

FROM SUNDAY TO SATURDAY

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Saturday, Feb. 3, 1973: The Fascination concerning American Indian culture which has overcome me in the past few years has been mentioned before in these pages; it was so strong -- and time-consuming -- in the past couple of weeks that I'm starting these eight pages for FAPA perilously close to the Deadline, and they are likely to contain few or no Mailing Comments. The 141st Mlg. was thoroughly interesting and enjoyable, if memory serves (the Mlg. always gets read within a few days of its arrival -- I'm not that gafia) but there hasn't been time to re-read it and write out Comments, so I'll make do by typing up notes which are already written; these may or may not be of much interest to FAPA, but I rather think that too many fans restrict their fanzine writing to an unnecessarily narrow range.

One of the more interesting side-effects of this interest in American Indians, to my mind, has been contacts with the California Indian Hobbyist Association (CIHA); the group has some striking similarities to our fandom, and some striking differences. The White hobbyists -- sometimes called "sycamores," because the bark of that tree is white on the outside and red on the inside, and sometimes "Members of the Wannabee Tribe," because they seem to want to be Indians -- are almost as Varied and Strange as we Science Fiction Fans are. Many of them, also, are almost Fanatics, spending an enormous amount of time and money on their interest (a couple of well-built costumes would cost about as much as a complete collection of the old pulpzines, and might involve even more time, since the Ideal (and to some extent the necessity) is to Make It Yourself, which means gradually acquiring a large number of difficult skills), and there seems to be a major trend to make it the focus of one's social life. (This may be more apparent than real, because I see these people only in this particular context.) The meetings are monthly, but the weekly singing practice sessions are attended by a good-sized ingroup, and there are a number of friendships and social-inter-relations which seem to indicate more frequent association.

As with us, the intellectual level is distinctly above average, and one may fairly suppose that there's a definite sense of alienation from contemporary culture; we tend to escape into possible futures, they, like the Creative Anachronists, go more into the past -- at least, the "Old Time Sioux" freaks do; many are "Fancy Dancers" who labor frantically to keep up with the latest fads from Oklahoma. ("Fluffy feather bustles are definitely Out; almost all the Important People at the Tulsa Powwow last summer were wearing drooping hackle-feather bustles.") Intellectuality and even intelligence are less Absolute Requirements with them than with fans, however, since they are not so necessarily oriented towards the written word, and a skillful dancer or craftsman can take a high place in the social order on those grounds alone, and of course, as with us, the quality of being Good People swings much weight.

The key word seems to be achievement -- which may explain why they seem, on the average, to have a higher mundane socio-economic status than fans -- their ability and desire and drive to Excel carries over into the Real World. They also (presumably as a result of this) tend to be a trifle stuffy and upper-middle-class Conservative, in comparison to fandom's quasi-Bohemianism. That makes for some Problems; since they're quite closely affiliated with a number of youth groups (Boy Scouts/Order of The Arrow, and even the Y Indian Guides), the general demeanor expected is that of the exemplary sort appropriate to such Leaders, (When there was a Rumor going around that some of the younger-generation members had sneaked away and smoked pot one evening, everyone had to pretend to be Shocked To The Core -- and some of them undoubtedly were so far out

of touch with modern reality that they really were Shocked (most of us can remember youth group leaders who were amiable and well-intentioned, but who simply didn't have the faintest idea of what life was really like). As with some local fandoms' reactions to the advent of the Head scene a few years ago, some of the people didn't realize that a direct frontal assault wasn't the most effective way of solving the problem, but eventually things cooled down nicely.) Since the group's functions are held in (free) YMCA or public school facilities, drinking is strictly a no-no, as is smoking in most of the buildings. This means that while Indians are not excluded from the Hobbyist powwows, their presence is not actively encouraged, either, except for a few who are known to be Dependable and properly ~~happy/broken~~ acculturated, &cet. This attitude is not one that I like, but I see its validity and necessity, and wouldn't think of trying to change it. (I'm sufficiently middle-class myself to be somewhat annoyed/uncomfortable in connection with some aspects of Indian powwows, too ☹ let's face it, Indians are even worse litterbugs than Whites are. Both scenes have their values and their drawbacks, and I accept both for the good things they have to offer.

