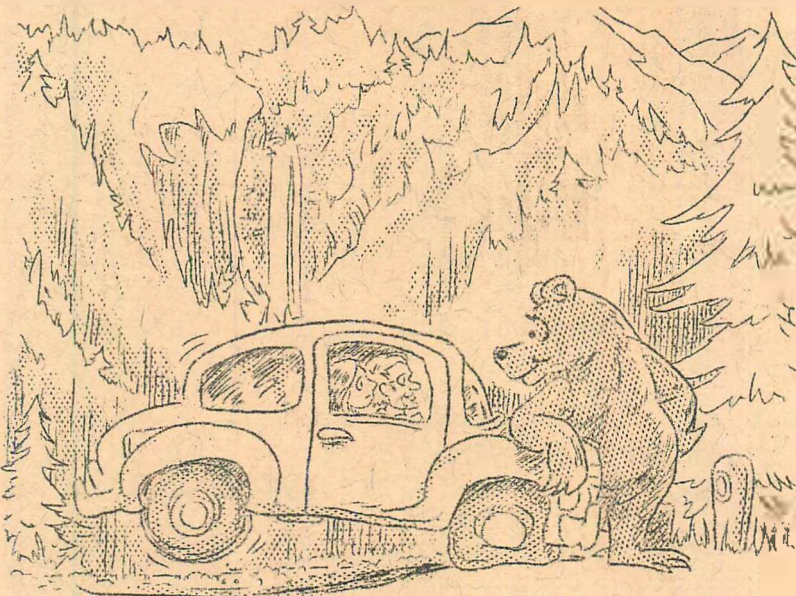
The car broke down again in Wyoming -- the transmission again. Second gear was gone most of the time, and when reverse wasn't gone it was acting as first gear. We checked the map: the nearest Renault service shop was nearly 300 miles away, in Billings, Montana. What the hell, I thought, once we're in third gear we won't need second gear, it's all highway driving; and the car did do its gear-changing right for once so off we went. We stopped for dinner in Sheridan, Wyoming, still 140 miles from Billings. Guy at the cash register said to me, "You mean you're driving to Billings tonight? Man, you wouldn't catch me driving that stretch at night for love nor money. That goes straight through the Crow reservation, and it's Friday night -- they'll all be on the road, in their beat-up old jalopies, all of 'em drunk. Nossir, I wouldn't want to drive up that way tonight." I thought, Jesus, I hope you're a bigot.

Well, the forecast drunk-driven jalopies didn't appear and we got to Billings that night; we found a motel, and in the morning called the Renault dealer. He said sorry, only the showroom's open today, the service shop won't open till Monday. So I sighed and we began to read some books, and I thought it really wasn't such an unpleasant place to spend the weekend, there was that nice crisp smell of smoke, for instance. Then the motel burned down.

We took our stuff outside and dumped it into the car and watched hordes of firemen working with much to-do. Being unable to start the Renault, a bunch of us pushed it out of the lot and into the first empty space we could find on the street; this turned out to be right in front of a fire hydrant, but in the confusion I didn't get a ticket. The motel didn't burn completely down, not really, but there was extensive damage in every room around the horseshoe. I managed to get the car started and we drove up the street in first gear to move into another motel. Quickly we ascertained that Billings held three movie theaters and a bowling alley. We saw Klute that night, Saturday -- a beautiful, heavy movie, and seeing it in Billings made it even more of a trip. All that New York paranoia caught so well up on the screen, then you walk outside into midnight streets that are clean and nicely lit and quiet and cool and peaceful and calm, and what was that movie all about, anyway? Sunday I doped off and watched football games on television, then that night we got ambitious: went out to dinner, went bowling, went to a movie. A gaffer joined us to kibitz while we were bowling; he'd been a postman for forty years in Billings, and showed me the watch he'd been given on retirement in 1953. Far out. The movie was Borsalino with Delon and Belmondo -- a 1930's gangster movie set in France, with Delon playing George Raft and Belmondo doing his Bogart thing, and much Gallic joy in faithfully reproducing all the cliches and nuances of old American pictures, all very deadpan. Gassy.

Monday the car was fixed by a bucolic version of Jason Robards and we drove to Yellowstone, vastly relieved to get out of the wasteland of Billings. (We'd used up all the movies in town; the only other one playing was The Love Machine.) Yellowstone instantly made us high; it was absolutely gorgeous when we drove in at dusk and the sky was so clear and sharp against the silhouetted pines, and as it got dark we came to geyser country, steam ghosts stirring beside the road as we passed. In a little town at the edge

of the park Carol spotted a wall graffito saying WE ARE EVERYWHERE, UP THE REVOLUTION. We'd reserved a cabin near Old Faithful, and we found that the heat barely worked at all against the sub-zero nights there. But we had a delightful stay, and cuddled a lot. Next day we did the short tour of the park -- Old Faithful and a walk through the geysers and hot springs, then a drive around Yellowstone Lake and through bear country (but no bear around today), finally the colors and beauty of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, which I remembered from the first time I'd visited the park some twenty years ago. Back to the cabin for a while, but before dusk we drove out to look for bear, that being the best time, and we did score: it was



a small bear, but a good one; it put forefeet on Carol's window and sniffed at her. Then the bear walked off, finding we had no food to give him, and we drove back to the lodge for dinner.

Another night in our cabin and then we were on the road again. We drove to Boise, Idaho that day and I called Guy and Diane Terwilleger; got an immediate invitation to dinner. They're totally out of fandom now, have been for ten years; Guy's in charge of all the buying for five stores in a chain of women's clothing stores, and Diane cooks in the school's box lunch program.

Guy still reads and collects science fiction; he showed me his collection with evident pleasure and we talked about what a good job Ted White's been doing with Amazing. Guy gave me a copy of what was to have been the cover for the next issue of TWIG, silk-screened and a collector's item, I guess. He said one reason he'd quit his fanac so suddenly ten years ago was that he found it was keeping him from reading science fiction. How about that.

"No one dare impute that the first man on the moon will be other than British."

-- Maurice K. Hanson, in TOMORROW, Autumn 1938

We drove due west through Eastern Oregon, which I capitalize like that because all my life I've thought of it as some strange sub-state, not really part of Oregon at all. My family were Oregon chauvinists, and my father verbally banished Eastern Oregon from the state; he hated it. I'd never seen it, and was curious, and it was on the route to Eugene, where we could visit Alpaupuri. So we crossed very dull desert all afternoon, in blistering sun and with crosswinds that made for tense highway driving. I was exhausted when we got to Bend. We stayed there the night, next day drove the gorgeous two-hour route through the Cascade Mountains to Eugene. Alpaupuri wasn't listed in the phonebook under that name, so I called the Silverbergs long-distance to get his number, ha. Later got in touch with Paj and he joined us at our motel, spent five or six hours rapping with us, which we greatly appreciated. We were people starved, and Paj is an interesting guy.

From Eugene we cut west to the Pacific: I'd heard all my life how beautiful the Oregon coast is, but I'd never seen it. It really is kind of

incredible, mile after mile after mile of strange and rugged coastline, huge boulders standing in the surf. At sundown I pulled the car off the road to a viewpoint and we watched the sun disappear below the Pacific, thinking of endings and beginnings.

Finally, on a Sunday late in September, a week ahead of schedule because people had come to seem more important than pretty places, we drove the last lap to Berkeley...through the redwoods, Mendocino and the wine country. As soon as we got to the Bay Area I said, "Hey, Sausalito's on the way, let's drop in on Steve and Grania Davis, that should be fun." So we did, but Steve and Grania weren't home.

But Dick and Pat Ellington were when we got to Berkeley; we found them sitting around the dining room table collating a political fanzine with various Wobblies. We met our cat George again, whom we'd shipped by air to Dick and Pat; his personality had undergone a few changes since he'd been living in a houseful of Sequoia-sized dogs and rabbits and other stuff, with the scent of kangaroo in the wind. We got all the mail that had piled up since we'd left New York. Dope was set before us and we were turned on. Hi, Berkeley.

"They used to ask me when I was a little kid, 'Are you a hero worshipper?' I'd say, 'Certainly I am -- and then other times I just hate myself!'"

