

NEXT WEEK, EAST LYNNE...

LeeH here, and the date is 19 December '66. Mlg #36 came today.

Well, gang, the mimeo is finally off the kitchen table and back where it belongs in the bone room where it belongs. Unfortunately, the stuff that had accumulated on top of the mimeo immediately filled up the clear space on the kitchen table, and the stuff I had to move to make space in the bone room for it is now piled in front of it, making it somewhat inaccessible (as usual) so if you don't get this fnz for months and months, you know a likely reason why.

BOYD: You bring to mind a thot on the subject of Charlie Chaplin which I've been pondering for some months or years now. All the time I hear this jass about The Little Man Caught Up In The Machine Age of Mass Production, etc., etc., and I get the impression that many (or at least some) people thing this is the character he portrayed. People who think that have obviously never seen his two-reelers and the like. Chaplin did indeed indulge in the heartstrings bit, especially in his later pictures (as the little tramp), but from what I've seen, which is a hell of a lot of the short stuff, mostly early comedies, the Chaplin character was rarely a "pathetic little man". Naive, yes. An underdog, perhaps. Brash, aggressive and copable, yes. Pathetic--rarely.

ELINOR: I am really taken aback by this business of novelizations of TV shows, movies and whathaveyou, and am still trying to figure out how the hell it works. I mean, wouldn't it be natural to have one of the show's regular writers do the novelization? Well, yes, but no. I think most TV writers wouldn't consider whupping off a novel--not considering the price. So the job gets farmed out to some hack, probably on the strength of a page or two of presentation, or on a basis of his past performance, or something like that.

The whole idea of selling books on the strength of a presentation croggles me. An author is admittedly a minor character in the great drama of a book's creation (in the hack category of paper back, his contribution is worth four one/hundredths of the final price). But still it seems strange to ~~k~~ me that a book can be pre-sold to a publisher by a crude outline of the plot and perhaps a few sample pages of the writer's style. Nobody seems to be too concerned about how he will handle the plot development, the characters, motivation, and jass like that.

Me, I don't understand it at all. Especially since I know (from personal experience) that while a person might be able to "talk" a damnfine book, it doesn't necessarily mean he can write one.

But then, like Sam Delaney was saying last week, it is a shame people don't get to read books first and pay for them afterward on a basis of satisfaction. It might change the whole scene considerably.

While on the subject, did you ever think about the extent to which it is the packaging, mainly the cover painting, that sells a pb. And if the first book sells well, the author will stand a good chance of pushing his next ms into print.

Geez, I don't mean to sound sour-grapesish about all this. Don't see any reason to be thinking that way--so far I've sold all but one and a half of the books I've submitted (one sale on the strength of an outline and sample chapters). Dunno how the books I've got in print have sold (they're Ace publications, you know). But one gets awed by the vast and peculiar machinery of the publishing business and I am duly impressed by how far one can go without talent as a writer.

BUZ: Yes, Georgia--all sections of it--is loaded with Mushmouthese. It is the predominant local dialect. And I never learned to understand it. I've got a lousy ear for that kind of thing--can barely comprehend anyone who doesn't speak Pre-War American Radio. I used to go out of my head when I worked for my father, trying to figure out what some of our customers were saying. And last summer I was fascinated when we went into the Interior (the Okefenokee swamp and environs), and I encountered again the typical Central Ga/Fla accent. There was a herpatologist of sorts lecturing in it and I finally figured out what he was talking about when he held up a baby alligator.

Dialects are curious things and all this talk about how to pronounce "hawk" (Hey, Boyd, how much do you distinguish between the "alk" in "talk" and the "awk" in "hawk"?) but one keeps running into the same question of right-and-wrong that one encounters in the Race Question, Morality and sundry other Important Topics. Which is the correct pronunciation? Like, because Boyd says one way is right, does that mean it truly and absolutely is? How can I know Mushmouthese is not the True Way? Or is standardized spelling the determining factor? (You mean the phonetic rendering of some uncouth ancient British dialect is supposed to dictate my pronunciations?) Or am I supposed to accept the authority of the printed page in Webster's which says I should pronounce *ā* as in "fāte"--but how should I pronounce "fate"?)

GINA: I thank you for the kindly words about slacks. I wear britches whenever the occasion will permit and sometimes actively avoid affairs that require formalish attire. I am certainly more at ease and able to "be myself" in denims and a fuzzy shirt. There is a disadvantage though--of which the cover on mlg 35 reminded me. Like: a couple evenings ago I was out walking observing the Christmas season traffic jams. Wandering back (alone on the streets of NY after dark, I might add) I was accosted on the upper Bowery by a panhandler who spoke, then began to apologize profusely, explaining he'd thought I was a man. Well, with my built, being 5'7 to 5'8" (taller yet in the high-heel fag boots I was wearing), bundled in a peacoat (I hear they're "in" this season), with my hair pulled back in a clip and a watch cap over my ears--not to mention an unfemininely long stride I tend to affect--I suppose I should expect that kind of mistake.

Tsk, I'm sorry you didn't go out collecting rocks and get permanently hooked on the hobby. I could have told you about how Don & Jo presented me with a bottle of hydrochloric acid and I spent most of the night sitting in the kitchen making carbon dioxide and residue out of carbonates. Frankly, I was disappointed in my rock-collecting in Quebec. I only picked up a small handful of your rocks. There were a couple of nice examples of potash feldspar type granite, but **not** much variety and nothing really weird. Of course, if I'd ever unsacked before mid-afternoon and gotten into the yard before twilight, I might have done better...

Glad to hear your editor came through on the per inch deal.

THE AMURRICAN WAY DEPT.

As all you Canadians up there know, Amurricans are a quaint and sentimental people, yet a people of progress, always advancing, always taking fullest advantage of the produce of science, ~~we~~ always alert to Better Ways Of Living.

Well, this year, for those among us who are Deprived and no not have wood-burning fireplaces in our homes, WPIX-TV (ch 11, in case you are in the viewing area and want to watch) will broadcast nothing from around 9 til midnight Christmas Eve except a picture of a burning yule log, whilst playing appropriate background music.

One (this one, at least) is croggled by the prospect of a happy Amurrican family gathered for a cozy, homey (housey?) Christmas Eve around the merry picture of an open fire--all the while roasting photographs of chestnuts and eating hand-paintings of popcorn, I suppose.

SPEAKING OF AMURRICAN TV:

It is sure full of commercials for Expo '67 these days. I'm glad I saw that installment of "Nightcap" and found out what an expo is. Never heard it called that before...

MISCELLANEY:

Well, I finally did unpack from the Queebcon trip. I did it today, after I moved the mimeo. Maybe tomorrow I will get back to collating copies of SFFY. By the way, gang, I goofed on mailing out non-FAPA copies--lost my list. So if anybody out there should happen to want a copy and didn't get one, it can be had at request. Small donations toward postage (in cash or stamps) always accepted.

Oh, today was indeed a productive day here in the cave. I finished revising a first draft of a ms--this is the second revision of the first draft. I eagerly look forward to someday completing a second draft. I made a calendar for 1967 (see, sometimes I do plan ahead!) I bought some Xmas tree lights, just in

LeeH-4

19 Dec 66

case I should happen to get an Xmas tree (another example of my thoughtful fore-planning!) I cut some psuedo snowflakes out of folded paper. And I did sundry other things which really don't concern you at all.

There is something disconcerting about getting through four lines on the fourth stencil and discovering that not only does one have nothing else left to say, but that one can't even fake it. I am disconcerted.

Hoping you are the same,

LeeH

This space had been donated for the Society For Less Reading Matter
In Fanzines