The CIHA has close ties with the Ponca Tribe -- the southern segment of the Sioux, who have settled in Oklahoma -- and the Ponca Singers are well-known in that area for the quality of their singing; they combine some of the northern tradition with the more melodic southern plains/Oklahoma/pan-Indian forms, and have composed a number of good songs of their own (available on some five lp records). The hobbyists scraped up enough money for two carloads of the Ponca Singers to come out for a Winter Dance last weekend, and I was Highly Enthusiastic about this since I've acquired (it is an acquired taste) a strong liking for Indian singing.

I kinda share the Indian attitude towards music -- for the most part, their songs don't have names, because .... one doesn't talk about songs, one sings them (or listens, as the case may be). It would be pointless (and too difficult) to write about the music, here, but some of the personal interactions seemed to be interesting enough to set down, if only for future reference. (Note that I'm not into things enough to have been introduced to the Singers (and most of you know that I'm not Forward enough to go up and introduce myself), so I may have some names wrong, and am relying upon distant and brief observation, and some hearsay.)

Sylvester Warrior is probably the senior member of the group, as far as singing is concerned, but among Oklahoma Indians, what you are is often balanced by who you are, and Albert Waters is the Patriarch of his clan (i.e., the oldest member of a group of inter-connected families). As such, he swings a whole lot of weight -- it was he who was asked to give the Invocation... and when there was some question as to whether this or the Flag Song would come first, 3 or 4 words from him caused the Singers to draw back their drumsticks hastily. (If, for example, Mr. Waters were to suggest to his great-grand-nephew that it might be a good idea to plan to attend Princeton, there is about a 98% probability that the boy would arrange his highschool schedule to include the necessary courses, and work very hard to get qualifying grades (and maybe a scholarship, though tuition and expense money would appear, somehow). (After graduation and getting a good job, he'd be expected to contribute heavily to other family/clan causes, of course.) Joe Rush, who looks more Sioux than the other members of the group (perhaps because he wears his hair in long, wrapped braids in the Old Style), is typical of them in his incredibly quiet, self-contained Dignity and self-confidence, which does not entirely conceal an underlying sympathetic friendliness. The other two Singers, Napoleon LeClaire and Thurmond (Ducky) Waters, are younger (WWII rather than WWI veterans) and hence more self-effacing.

Also out for the Winter Dance were Abe and Ida-May Conklin and two of their children, Joe and Roscoe. Abe is, by repute, quite possibly the best Straight Dancer in Oklahoma (or, in effect, the world), and is friendly in a quiet way; his wife is...

an incredibly friendly and outgoing woman who seems to know and like everyone -- she probably can recognize and greet by name hundreds of people, and gives the instant impression of being someone you'd very much enjoy knowing.

I was looking forward to meeting Joe, since the CIHA people rather often sit around swapping Joe Conklin Stories, just as fans so often tell Harlan Ellison Stories (there's a difference, though; some fans don't like Harlan, whereas I got the impression that everyone likes Joe, even those who are Overwhelmed by him. He didn't live up to his reputation (\*Sigh\*) -- he's older now, in his late teens, and has settled down a lot. (Indian children (to Generalize, perhaps overmuch) are raised very permissively, until the time comes for them to become adults, whereupon they do so rapidly; there is little of the extended adolescence period which marks modern mainstream White society in this country. (We have two major transitions to make -- from child to teenager/adolescent, then to adult; a single step, even though larger, might be easier in the long run.) If Joe is no longer Spectacular (though he's still lively enough to appear to be an interesting person), his place is being taken by his younger brother. Roscoe seemed to be not only In All The Rooms, but in at least three places in each of them at any given time, and was always almost (but never quite) getting into some sort of trouble. ("If you think Roscoe's a Holy Terror, just wait until you encounter Junior," someone muttered threateningly -- but I don't shudder at the prospect.) The aura projected by this entire family is one of extraordinary activity and intelligence and general goodness, and I found them highly impressive.

I almost regret having encountered these Ponca people; it's unlikely that I'll ever get to know them much better, or to associate with them, and this brief meeting was enough to make me realize that I'm missing something which would be highly enjoyable.