--- Charles Burbee,

in GLORIOUS SPOOL #1, Autumn 1950

We're living in a rented house and looking for one we want to buy, but we're likely to be here for another few months and we did throw a housewarming party. All sorts of people came, from the Lupoffs and Ellingtons to the Goldstones, Davises and Demmons. Even the Silverbergs flew out for the occasion, covering the party on special assignment for LOCUS. Charlie Brown didn't run a report, though; he doesn't understand what's important in fandom. Greg and Suzy Shaw were here; so were Jim and Hilary Benford, Mike Kurland, Bill Donaho, Mike McInerney, even Gordon Eklund. The place was packed to the absolutely optimum point -- there were several conversations in every room, but there was still room to move through people to get another drink or just mingle at random. And everybody was so warm and friendly; I really felt we'd been welcomed to California by the time it was over.

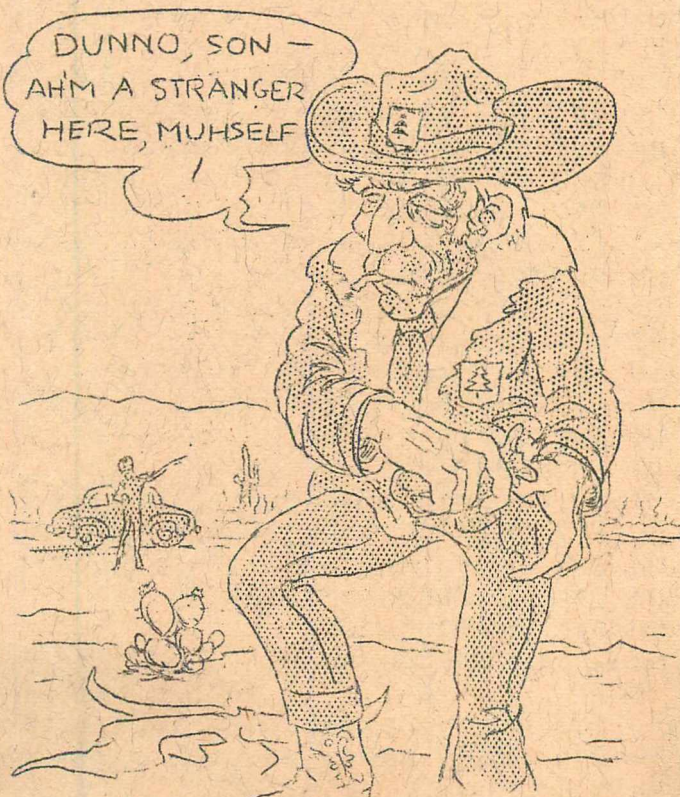
More recently there was a groovy party at the Ellingtons', more or less in honor of the 150th mailing of Lilapa. The Silverbergs had just arrived for a couple of weeks' vacation, so they made that party too; we'll make Berkeley fans of them yet, mark me. Bill Rotsler and Paul Turner came up from L.A., Dan Curran came back to town from his sheep-ranching pursuits in the foothills of the Sierras, and of course all sorts of other people were there: Benfords, Davises, John Berry, Shaws and so on. Rotsler drew lots of cartoons and Suzy Shaw talked about her days as a hippie and I talked about fanzines with John Berry and about sex, dope and science fiction with various people. What else is worth talking about?

We went on a week-long trip with the Silverbergs, first to Death Valley and thence to Los Angeles. It was delightful. We got to sleep on a waterbed in a motel in Bakersfield, and went to one in Desert Hot Springs that had individual whirlpool baths in every room; oh wow. Of course, the latter motel caters primarily to older people, so the instructions we got

were to go in the whirlpool for five minutes then stay out for an hour to let our systems recover. The baths contained eleven known minerals, not to mention the unknown ones. So we went in for an hour and stayed out five minutes, etc. Groovy. In Death Valley we scrambled across jagged salt fields and climbed hillsides and skootched down them and walked way out in some marvelous sand dunes to watch dawn. We also saw dawn, a different dawn, from Zabriskie Point, though it was far too cold there to indulge in any such sexual circuses as in the movie. Carol's long-dormant racial memories from her outdoorsy mountain goat ancestors were awakened in Mosaic Canyon, and she scrambled around with gay mad abandon. But it was cold that December in Death Valley -- it isn't supposed to be cold in Death Valley any time, but it sure was. In fact, we were sitting in the restaurant at Stovepipe Wells and the park ranger said it was the coldest damn winter since he'd been there. I looked at his grizzled, lined, frontier-type face and asked how long he'd been working in Death Valley. "This's my second year," he told me.

I think it was somewhere in Death Valley that I said to Bob, "Anybody who accuses me of macho has got me by the balls."

Los Angeles seemed to consist mostly of Bill Rotsler and Paul Turner, but it also included Mount Olympus and the LaBrea Tar Pits and a place called Space City that we were sworn to secrecy about; it's a gass. Dope and beer were proffered, and we got to see Norman Spinrad, Mitch and Wendy Evans, Greg and Joan Benford, Steve Tolliver and George Clayton Johnson. We went to Watts Towers, then to Harlan's for dinner. Ed Bryant was there, along with others; I like him. While we were eating the phone rang and it was an honest-to-gosh Harlan Ellison fan, calling long distance to see if Harlan was a real person. Harlan talked with him, and the guy seemed to be high on something. Harlan introduced the famous Robert Silverberg and Bob talked with him too, much to the fellow's stoned becrogglements I'm sure. Whatever he was on, he must've had a ball. (Things like that happen at Harlan's all the time. All the time.)



There was another phonecall in L.A. that caught my fancy. I called Sturgeon about a novella he was writing for one of my books; he said, "I've got this great idea for it and I'm really looking forward to writing it." I said, "That's great, because Bob Silverberg's in the book too and I hope you'll write this one up to his standard." Wasn't that a marvelous thing to get a chance to say to Theodore Sturgeon? -- why, when I came into fandom Bob was still wrestling with his mimeograph and Sturgeon was publishing Baby is Three. Saying such a thing felt like telling Tom Disch I sure hoped he'd come up to the standards set by Jerry Kaufman. There was a great silence across the telephone line for several seconds after I said it, and then Sturgeon said, "I'll bet Bob is in the room with you." And indeed he was, with a peculiar

grin on his face.

I have heard it on sterling authority that one former editor of Super Science and Astonishing Stories was paid the staggering sum of \$15 per week. His secretary was also getting \$15 a week, so he fired her, did her work too, and got \$30.

-- Joe Kennedy, in MASQUE #7, February 1953

Arnie Katz called long distance a few weeks ago to say he was going to run off THE INCOMPLETE TERRY CARR the next weekend, so maybe it'll be all ready by the time you read this. Arnie started putting that on stencil two or three years ago, and made a good selection, I thought, of my fan writing from ten or twelve years ago. Hurray, now I'll get my chance for fannish immortality (which is to say, soon everybody will be talking about how overrated I am).

People have been asking me when I expect to publish INNUENDO #12, the one that I was originally going to do for the Bob Shaw Fund. Well, a lot of it's on stencil, Meyer, and I'm going to forge ahead with it and hope for publication by May. I pick May because it occurred to me the other day that that month will mark the twentieth anniversary of my first fanzine. (VULCAN #1, May 1952.) What better way to celebrate the occasion than by a swell issue of INNUENDO containing Calvin Demmon, Greg Benford, Carol Carr, Sid Coleman, Tom Perry and Bob Shaw and a bunch of other first rate writers I never got a chance to publish in the original INNUENDO?

Twenty years? Maybe that's too many....

Dick Lupoff on death: "When it happens, just don't be there."

Years and years ago -- like in the early fifties -- I spent a Saturday night out drinking with faaans: Dave Rike, Bill Collins, Boob Stewart, Frank McElroy and probably Pete Graham. We were walking around the streets of San Francisco and Dave had a bunch of letterheads for The Bay Area Militant that he'd gotten somewhere; Boob decided that it would be a wizard wheez to throw a bunch of these off an overpass spanning a sort of freeway. Our luck was such that we were noticed by a passing cop car, and we were picked up and taken in to the Ingleside Police Station. There'd been a broken-bottle fight at some other teenage party in the area and the cops were picking up any kids they found on the streets that night. So we sat in the lobby of the Ingleside Police Station, and Bill pulled out an old comic book he'd bought earlier that day and we passed the time reading it while the cops puzzled over the Bay Area Militant letterheads and finally decided we were a bunch of harmless crackpots who'd had nothing to do with that other party, all of which was correct. Suddenly Frank looked up from reading and said with wonder in his voice, "You know, if you'd told me at two o'clock this afternoon that at two o'clock this morning I'd be sitting in the Ingleside Police Station reading Cosmo Cat Comics...I'd have punched you in the nose."

I think about that a lot at various times when unexpected things have happened to me. One of the favorite conversational games of people like me and Bob Silverberg and Ted White is talking about the astonishing ways in which our lives have progressed, and If you'd told me twenty years ago

that... Mainly, of course, these are exercises in bragging about what great big men we are now.

Shit man, I remember announcing in one of my fan columns that Bob Silverberg had sold a professional science fiction novel, Revolt on Alpha C. And I remember when Ted White used to publish a digest-sized fanzine called ZIP! that featured his own amateur sf stories. And I remember before either of those that I used to write my short stories in hand-printed pencil, and illustrate them myself, and send them to the prozines without any return envelopes. And yet look where we all are today: Bob's novels get nominated for the Hugo every year, Ted's prozines get nominated for the Hugo every year, and I get nominated for the Hugo as best fan writer. ...Well, I don't think that was what I started out to say.

No, but seriously: If you'd told me twenty or so years ago that beginning in 1962 I'd sell every single word of science fiction that I wrote, without fail...I'd have shat. If you'd told me in 1950 that in 1972 Theodore Sturgeon would refer to me in the pages of Galaxy as "a brilliant editor"...I'd have sprouted hives on the spot. If you'd told me then that in 1969 a short story by me would be nominated for a Hugo but would lose to one by Harlan Ellison...I'd have pissed on your shoe. Yet all these things have come to pass.

So what can one say in the face of very unexpected occurrences? That traveling forward through time is a mystic experience? That change is the only constant in the world? Personally, I usually just mumble "Far out."

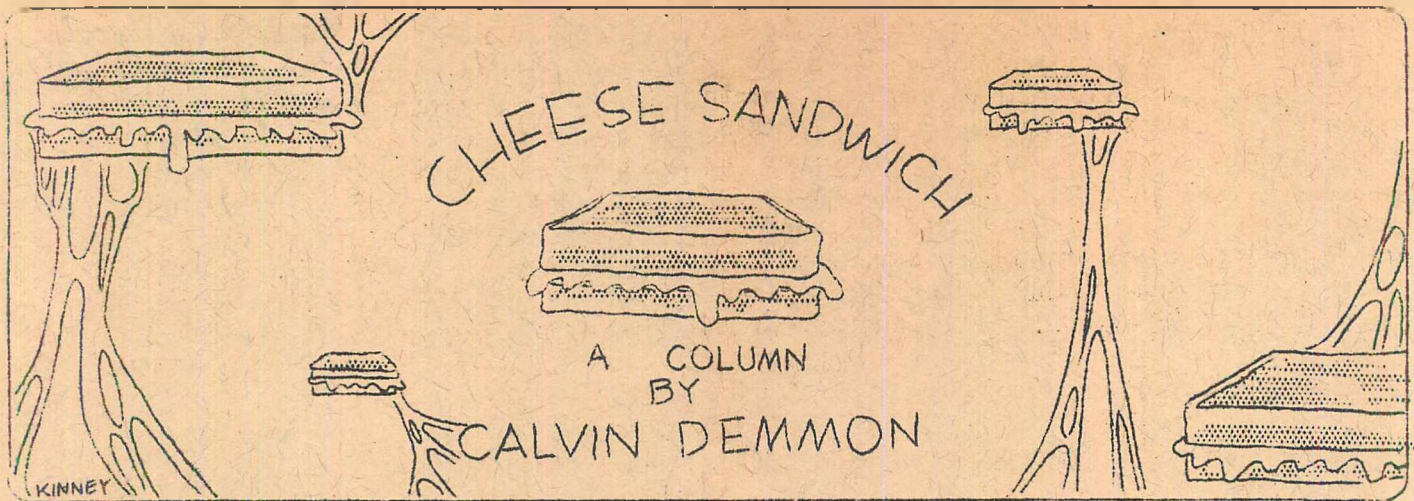
This has been an essay against goal-orientation.

I'm nineteen, soon to be twenty, and I wish to make commercial art my business. I have done work for FPCI and later for Astounding Science Fiction and still later I did one pic for Other Worlds. I work surrounded by Prokoffief and Stravinsky and deadlines. I am currently engaged in illustrating "A Child's Story of Pennsylvania" and in trying to do comix for a venture fathered by Shelby Vick. I have studied art for three years and by means of a scholarship I am going to give it one more try in hopes that I may pick up something this time.

-- Jack Gaughan, in FANTASY ADVERTISER, July 1950

Since I wrote the first five pages of this column in December, nearly four months have passed and it's now early April. I think I feel vibrations of a new FP deadline. Meantime, we've found a house, bought it and moved into it, and we love it. It's in the Montclair hills, and it's sort of California-modern-rustic, a seven-room house on a forested hill, with a fireplace opening on both the living room and the dining room, and a view of pines and eucalyptus and berry vines and some neighboring houses. It has one of those circular floor-plans that are designed for homes in which to throw parties, and it has a large sun deck from which to breathe eucalyptus-scented air. The kitchen is great. We're having shelves built in both upstairs and down, and we've bought two waterbeds, one for our room and one for the guest room. We even had a contractor in who swore the house wouldn't slide down the hill the first time thirty people were in it. So here's our *change of address* :

Terry and Carol Carr
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I ought to tell you about the time I met Charles Bukowski. You may not know him. He's a Los Angeles poet, an old man who worked for the post office for twenty years and wrote poetry on the side -- or, to put it another way, he wrote poetry and worked for the govt on the side. When I met him he was no longer working.

My wife Wilma had a childhood friend who used to live with a dentist, but is now pregnant by a saxophone player. When Wilma's friend was living with the dentist, Don, we socialized with them a little -- nothing much. We just went over for dinner and in turn had them over a couple of times. So one night a couple of years later Don calls me up. "You're a writer. I'm having Charles Bukowski over tonight to read poetry at a party. You come over, too."

Buk, as they call him, or Hank, had some articles in Open City, an L.A. underground newspaper, and I had admired them. I also once saw a room in the library at Los Angeles City College filled with glasses cases which contained limited editions of Bukowski poetry. He was, and is, a good poet, so far as I can tell. I'm not.

Don's refrigerator was filled with Coors -- cans in stacks, in six-packs, jammed into the ice cube racks in the doors. His table was loaded with wine and cheeses. In a little box on the bottom shelf of his book case, beneath anatomy texts, dental reference books, and a modest but tasteful selection of fiction and poetry and art books, was a cigar-box full of joints, pre-rolled and ready to go.

Some of my friends were there: Anne whom I have always liked because she is pretty and laughs at my jokes and tells good stories which I run home and write down and try to sell. Frank, who worked with me at the university, teaching freshmen How to Write and Read (that's what we were supposed to do; I don't think I ever did it, but Frank might have). Tony, a poet in his own right who had so impressed the chairman of the English department with his brilliance -- a visible, impressive brilliance, to be sure -- that he had coasted by on fellowships and scholarships and grants for two or three years in graduate school without ever completing a course. (Tony's younger brother published a fanzine once, QUAGMIRE, thus does fandom impinge on reality.) (Possibly not.) Tony was a Bukowski fan; he was in awe that the man would be there and had brought a copy of the San Francisco Review with some Buk poems in it that Buk hadn't seen.

We drank. We smoked. Wilma was at home taking care of the baby; I drank & talked to Anne and Frank and Tony and watched and smoked and waited and ate and mingled, in and out of the house, outside in the back looking out over the little valley that separated Don's house from the hill where our house sat, Wilma inside taking care of the baby. A Sunday night; had to get up the next morning to teach freshmen How To Read. Frank disappeared for a while with a girl. I talked to Don. Anne met some old friends. A girl named Bonnie Jean, who had been at other parties playing her guitar and singing her own songs, played and sang. Again I wondered why she'd never recorded anything, and then again wondered if her stuff was any good if you weren't drunk. Then wondered if anything was any good if you weren't drunk. Ran across Tony again. People were listening to Bonnie, or clustered in the bedroom talking, or out in the back, looking out over the valley. "This is a party straight out of the 1960's," I said to Tony, and he seemed to think that was as profound as I thought it was. It felt like beatniks instead of hippies; bohemians instead of Swingers. It felt like a good party.