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The first event of this hectic weekend was a Singing and social session in Lomita/Long Beach on Friday evening. Usually 10 or 12 of the CIHA singers, plus a dozen or so other people, meet on Friday for ~~gossip/and/~~ singing practice, but this time there were about a hundred people present -- mostly to meet the Ponca guests and listen to them sing. The Northern Sioux songs are full of falsetto ululation and are generally quite Alien-sounding, but the Ponca have been living in the south long enough to have modified this into something much more melodic and pleasant to ears accustomed to Western European musical traditions (as a matter of fact, I'm starting to like the Northern songs, too -- I wonder if this could be a symptom of Twonk's Disease?). I like the Singing a lot, and really Appreciated the opportunity to draw a chair up just behind the circle of Singers and absorb myself in the Songs, without the distraction of the dancers' bells which usually overwhelm the singers' voices at a regular powwow. (If I asked, I'd probably be told that it would be ok for me to make a drumstick/beater and join the Drum, tapping quietly at the outside of the head until I got the hang of the beat, but I hesitate, especially since it's unlikely that I'll ever advance much farther than that stage.) (I noticed that Roscoe Conklin, previously noted as an enfant terrible, sat at the Drum this evening -- he teased some of the nearby girls (and vice-versa) during the short breaks, and tore around all over the place during the longer ones, but when the Singing was in progress he behaved most properly and demurely -- even at purely social events such as this, The Drum and The Songs retain a certain Sacred status, and are not treated lightly -- the Tobacco smoked by the Singers at the Drum is at least partly sacramental, as it has been for thousands of years. The session broke up fairly early -- around 11:00-- since the visitors were still tired from their trip, and needed to save their voices somewhat for the following two days.

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Saturday morning I cashed my paycheck and splurged almost a hundred dollars -- much more than I could afford, really -- on a cassette-type tape recorder (Realistic CTR-15, from Radio Shack -- selected more or less at random, on the general theory that the field's sufficiently competitive that you pretty much get what you pay for), though actually the previous night was the only opportunity to get a good recording -- but some people put mikes up next to the Singers during all the performances, and copies of those tapes should be obtainable in time. (During the following week I must have replayed the five hours of tapes at least five times; the songs are now beginning to become familiar (though many of the words are drowned out by the bells) and I've discovered that it's possible to recapture, to some extent, the sense of Power which they contain.)

Saturday afternoon featured something rare in Southern California -- I'm not sure that it had ever been done before here.-- the performance of a Heluska. As I gather from evesdropping/listening to other people's conversation -- I've not encountered it in The Literature -- the Heluska is an old-time Warrior Society dance; it's extremely formal by modern standards, no women take part, and announcement of the Singers' names includes an account of their military service. (When Robert Cody heard the singers' names at a powwow the following week, he said "The Heluska Singers" in a tone of voice I can only describe as reverent, and was extremely unhappy that he hadn't heard about it, and had gone up to Oakland that weekend to play basketball. He'd danced at a Heluska in Hominy, Oklahoma, and they'd given him a blanket dance and passed him money until he came away with about 300\$, and he'd have liked to have had the opportunity to express his appreciation.) The CIHA Singers did not sit at the Drum this time (nor could they conduct a Heluska, since they've not been given permission to do so -- and perhaps the knowledge of certain Special Songs is required).

The unusual/uncommon rituals here were somewhat interesting. Plains songs have a pause between the end of the body and the beginning of the coda (usually a repetition of the first few lines, I think); the dancers customarily stop on the last beat of the body of the song, pause until the coda has begun, then dance to the end. For the Heluska, however, the dancers quickly return to their places (marked by Pendleton blankets, as a rule) on the benches at the end of the body of the song, and two appointed Tail Dancers dance out to the Drum on the coda. Others may dance on the Tail, but (if my observation was correct) only if they are going to make a gift to one of the Singers or another dancer. (This may take the form of a valuable object, such as a blanket, or a folded bill, palmed and passed in a handshake. Another bit of old ritual survives; there are several "Whippers" who are theoretically supposed to whip laggard dancers (I suppose the old Heluska were somewhat Trials of Endurance) and who pick up any object dropped by a dancer, and extract a fine before returning it. (One person dropped something -- I suspect intentionally, in order that as many old customs as possible might be exercised.) (I noticed that one of the dancers who came out on the tail made a gift to someone who was obviously a neo -- a thoughtful sort of welcome/acceptance gesture.)