But where was Bukowski?

Bukowski was on his way, that's where he was, with an entourage of four or five, and then they burst in the front door and the party really caught. It was 1964. Nobody sitting around in a circle spinning into inner goodness; everybody mingling and talking and drinking and eating. And Bukowski came in, drunken, stooped, gnarled, bad teeth, balding, blood vessels in his cheeks and on his nose burst years ago from drinking and fighting and poem-making. Not a loud voice, but commanding--slow, careful, measured, intelligent. Like what writing of his I had read. A poet, all right, and not just somebody acting like a poet. The genuine article. With him was a genuine acolyte, drunk, loud-talking, a sheaf of poems in his pocket. Neely Smith, I think, or Neely Cherry -- he used both names, or I misunderstood. Younger, fatter, more obnoxious. Not the imposing presence that Bukowski was, but an attention getter, if only because he was there with the real man and obviously his friend. In any other context he would have seemed obnoxious. Instead, he was a kind of short, fat Don Quixote to Bukowski, and he failed only because Bukowski was there being Bukowski.

Tony had the magazine, but seemed reluctant to approach the man. I would do it, here, give it to me, I had lost count of the beers & wine & smokes & was digging Bukowski & felt the reality in the room shifting and regathering around him, but I wasn't afraid of him, having my strength from drink and a good party and pretty women and my own feeling that I was a writer too and could approach, if not on equal terms, at least with an understanding. No, Tony would do it. He did; Bukowski recognized him, seemed glad of the publication of his poems.

Don's bathroom was lined with aluminum foil, floor to ceiling, ceiling too. A dentist who couldn't get away from mirrors. In the bathroom I thought myself a tooth, surrounded on all sides by mirrors, water



trickling down the drain. But I had no imperfections and was meant for polishing, not extraction.

Bonnie Jean, who had rested and talked for a while, began to sing again. I remembered a song she had done at a party two or three years ago, and asked her to sing it. "You see the go-go girl, up on the stage...Well you can loo-ook! But don't touch!" It was the worst song in her repertoire, and I was instantly sorry it was the only one I remembered. Buk turned up his nose. "Another anti-war song." It was a direct challenge, I figured. The old lion, on his way down, lashing out at the young one, me. He knew I was a writer--after all, I had told him I was, when he accused me of being a cop. "You're too big to be a writer, Jesur Christ, this whole room is filled with fucking cops--well, I'll fight you all, I've done it before, Christ what a dull party. Where is everybody?"

A magnificent drunk. He talked to me for a minute more, then went into the aluminum foil bathroom, left the door open, and pissed on the floor. "He pisses on the floor in his own house, too," Don said admiringly.

Another beer, and the beer was gone. Neely passed among us, gathering change for an assault on the liquor store. Suddenly he was back with more beer, more wine. Getting on about 1 a.m., a few people had left, a few more had arrived. A fine party, the best one I had been to in years.

But Bukowski hadn't read his poems.

Somebody asked him. "Christ, no, I don't want to read to you fucking insensitive morons. I'm an old man, I'm not up to this."

"Read your fucking poems, then," I said suddenly. "That's what we're here for. That's what we all came for."

He gave me an odd look, crafty, smart--see, I'm not nearly as old or drunk as you think I am, and I heard what you just said.

"Go on," I said. "Read the fucking shit."

Don produced a paperback book. Bukowski stories, not exactly poems. Bukowski opened it and read a long, beautiful, funny story about an angel who played baseball with a minor league team. An angel, with wings. And it was good, and the party drifted into the living room and sat down around his feet. Another acolyte, who had been quiet until then, began to interject. "Shit! What a bunch of shit!" And when the poem got beautiful: "How the fuck does he do that? How does he do it?"

Now I would protect Bukowski from this Philistine. "Shut up, you stupid prick," I said. "Let him read. Nobody wants to hear from you."

And a few more poems, and, "Christ, I'm tired of this, I haven't got any more poems." Somebody pressed him to read from Tony's magazine, but he wouldn't. Neely read then, smaller poems, odd Bukowski echoes, but whether it was his attitude or his poetry, or the fact that he was a mimic and what he mimicked was there for comparison, the mood was broken.

But nobody seemed to want to leave. A few went and a few, having gone to other parties, came back. "Hasn't anybody got some poems, Christ, what kind of a party is this?"

In the bathroom again, holding the door shut with one hand because somebody had broken the catch, pissing with no hands, I pulled my notebook from my pocket where it always stayed in those days, and read over my poems. They were terrific; Bukowski would like them.

Back in the living room. A silence, a lull. Bukowski not about to leave, settled in for the night, hurtling curses, drinking, trading insults with Neely and the others. "Nobody's got any poems, Je-sus Christ!"

"I'll read," I said.

A shift, a catch. A quickening. I reconstruct them from what I know of the evening--it is the worst of excuses that you didn't know what you were doing because you were drunk.

A space was cleared at the front of the room. Chairs rearranged. I was not to sit on the couch and read, because Bukowski was on the couch. My friend Frank left--"Wait, stick around, I'm going to read my poems." But he had a guilty look and he went out.

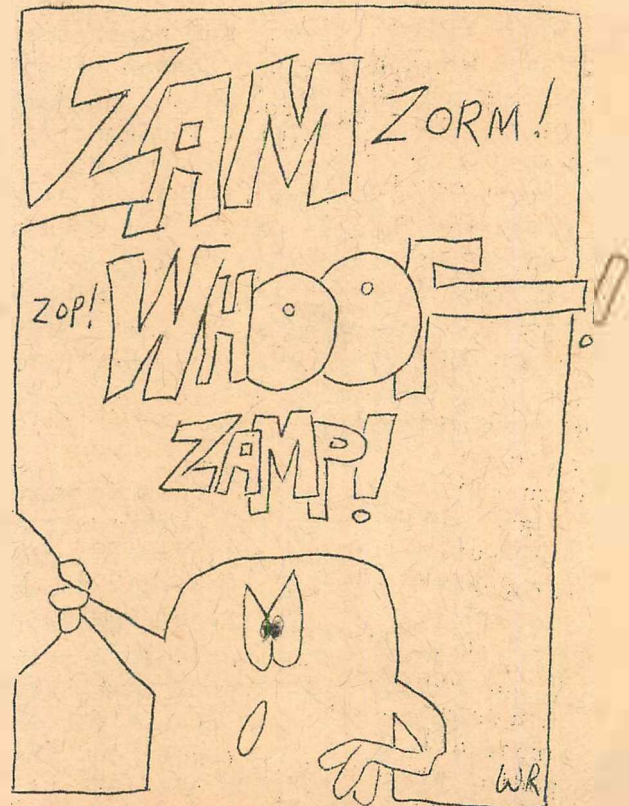
"Okay, I'll read," I said, and I moved to the front and stood and took out my notebook. "Let's see--this first one is called, well, it really doesn't have any title. It starts out--"

I read the first two lines. Sounded good to me. I was halfway into the next line when Bukowski (or somebody) stood up, said, "Je-sus Christ! I don't have to listen to this shit!" and left the room.

I was through with my second poem before it even began to dawn on me what had happened. I was still drunk the following morning, but I managed to get to my class and give my lecture. At the end of the hour I discovered, like a character in a novel, that my fly was open.

Though this is not a plea for sympathy, the party was over a year ago, and I haven't written a poem since.

-- Calvin Demmon



JOHN BERRY STUFF & FANAC

It seems a reasonable time to revive the above hoary old title, and FOCAL POINT seems an appropriate place to do it. (If the name doesn't strike you as sufficiently old and hoary, then I can only suggest that you keep this fanzine around unread for a few years until it smells as if it's properly aged. In the meantime, just keep practicing words like "whippersnapper" and "second childhood".) In actual down-to-earth reality, I'm just helping Ted White to turn this fanzine into SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW now that that fanzine is dead. Arnie doesn't know this yet, but we're working up a good Alter Ego for him that'll be ready any day now.

It's all a plot, Arnie. We're all trying to drive you crazy.

Speaking of the batty and the askew is what I started out to do. I'm thinking particularly of those I found last August in London. You see, I spent a week in London with a lot of other American students from Stanford-in-France, ostensibly on some sort of a "field trip". I could have enjoyed London a lot better without the "field trip" aspects, but at least I saw a few historical places I might otherwise have missed. A bunch of us were coming back into London of a Sunday afternoon, after spending the morning running around the old Tudor palace of Hampton Court, and remembered the good things we had been told about the Speaker's Corner of Hyde Park. It seems that on Sundays in particular, every sort of speaker imaginable, mostly nuts, can be found standing on his soapbox presenting his own frothy version of the truth. Our free time, which loomed so large on the mimeoed schedules we all had for our week in London, proved dismally short when faced with the distance and traveling time between Hampton Court and the place we were staying, way down in south London, so we barely had time for a half hour or so at the Speaker's Corner before heading back for dinner. (That's if you get out at the right tube stop. We got split up, and the other half of our party went to Hyde Park Corner, which sounds nice but happens to be the wrong corner. They found us, though, and got a nice walk through the park to boot.)

It wasn't hard to know we were in the right place. Right outside the tube station is the entrance to the park, patrolled by one bored bobby, and beyond him and the hotdog stands and balloon sellers is a great paved area, which fades off into a great dusty area, all of it spottily filled with small throngs. Each throng had as its center a podium of some sort (except where two spectators might get into a shouting match, in which case a throng would form around them; this had the effect of preventing the two from escaping and of prolonging their fight). I discovered that some of the speakers have been at it for a long time, or else they have organizations backing them that have been at it for a long time, and there are permanent podiums with signs rising above them reading "India Society" and things like that. (That may not be an accurate name, but

there was one something like that; under it was a relatively serious speaker and throng, and not surprisingly the subject was Bangla Desh.) Although there were lots of spectators, like ourselves, who drifted from speaker to speaker, breaking up and regrouping at random, the throngs were not all interchangeable. There was one crowd, a particularly large one, surrounding a young black-haired fellow under a spreading tree. He was denouncing America while I listened to him, although it seemed to be just a long digression from his primary subject, whatever that may have been. "Is anyone here American?" he dried. I didn't answer, but two others did: one a white long-hair on the outskirts of the crowd, the other a black wearing a beret near the podium. The speaker didn't seem too interested in the black guy, but continued to denounce the US and occasionally challenge the white American with an abrupt question. I couldn't hear much of his reply; it sounded as though he was agreeing.

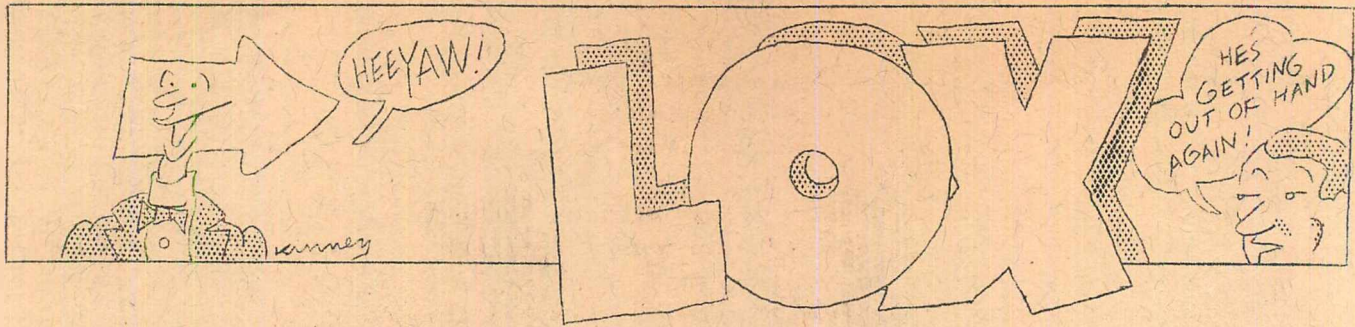
The character of most of the speakers was manic, mad, as unable to cope with reality as a LASFS meeting. Many of them were happily unwilling to cope, and they had obviously been flipped out for a long time before I got there. One smiling, middle-aged black man, wearing a vest and derby and with his eyes only half open, was, as near as I could figure out, trying to convince his sparse audience of the wonderfulness of European civilization as opposed to African. There was a black militant and his friend standing just under the speaker's nose and contradicting his every statement. The speaker paid no attention at all; he just raised his voice and smilingly drowned the other out, which was easy for him since he had the advantage of his soapbox.

Drowning out was the prime speaking technique in Speaker's Corner. The heckling took the same form, especially in the thoroughly middle-class English throngs. One religious thunderer was getting his own conviction thrown back at him tenfold by an angry little Englishwoman who sounded as though she'd been blaming the world's problems on the Catholic Church for at least a couple of decades. She was reeling with the fury of her fulmination and sometimes had trouble standing up.

There was one serious, polished, sane speaker in the park; he was representing some sort of obscure Socialist party and had just come from a big Bangla Desh rally somewhere else in the city. But if I tell you about him it'll spoil the earthy wholeness of this column.

This fanzine is round like a ball, you know. And I'm going to sail off the edge.

-- John D. Berry



It's been a long, long time since the last full-scale letter column in FOCAL POINT, issue #33. Some of the following letters are getting a little yellowed with age, but I think they're still of interest. I'm hoping this Great Big Serving of letters will encourage forty or fifty of you to sit right down and dash off a brilliant LoC for the next issue of FP.

Charles Adamek
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I gave a few minutes' thought to why it was that I enjoyed the book reviews in the old SFR, and why I felt that even an avowed fannish mag ought to include reviews. When I looked back on reading SFR, I discovered that I did not use the reviews as a buying guide and actually enjoyed the reviews of books I'd read more than reviews of books I'd not read. Why was this so? I think the answer relates to involvement of readers

and fanzines. Every editor of a fanzine would like to have readers involved and relating to his mag. This is understandable, and ideal.

However, it's hard for me to relate to, for example, convention reviews. I've never been to a con. I don't anticipate going to a con (unless one is held in Chicago or nearby, and it seems they never are.) I don't know the personages described, and it doesn't mean much to me to have Terry Carr relate that he had a beer with good old so-and-so, who has a nice wife.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not critical of the con reviews. I think they serve a function in the fanzine and are moderately enjoyable, even for the outsider.

To get back to my original point, however, I can and do relate to reviews of books and prozines that I've read. After all, the literature is presumably central to fandom. It is the one common bond. It's the meeting ground. You can learn a lot about a reviewer, and about yourself, when you contrast and compare your own reactions to a book with someone else's response to it. "Bent Staples" works the same way. I think I get to know Arnie Katz better by seeing what he values in fanzines, what he looks at, what he gives points for, etc., than I do from the editorials. It's almost an application of the old "actions speak louder than words" principle.

Fannishness is fine. Some of us in the boonies can't participate in fanactivity to the extent we'd like, and if you have any desire to relate to us as an audience, it's necessary to reach us. Convention reviews don't reach us the way book reviews do, because we haven't participated in the cons but have read the books.

A fannish publication which ignores the literature completely isn't making efforts to reach me, really. It is satisfied to cater to that group which can and does actively participate in cons and live fan events. That's fine, too, if that's the purpose you set out to accomplish. But is it? Aren't you looking to involve a broader audience than those people you already know? I suspect you are, or you would not have switched formats and proclaimed yourself a genzine.

In any event, I think I could become more closely involved in FOCAL POINT if it carried reviews as well as the other things it does so well. Is this a sorcon trap? Am I trying to lead you away from the true fannish path? I don't think

so, and believe me, I hope not. All I'm doing is suggesting that you define your objectives more clearly in your own mind and if you find that one of your goals is to involve relative outsiders like myself, I suggest that you look for that common ground where we can relate. The literature is such an interface.

/// I'm sure that your suggestion is made with the best will in the world, Chuck, but I think you are overlooking the possibility that my goals in fandom differ from yours when you suggest that I get my goals more clearly defined. My detractors would probably suggest that I already have my goals all too clearly defined. I hope that isn't true, but I think, after nine years of active fan publishing, I know what I want to do.