Some famous French gourmand is reported to have admitted that the United States has the best home cooking in the world (France has the finest Restaurant chefs and haut cuisine, of course); the potluck supper which followed the Heluska indicated that he may well have been correct. There were several exceptionally good Oriental/Poly-nesian dishes, and many other things were equally tasty. I felt kinda Guilty about just bringing in some pizza from nearby, but as a bachelor I'm not quite up to coping with making something to be served several hours later.

Then, on Saturday evening, there was a standard southern plains powwow, opening with a series of round dances for socializing and getting warmed up, then with grass or war dances for the rest of the evening, with a two-step and a snake-and-buffalo inserted for variety and because parade-type (or follow-the-leader type) dances are fun. Though less interesting in terms of ritual and tradition, this was a more colorful spectacle than the Heluska; there were many more dancers (over a hundred --almost half of them women) and more of the men were Fancy dancers.

Perhaps a brief discursion (if one can discourse from something which is itself a discursion) would be in order:  
Straight Dancers -- costume marked by a somewhat restrained Elegance -- colorful enough, but much less showy and Busy than the Fancy (or Feather) style. There is considerable individual variation, but the basic elements are rigidly fixed -- one eagle feather worn on the head with the traditional porcupine-hair roach, a long-sleeved shirt (paisley, brocade, or silk/taffeta), neckerchief with matching (folded & pressed) kerchiefs attached to the back over the shoulder-blades, a narrow otterskin trailer falling from the neck to the heels (mounted on cloth with decoration of applique ribbon, and beadwork), a broad loom-beaded belt (usually of tiny (#16) cut glass beads), breechclout and leggins of blue wool cloth with rainbow selvage and applique ribbonwork, a strap of bells just below the knees, and fully-beaded moccasins. The whole air is definitely one of great Elegance, especially since much emphasis is placed on meticulous craftsmanship. The dance style, too, is elegant and restrained; Straight dancers do not make themselves conspicuous, though the really good ones manage to make themselves noticed. They display a sort of graceful Dignity -- in Oklahoma, many of the Straight Dancers are older men who dance only once or twice a year, mostly, I suppose, to Keep Up The Old Traditions for the benefit of their children and grandchildren. The Straight Dance outfit and tradition is basically Osage and Ponca, I understand, but it has spread rapidly and widely the past few years in Oklahoma and elsewhere (I've even seen Navajo and Pueblo adaptations of it) in connection with the Pan-Indian Movement. People with no strong tribal affiliation or suitable tribal costume tend to adopt it, especially when they are too old or portly to be comfortable in the more common Fancy Dance scene.

The Fancy or Feather Dance style has spread from Oklahoma to tribes as far away as New England and the Pacific northwest, in connection with the Pan-Indian Movement, and is what most people think of as "typically Indian", I guess. (Not the old-style "typical", with full war-bonnets & cetera, out of a Buffalo Bill Wild West show). It's marked by big, bright-colored feather bustles, and fast and fancy footwork requiring the endurance and co-ordination of youth.

It may be noticed that I've not mentioned women's costumes; in a sense, women are unimportant in many Indian cultures, and in another sense they have a very important say in running things. In any event, they are generally quiet and unobtrusive. At the dances, their costumes run from traditional buckskin, with long fringes and much elaborate beadwork, usually, to red or blue wool trade cloth (often ornamented with cowrie shells), to modern Oklahoma taffeta dresses with a fringed shawl wrapped around the waist (and another carried folded over the arm). I was probably incorrect in using the word "unimportant" earlier in this paragraph; one might equally consider that women are felt to be so Important (Sacred, even, being the obvious bearers of Life) that they may (and frequently do) dance in ordinary street clothes, provided they wear a shawl (again, usually with long fringe) over their shoulders. They usually circle slowly around, close to the Drum, but some of the girls get quite active, and that fringe sways... interestingly. (A few young girls dress and dance in the male Feather/Fancy style, but the more conservative and traditional people (i.e., most Indians) rather frown on this.)

A colorful spectacle indeed; many Whites seem to get tired of it after about an hour, but I find that the varying rhythms of the drum, the Songs, the color, the movement of the people...have a profound and moving psychological/psychedelic effect.

A Blanket Dance is a traditional fund-raising thing for some particular Cause at powwows -- most Indians are well below the official Poverty Level, and illness or death in the family puts them up against the wall, but it's traditional that those who have even a little money share it with those who need it. (This is done mostly on a family/clan level, but the spirit of Indian Nationalism/Identity/Brotherhood is growing, especially in urban areas where most people have few of the old family contacts.) Here, the Cause was merely to get enough money to pay the Ponca Singers for coming out. (Actually, I think a certain minimum had already been collected, but...it's nice to give a little more.) A blanket or shawl is spread on the floor near the Drum and people are invited to drop money on it and dance on that song. I'd been wanting to give a little bit to the Singers, because they had given me so much pleasure, but both the formal Give-Away and the informal method of palming a bill and shaking hands with the Singer seemed a bit too Ostentatious for me, so this opportunity was welcome. (No, I didn't dance on the Song -- just walked out and dropped money on the blanket and walked back to my place, which is considered ok -- I really don't know how to dance (though the basic step is simple enough) and (more to the point) feel silly doing so. (The only time I've done it was at the urging of Iron Eyes Cody at the Little Big Horn powwow when there was an Honoring Song in memory of someone I'd met a few times and had come to like and admire greatly.)

Sunday afternoon: Another standard powwow -- this time with more of the CIHA members sitting at the Drum (though always letting the Ponca lead off the songs), and with more Indians present, which made it even more enjoyable for me. Somehow the Indians -- even those who aren't exceptionally good dancers, have a certain Air about their dancing which few of the hobbyists ever attain -- a White, even though skillful and wearing an elaborate, authentic, and perfect costume, somehow just doesn't quite Make It, whereas an Indian, despite some makeshifts and cheap HongKong beadwork, almost invariably does.

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Somehow I've gotten off the track of Another Fandom, here, and onto stencilling notes for something I might/probably will develop more thoroughly sometime in the future (after discovering how little I actually know, and then learning more about what it's Really Like). Oh, well..

It might be worth mentioning, though, that the Indian Hobbyists have two regional conventions (Witiyapi) each year in Southern California, usually with about 500 people registered) and a National Powwow corresponding to out Worldcon. (There's been talk of working out a formal Rotation plan, since it's usually in the East or mid-west). Randy Kroha (an excellent Fancy Dancer, despite a lamentable tendency to stop with an elaborate flourish a beat or two before or after the Drum does, which is very much a no-no) said in a speech at one Wit., "The Indian lore hobby is not just a good Hobby, it is a Way Of Life." And someone recently mentioned an "Insurgent Movement" at the Denver Powwow a few years ago.

Science Fiction Fandom is somewhat divided between Old-Wave and New-Wave writing; Indian Hobbyists seem to fall into more like four categories -- Old-Time or Historical/Creative Anachronists (except that the anachronisms are studiously avoided) types (i.e., Sioux pre-1840, Eastern Woodlands tribes, &cet); Traditional/Contemporary (Straight Dancers); Modern (Fancy/Feather Dancers); and (a very few) -- and very quiet, because they're outnumbered and out-gunned) New Wave types who are sympathetic with Indian Activism, &cet). The Conservative Element is very much in power, and little conflict or prospect for change is in evidence; all of the groups seem to be reasonably tolerant of the others. After all, when you do something that people are likely to

laugh at you for, you realize the importance of associating with others of your ilk, even if it isn't quite the same ilk. (I remember the moment at one Witiyapi when a man in his 60's, wearing tennis shorts and riding a 10-speed bike, came up to the door of the college gym during a powwow; he got the same expression on his face as mundanes often get in the lobby of the hotel at a Con -- and I got the same feeling about him as I get about mundanes who sneer at sf Cons.

Humm...another similarity: Indian things are suddenly becoming quite Popular, just as Science Fiction has in the past few years -- and the Popularizations are equally distorted and equally painful to those who know a little more about the subject than the Mass Media do.

The CIHA people seem to be much like fans in their treatment of newcomers --quite willing to explain things if asked, but mostly busy with one another and with ingroup activities, and perhaps hesitant (as one of the Benfords once put it) to hold out their little world and let people spit on it if they want to. Once the neo shows that he's really interested, and becomes a Familiar Face, he/she gradually works his way into the appropriate ingroups. Gee, it's almost like the LASFS. (Actually, this seems to be one of the two patterns common in such groups. The other -- that of extending the Glad Hand and slathering on a frothy icing of superficial sociability -- seems to me to be far worse than one which seems to be rather cool towards newcomers.)