Reaching a wider audience is not a goal in itself for me. Naturally, I would always like to meet more people with whom I am compatible, and I would also like to have as many people as possible enjoy what I do in fandom. I see no reason to publish something in FOCAL POINT in which I personally have no interest just to expand the readership. FP is already the most widely circulated fannish fanzine currently being published, so printing things I wouldn't read in someone else's fanzine just to add even more readers isn't very attractive to me.

I don't see why you assume that only con goers can become involved in fannishness. After all, Richard Bergeron is a complete fannish hermit and Harry Warner is at least a partial one, yet both show a lively interest in the microcosm. If you stay in fandom, the people, places, and events alluded to in fannish articles will become familiar to you, just as prolonged reading of science fiction makes stock concepts such as hyperdrive, robots, and time travel more familiar and comprehensible.

It's also a little difficult for me to see how a book review can be more revelatory of character than a fannish article which is, at bottom, nothing but a character study and/or an opinion piece. I've known many people who were very different in personality and interests who had remarkably similar tastes in science fiction.

It's questionable to me, therefore, whether science fiction is really the meeting ground you claim it is. Since I have no interest in writing articles about sf or in reading reviews of sf books (unless it is one of the few perceptive critics such as Alex Fanstun writing the piece) -- if I'm going to do anything in that line, I'd rather read an actual sf book than someone's opinion of one. For me, fandom itself and the people in it are the common meeting ground, not science fiction reviews. So I print what I like and expect that I will eventually get to know like-minded people through their interest in what I present in FP.

Rick Sneary
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90280

I've decided that you produce a fanzine I consider provocative, in the best sense of the word. I find that it provokes as much or more comment than any fanzine currently out. Some time I disagree and sometimes I'm right with it, but most times it causes me to wander off in added chains of thought.

I should hope that the machine you've bought is not the Enchanted Duplicator. Not that you aren't as likely a true-fan to find it as we have these days, but I look upon the Enchanted Duplicator as being in the same class as the Grail, or lasting peace. Something to be strived for, but never really achieved. For it seems likely that if anyone did find the Enchanted Duplicator, it might be the end of fandom... The one and perfect fanzine might overwhelm all others and other publishing would cease. It would be so perfect that no one but the finest writers would feel worthy enough to write to it, and everyone else would give up trying.

Actually, I can't imagine what kind of fanzine could please all fandom. I find it hard to think of a fanzine that has pleased me in all things. WARHOON's layout and graphics are most pleasing to my own taste. I like bold graphic designs and solid pages of type. Of course, this is a personal feeling and contrary to most fanzine editors who seem to feel that if they don't put a picture on every page their readers will lose interest. The trouble with WARH is that it is a little cold, so professional that it feels formal.

Much as I admire SPECULATION and the Australian review-centered zines, they are even less exciting to read. Regretfully, most American faan-zines are too exciting. A rare issue indeed that doesn't liven up its pages with the blood of some victim. I suppose most old-timers would say HYPHEN was the best fanzine; in content it was, but the format wasn't too good. It was just a little too crowded. But my it gave you a lift to read it! It made fandom as a whole seem like a



very good place to be. Perhaps the most nearly perfect fanzine was QUANDRY, which had slightly better layout and only slightly inferior writing. Or at least that's the way I remember it. It's nearly 20 years since I read a copy, and the memory dims. But it seemed the last and best of fandom's innocent days.

/// My interpretation of "The Enchanted Duplicator" is a little different than yours. I don't believe Bob Shaw and Walt Willis meant to say that there was, literally, only one Enchanted Duplicator. They said, "The magic mimeograph is the one with the trufan at the handle." In other words, the Enchanted Duplicator is a universal concept, rather than just one machine. Is this correct, Walt and Bob?

I think you and Joyce are completely mad to be editing two fanzines which are basically of the same type, but until you decide this, too, I'll be perfectly happy to go on getting both of them. Maybe the competition will keep you both on your toes. How come Joyce doesn't do a column for your zine? Fair is fair, I usually say.

/// Joyce and I don't think our fanzines are that similar. POTLATCH is much more of a personalzine than FOCAL POINT, and the type of material Joyce prints is somewhat different than what I want for this fanzine. As to why she doesn't do a column for FP, I wish I could tell you. I consider her one of the best writers in fandom and have asked her repeatedly to do something for FP, but she hasn't been as prolific as she would like, and those loong POTLATCH editorials take a lot of her writing effort. Perhaps as the Brooklyn Insurgents plunge back into active fanac, Joyce will be moved to write more.

Dave Hulvey
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Harry Warner's "All Our Yesterdays" column about the SOUTHERN STAR makes me wish that South fandom showed the same vitality today that it did in years past! There are as many fans in the South as NY or the West Coast, but they're so widely separated and fragmented that nothing even vaguely resembling the NY scene occurs here. To my acute embarrassment, I know fans outside the South, but very few in my own area. Who are they? Where are they? Perhaps Dixieland is too humid climatically to allow fans to develop. I know the summer saps my fanzine endeavors. Think what it must do to others in the region. Further, can you name any current fanzine coming from

the South that has captured the attentions of fandom? Certainly not.

Unfortunately, some Northern fans seem to delight in ridiculing fans from the South because of their mannerisms and peculiar turns of phrase. These charter members of fandumb seem to enjoy practicing discrimination against anyone below the Mason-Dixon line. They must have a severely warped world-view. I suppose they think Southerners are an uncouth crowd of racists and ultraconservatives. Perhaps they think this tendency spills over into the minions of Southern Fandom. Well, not quite. After all, Ted White is technically a Southerner, and he hardly fits that simplistic mold.

/// Density of population is certainly a key factor in any discussion of the relative non-existence of South Fandom. There may be as many fans in the South as there are in New York City, but here you always have other fans within easy traveling distance. In the South, the nearest fan may well be in the next state, while in New York it only takes a short subway ride to bring you face-to-face with a fan you hate the sight of.

Still, Southern Fandom has proven its ability to produce fine fans over the years. Besides the Southern Star crew Harry wrote about, there were the perpetrators of QUANDRY and CONFUSION and, in more recent times, such actifans as Lon Atkins and Dave Hulan active in the South. I'd say that the current low state of fanac in the South is fallout from the feud Hulan and Atkins had a few years back which pretty well destroyed the main focus of Southern fanac, SFPA.

As far as discrimination against Southern fans by Northerners goes, I think this is mostly in your imagination. I haven't noticed that Southern fans were particularly persecuted. You've come in for a fair share of knocks, but I think you drew them because of your personality and your actions, not because you're a Southerner.

Jerry Lapidus
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Pittsford, N.Y.
14534

Y'know, Amie, for a mainstay of fannish fandom, you -- this may be heresy to Seth McEvoy and such, but say it I must -- have a good grasp of visuals and graphics effects. Need I comment on the magnificent Chamberlain cover on FP #12, one of the best comic covers I've seen since QUIP? And your willingness to use layout and page designs out of the norm in with more traditional layout marks you as a rare fan indeed. I wonder how

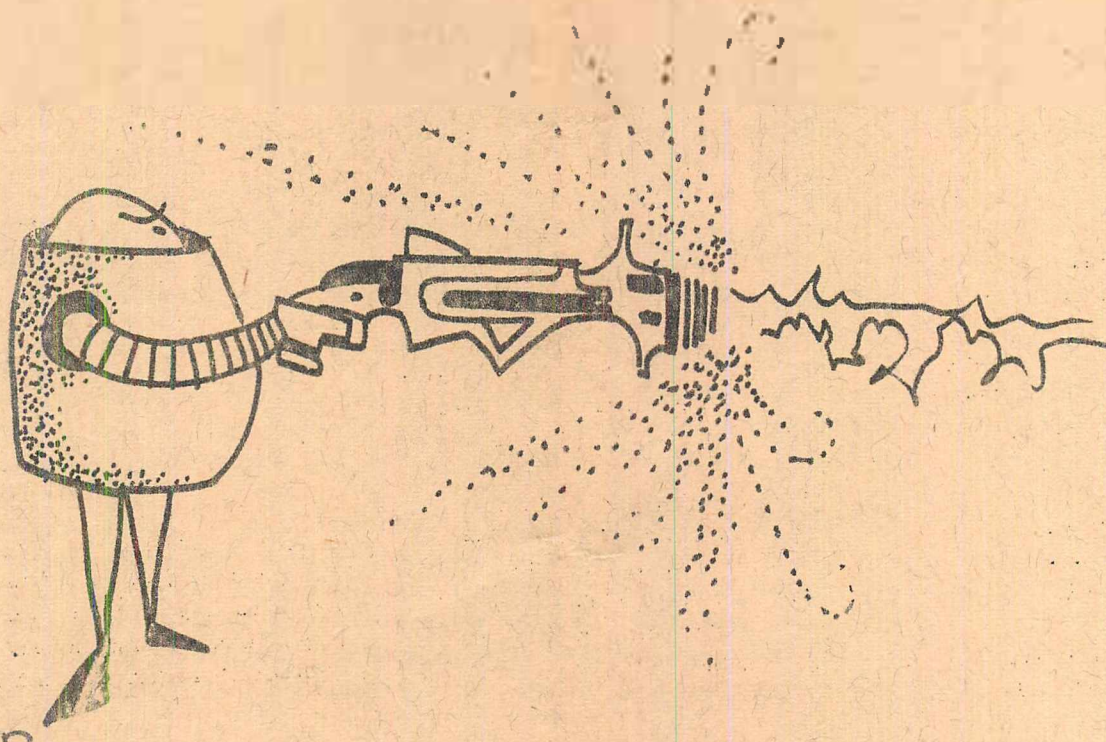
many people realize the thought and planning that goes into the physical presentation of FP and helps make it all that much more enjoyable?

/// Thanks for the praise. I'd rather readers of FP were less conscious of the elements of the layouts and more sensitive to their effects, if I had my choice, so I don't miss the paeons to my Graphic Industriousness. The most effective layout, in my opinion, is the layout that works so smoothly, people just read the whole fanzine suffused



with a feeling of Intense Joy. Once the reader stops reveling in the zine and starts analyzing the layout, then I think that layout is a failure, no matter how "avant garde" or "experimental" or "far out" the design is. Layout is a means to an end, not an end itself. When it becomes the goal, then I think we're in danger of drifting dangerously close to the pretty but empty and sterile magazines produced by mundane amateur journalists.

Arnie, a serious question for a moment -- what's the current circulation of FOCAL POINT? I just keep thinking of LOCUS' 1000 readers -- and realizing that with SFR gone, LOCUS is by far the biggest single influence around. And no single person, whomever he is, should have that much power in fandom -- it isn't a healthy thing, whether you tend to agree with the person's opinions or not.



Although I know you don't like to consider big circulations, I'd very emotionally like to see as many people get FP as possible, if for no other reason than to provide another strong influence on fandom in general.

/// I don't think I see fandom as an ideological struggle. Sure, I'd like fans to be ethical and conduct their activities on a higher plane than they sometimes do with regard to things like the Hugos and TAFF, and sure, I'd like many bright, entertaining people to find fannishness entertaining, but I don't think we have to go to war over it. Fannishness is not for people who are basically sf readers getting one news publication like LOCUS, since it takes some involvement with fandom to learn enough to understand the fannish outlook. Those who first read LOCUS and then go on to become active fans will come to fannishness in their own sweet time, if at all. FP is a generally available fanzine, and if more people order it, I'll print more than the 300 copies I run off now.

Ted Pauls
1448 Moridene Dr.,
Baltimore, Md.
21239

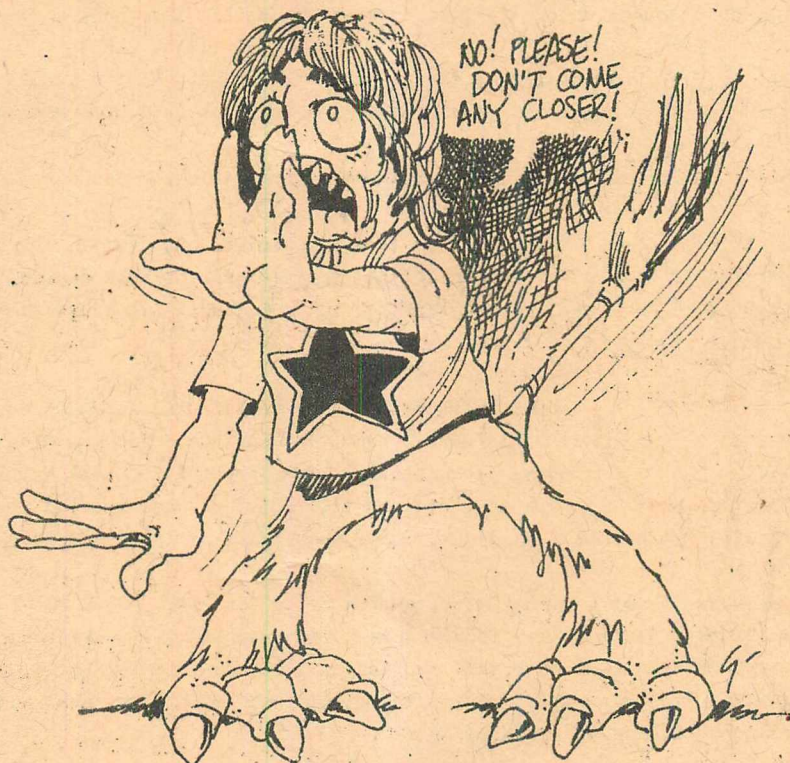
I sympathize with your difficulties with the Rex ((in FP #33)) undoubtedly merely the first in a long series of problems. I've always had a profound distrust for Fancy, Complicated Duplicators, reasoning that the fancier and more complicated they are, the more things can, and ultimately will, go wrong with them.

For all of my fan career, I have used a Sears-Roebuck Tower mimeograph that cost \$35 new in 1957. A simple machine, to put it mildly -- just a revolving drum, a roller, and a primitive feed attached to the body and drum, along with a tray to receive finished copies. Hand inked, of course, with a paint brush, and a tendency to drip ink on your foot if you leave the crank in any rest position other than straight up. Although possessing a certain primitive grandeur, like

a boulder, I'd be the first to admit that it is not exactly a versatile and sophisticated piece of equipment.

Still, it has the advantage of absolute dependability and consistency. Short of somebody taking a sledgehammer to it, there's no way it can malfunction. It doesn't have much in the way of moving parts, nothing at all that requires adjustment. The metal and plastic should last 50 years or so, the rubber roller is still as soft and uncracked after 14 years as a baby's behind, and the feed mechanism actually works better now than it did originally. Every four or five years I have to replace the ink pad, but that's the extent of upkeep.

So go ahead and gloat over your Rex when it's working properly and turning out FP with dash and sophistication, but



remember when you're cursing and unscrewing screws and poking around in complex innards -- I'll be here cranking away at my unhurried pace, smiling smugly at your predicament and muttering something like, "If Ghu had wanted us to have automatic inking and a snazzy paper counter and 30 copies a minute, we would have been born with them."

/// You may be right, meyer, you may be right. Of course, a man who thinks a baby's bottom doesn't have a crack in it.... All I know is that I'm sitting here in my shorts as the temperature and humidity battle it out to see which will have the honor of hitting 100 first typing away at this manual microelite typer. As I sit here, the sweat rolling down my back, it is only thought about eh swift sure ease of running this off that keeps me from Falling Right Over. That, and frequent transfusions of Pepsi.

Strangely enough, I wrote an article more than a year ago on the subject of the way today's fans are coddled and pampered compared to their heartier forebears. It was called "There Were Giants in Those Days". I gave it to Dave Lewton who gaffiated without returning the only existing copy of the piece. If some nice person would go see Dave and get my article back for me, I would think upon him with utmost kindness.

Rick Stoker
Univ. of Mo.
Columbia, Mo
65201

Bob Toomey's "The Eggman" just haappened to remind me of my own small experience with a U-Haul truck. Back when I was in high school, some friends of mine were in a band. When they got a job somewhere in St. Louis, they decided to rend a U Haul to cart their equipment.

Bob, Charlie (the only one who could drive a truck), Charlie's girlfriend and I squeezed into the two-man cabin and started off. The first couple of blocks weren't bad, especially considering the heavy traffic. Charlie had a little trouble changing gears, but the ride was uneventful.