The Indian Hobbyists seem to display a little more age -chauvinism than fans do (probably because their activities are mostly in-person, whereas fandom's are mostly at long-distance, through correspondence and publishing and writing), but not a whole lot-- when one of the members of the younger generation builds an outstanding costume, or learns to sing a lot of Songs well, it's a very real Accomplishment, a Fact which has to be accepted and respected, ~~and envied~~. I suppose there's an element of Social Pressure, too; when a teen-age neofan demonstrates that he can write much better than I can, and that he can discuss a topic more intelligently and sensibly than I, other people are aware of what's going on, and I'd look silly trying to put him down without justification. Or even with it, come to think on't.

There is more family participation in CIHA than in sf fandom, for reasons (and with consequences) I'm going to have to investigate. John Frey, for example, is the Head Singer, sometimes President of the group, and highly skilled in Plains-style metal-work in "German silver". His wife makes outstanding beaded rosettes, and the older of his three or four sons are all extraordinarily good dancers (& it looks as though the youngest will follow). There must be at least 15 or 20 other family groups active, whereas there are less than half that many in the LASFS, which is of comparable size. (CIHA, however, seems to have fewer fringe-fans than the LASFS.)

Despite suggestions from some members of SFWA that the professional science-fiction writers should charge money for their appearances at conventions, fan-pro relations in our fandom have long been on a friendly and equal basis; the comparable relationship between hobbyists and Real Indians is different and probably much more complex, though as yet I can only guess about the Indian side of it. A certain Distance is established by the Hobbyists' insistence on Middle-class Mainstream mores and behavioural patterns. (A very reasonable insistence on many counts: they are parents of, or are standing in loco parentis for a largish number of young people, they meet in (free) public facilities where drinking, smoking, and even slight damage (grinding out cigarettes or spilling coffee or punch on the hardwood basketball court floor -- something not all the Whites are above) will make it impossible for them to return. And part of the division comes from the Indians. "How would you like to be made a hobby out of?", as someone has asked.

Some people would feel flattered, and some wouldn't; I suspect that most Indians aren't, since there could be an element there of exploiting them for their Indianness -- of using them as objects, rather than thinking of them as people/individuals. It doesn't seem to me that this is actually being done on any great scale, but certainly some element of it is present, and it's not unreasonable for the Indians to be Suspicious. (If I were an Indian, I would certainly be Suspicious of anything connected with Whites.) Many of the Hobbyists go in for old-time costume and lore; Indians might reasonably regard this not at an acceptable Historical Interest, but as an insulting Rejection of of themselves and of what their culture is today. Most of the hobbyists are scrupulously careful to avoid specifically religious ceremonies, practices, or objects, but some get pretty close to the borderline, and a few stray over it. (One might almost generalize that, to Indians, everything has at least some religious connotation.) Many Indians resent this (some people, who might or might not know how to treat a Medicine Bundle properly if they had one, resent/object to such a sacred object being on display at the Southwest Museum, even, despite the fact that that bundle was given away by its owner). I would suppose that there's also some feeling that "The Whiteman has taken away our Land, killed the Buffalo The Creator put here, destroyed our way of Life, and now he's taking our Songs and our dances and our very clothes, so that we no longer have anything which is uniquely ours."

Then, too, there's a certain economic bitterness. Materialism did not loom large in most early AmerInd cultures, but this was largely a result of the social structure-- "A man can't get rich if he takes care of his family properly," the Navajo say. In breaking up the extended family social structure and trying to destroy the old cultures and make Indians into Proper Middle-Class Farmers and Factory Workers, the Government directly encouraged the development of a materialistic approach to life. As with most Government Projects, it wasn't successful enough; most Indians aren't materialistic & competitive enough to compete in mainstream American society, and the Government Educational system turned out lots of Indian farmers just about the time small farms became obsolete, , and factory workers just about the time mechanization and computerization greatly reduced the need for semi-skilled factory workers, so urban Indians are generally quite poor. (There are other reasons, and exceptions, of course.) It's not unreasonable that poverty-level people should feel some resentment at the hobbyists who can afford to take several weeks off during the summer and go back to Oklahoma to learn the latest songs and pick up the latest fashions, and who can afford to spend ca. 500\$ (or twice that much) on a dance costume.