We approached the intersection of College Avenue and Stanley, a four-way stop. Only we didn't. With a sense of doom, I watched the black '62 Chevy take its turn at the intersection. I closed my eyes, waiting for the big CRUNCH, as Charlie pressed down on the brake and the clutch as hard as possible. Fortunately, he managed to slow us down to 5 or 10 miles per hour, and we only made a little CRUNCH.

We drove around the corner, parked, and Charlie got out to talk to the guy we'd hit. Bob took out the instruction manual and found the accident report forms. He started to fill them out.

"In which direction were you heading at the time?," he quoted. "Let's see." He turned the book around, oriented himself, and drew a big arrow pointed in the direction in which we'd been heading.

"Stupid!" Charlie's girlfriend said. "That doesn't mean anything." She tore the book out of his hand.

Pretty soon Charlie came back. "Get out," he told his girlfriend. "Leave. The cops are coming." She is White and he's Black. Since her father didn't think much of that arrangement, Charlie decided that he'd better not get her involved as a witness. I decided to avoid any red tape and cut out, too. Bob had to stay; he was the only one with a driver's license and had signed for the truck.

Seth McEvoy
Box 268
East Lansing, Mich.

FOCAL POINT seems to be handling its changed format very well, although I still miss the old news, views, and reviews! You and Rich had such a charming way of writing news, and as I look back, some of the best writing was in the humorous way you saw the news and wrote it up. LOCUS has its ups and downs, but it is still weak on fannish doings, although it is beneficial, no doubt, as a trade publication for writers, editors, and would be writers.

/// Well, Seth McEvoy of East Lansing, Mich. -- You Asked for It! FOCAL POINT looks to be a genzine permanently, but Joyce and I have decided that fandom does need a newszine, a publication that will attempt to cover the fan world just as LOCUS and LUNA cover the professional science fiction field. We're calling it FIAMOL, and those on the FP mailing list can expect to see the first issue within the next couple of weeks. We'd have begun already, but we've been publishing up a storm, as it is.

Terry Hughes
1109 Pacquin St.,
Columbia, Mo.
65201

After reading your heart-rending account of how your Rex betrayed you, I shed a tear in sympathy for the agony you went through. If I had been Chris Couch when I saw what the insides of your ink-coated Rex looked like, I probably would have said, "Gee, that's too bad. Sure wish I could help you clean it, but I have this very rare allergy to mimeo ink," and then make a mad dash out of the apartment. It just didn't sound like a fun way to spend a morning. Hank Luttrell has been telling me terror tales of what happens with the cheap type type of mimeos, the open drum type. He assured me that there was no way one could ink an open drum mimeo without being covered with ink from fingertips to armpits. Maybe open drum mimeo owners could form a Brotherhood of the Black Arm or somesuch. Despite these horrifying stories, I'm still planning on getting my own mimeo, but now I won't use ink -- instead I'll use cranberry juice or grape juice or even prune juice to help keep the readers regular. Go organic!

/// Are you going to attempt multicolor work with your organic inks? If you mixed cherry, prune, and a dash of lemon, you'd have a ~~perfect~~ perfect ink for one of those "I'm-leaving-fandom" articles, a moving, sweet article, with just a hint of bitterness.

I really enjoyed Terry Carr quoting those old fanzines that were complaining about the ever-increasing size of fandom way back when. What would they do if they saw today's paper flood? This leads me to a question I'd like to ask you: how many sf fanzines would you say are being published today? Not counting stuff like comix or monster fanzines.

/// It's tough to give you an estimate unless you define your terms. If you mean the number of different titles,

including all the titles published for apas which are primarily devoted to sf fandom, then the number could easily run into the multiple hundreds. Think of something like Apa L, which must have well over a 100 different contributors during the course of a year, FAPA with about 65, the three major secret apas, with around 60 total, plus all the other apas plus all the genzines. The total number of different titles could run 4-500. And when you talk about the number of different issues of all sf fanzines published during a year, I think you're talking about more than 1,000 fanzines. I wonder if anyone gets them all?

Roy Tackett
915 Green Valley Rd. NW
Albuquerque, N.M.
87107

You struck a responsive chord by recounting your troubles with your mimeo. I just finished running off the latest issue of whateveritis I publish these days and, oy!, in the middle of everything had to stop and tear the machine apart and do a thorough cleaning and overhaul on it. It was, I tell you, a mess. But it hadn't been cleaned for ten years, so I suppose it was time. The roller was as if covered with gum -- non-chewing type -- and refused to let go of the paper. Fortunately, of course, I am still using the old hand-cranked Tower, which is much simpler to work on than those fancy Rexes and Gestetners.

Will Straw
303 Miagra Blvd.,
Ft. Erie, Ont.,
Canada

I think the trouble with any theories I've had re numbered fandoms is one Harry Warner points out -- that I and others tend to label as major trends what were actually only minor fads, effecting a very small part of fandom. I know several people who object to the numbers fandoms idea simply out of a general dislike for labels, in much the same way that people didn't like the term Insurgent and the overall lumping together of similar zines under one collective title. I'm bothered by that because I can't help but mentally combine QUANDRY and the early OOPSLA! under the title "Sixth Fandom", and I can't really stop myself from looking at METANOIA and POT-LATCH and RATS! as part of an Insurgence -- giving up these labels would mean that I'd simply substitute other labels for them.

/// In a way, Harry's right, of course. What we call "fandoms" would only be called fads if they were measured against mundane world time. But as many people have remarked, fandom and mundane move at different speeds. Fandom, though a little slow on short-term things (like holding a conversation in letters that takes 20 times as long as it would have face to face) but it moves like lightning on the longer range. A fan generation is only about two

A year is but a day in fanhistory

Joyce Katz

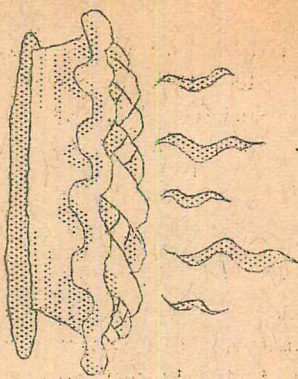
two years. So it's not surprising, at least to me, that fandom can have the equivalent of a historical age in a couple or three years. I mean, if we insist on applying mundane world time measure to fanhistory, there's no way you're going to be able to analyze it significantly.



I don't mean to quibble, but METANOIA is not one of the Insurgent fanzines. Part of the fannish revival and a damn fine fanzine, but Greg Shaw is not exactly part of the little group of fanzines which term themselves insurgent. We'd be pleased to have him take on the mantle, but MET actually predates the New Insurgent movement. (Bad word "movement", it sounds too much like we have a Program and Goals. Relax, folks, it's only us...)

And that, unfortunately, brings this letter column to an end. Thanks to all those who wrote whose letters did not make it in this time. I hope everyone will try to shake the rust from their typers and write a letter for the next issue of FP, which is, you understand, going to come out in about four weeks, ghu and the contributors willing.

Hope to see you all then.



FOCALPOINT

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BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11201

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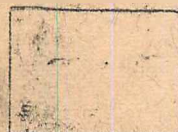


As is alluded to in my editorial, this issue of FOCAL POINT has been delayed a little. Lightning struck our apartment and left us with out power in my of our a-
partment for nearly a week.

This is the first issue of FP in some time, of course, but my plans now are to resume the clockwork monthly schedule of times gone by. This will take a little coopera-
tion. I'm trying to get , back in the fan-
publishing habit, and it would be a power-
ful inducement if you readers got back in
the letter of comment habit. Let's all try
to resurge, shall we?

"The Incompleat Terry Carr" with such
famed TCarr writings as "My Fair Mem-
mefan", "Egoboo for Algernon", and
"Trufan's Blood" is available from me for
\$1. It has covers similar to those used on
our edition of "The Enchanted Duplicator",
also available for \$1 (but quantities are
very limited) and is #2 in the Insurgent
Library of Fandom.

Hey do you guys remember this little box?
It's what FOCAL POINT has instead of a



whole page of drivel called
"why you got this issue",
filled with all sorts of
one-liners that don't ex-

actly leave 'em rolling in the aisles. I
don't kid around here, boy. If there's an
"x" in the box, you'd better watch out,
because you won't be getting any more
FPs, and I'm going to miss you terribly
unless you respond to this issue. If you
don't-see an "x", it means you're safe
for one reason or another, but it also
means that you're probably one of the
people I'd most like to hear from.

See you all in about four weeks.

-- Arnie