To be blunt about it, a lot of people (Y Indian Guides, Scouts, some Order of The Arrow Lodges, plastic hippies, &cet) who are "into the Indian Thing" don't have the faintest idea of what it's all about (I'm speaking from the position of having a faint idea), and look pretty ridiculous, thus earning some ridicule from the Indians. Most of the CIHA people don't fit into this category at all -- many of them know and understand more about the subject than a lot of "professional Indians"; the schlock turned out by some of the "craftsmen" at local Indian Centers is really horrible -- but "Indians" are not entirely free from the tendency to generalize, and tar everyone with the same brush.

Though the Indian Hobbyists are not, in general, at all oriented towards the written word, they do publish fanzines, of a sort. Most of these are more Ambitious than outs, and more expensive, since they're usually offset and what one might call semi-prozines -- i.e., available only for subscription (which, along with the ads, might cover out-of-pocket expenses, but certainly not the labor involved, which thus definitely qualifies them as fanzines). A group in New Orleans published an almost-monthly 16 pp offset zine with meeting notices &cet and how-to-do-it articles on an elementary level, and I understand that there are several similar publications along the East Coast, but the really outstanding publication is American Indian Crafts and Culture, published by Ty. Stewart in Oklahoma. Roughly monthly (& thus fannish), 24pp offset, with many

many comprehensive and well-written how-to-do-it articles, historical things, old pictures, and a fine series on contemporary Indian artists. Over the past few years, however, it has covered just about every aspect of costuming (its major emphasis) that I can think of, and seems about ready to take off in some new direction. This is The Big One, and there aren't many smaller ones, though, aside from things like the CIHA newsletter-- a one-page monthly meeting & events notice with a few fannish-type ingroup lines. What's missing from all of them is the letter column/reader-feedback and generally informal and personal conversation approach of fanzines. Why, they're almost as serious as this issue of FSTS. The lack of written-word orientation is particularly regrettable since many of the people do talk interestingly and amusingly (err...make that "wittily"); they simply haven't made the transition to the fannish practice of writing down and duplicating on paper what they would tell their friends in person.

There are gaffed bnfs here, too -- they may show up for a few hours at some special function, but apparently take no other active part in things -- it would be (or will be) interesting to discover their reasons and attitudes.

The Traders are also rather fascinating -- moreso than the huxters at our cons -- they sell beads in an at-first bewildering (but Traditional) variety of sizes and colors, bone hairpipes, buckskins, feathers of many sorts, blankets (Pendleton and Hudson's Bay, especially), shawls, cloth (from the old woolen tradecloth with rainbow selvage edge at 15\$ per yard to cheap calico (in Traditional-style patterns, of course), and various sorts of bells, and hundreds of books and records, and a few craftwork items. Some of the Traders have posts on Reservations, but most work out of their basements, apparently, and are very likely in the business more for the fun of it (and the excuse to travel a lot) than to make money.

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Reading these pages over, I'm beginning to feel more and more like Lafcadio Hearn --when he first went to Japan, he was bewildered, but after five years he understood the culture and wrote a number of books about it. After another ten years, he realized that he actually didn't know/understand much about it at all, and his education began in earnest. My education (like that of Henry Adams) seems always to be just beginning, but after some background in Fandom, an Understanding (to a reasonable degree) of the Indian Hobbyist groups shouldn't take more than a couple of years (humm...that sounds dreadfully cold-blooded -- there are a lot of neat people in that field, and I enjoy associating with them almost as much as with fans); getting to know and understand much of anything about Indian cultures is going to be a much longer thing, but I fully expect to enjoy almost every minute of it.

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With a little bit of luck, I'll have some Mailing Comments in the next Mailing, though to tell the truth, the luster of the quarterly apas is beginning to dim; a weekly thing like apa L is Too Much, but Minneapa, on a fortnightly schedule and a monthly activity requirement, seems to me to be the best fannish conversation going at the moment, even though ca. 200 pages that often can be a bit overwhelming. The quarterly apas, though, are really too slow -- or at least that's my mood at the moment. Come time to re-read the FAPA Mailing for comment-making, all the old Pleasure and sense of Involvement is sure to come back.

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