

Well, the 38th mlg just arrived and it seems like an excellent excuse to pull a page of The Work In Progress out of the typer and evade Working for a while. So...

Re the previous couple of pages, all that stuff was hashed out immediately after watching the program under discussion. After a lot more thought I got my ideas organized and reached a lot of Valid Conclusions which I will not attempt to detail here.

BOYD: Ah yes, you get to the kernal of the problem: communi-
cation. That is the function and purpose of speech (as she is spoke or wrote). Once can theorize all to hell and gone about the growth of language, its eternal changes, etc., just as one can theorize about everything. But theory and reality aren't always congruent. Rules of language may not be inflexible, but if we are to maintain some common agreement about language whereby we can use it as a tool of communication, we have to maintain standards--frame of reference--and jazz like that. I am very much in agreement with the linguists who say our Rules of Grammer are inadequate and inaccurate and always have been. But I think that until they can produce something more adequate we ~~will~~ much give lip service to what we have.

It seems like at least once a day I see or hear some to-my-eyes/ears vile corruption. It bugs me to the bone to hear TV news commentators (whom I assume are supposed to be educated persons) using absolutely atrocious constructions that I've have been flunked out of the fifth grade for. Mighod, I went to school in the backwaters of the old South and I know my English is far from a model for the youth of today--but if I put my mind to it, I don't make the kinds of stupid mistakes I hear on the media. And as to regional dialects, I accept them within limits. I am no end of disturbed to hear some Southern politician on the machine drawling into a microphone--not in what was at one time a proper and acceptable Southern accent, but in the lowest sort of mush-mouth--the kind we (when I was a Southerner) labelled the speech of the ill-bred, uncouth and uneducated. Foosh! Pogoese is far more intelligent and intellectual than much of the garbage I've heard.

I vote with you on The Film (that's like The Dance, isn't it?) Many writers on It are frightfully pretentious. I do not hold with the school of thought that Art is a Religion. And frankly I think a lot of present-day artists don't hold with it either. A week or so ago I accidentally went up to the Museum of Modern Art and was looking at some of the recent stuff and I am convinced that it is a put-on and that the critics (and people) who take it seriously are the butt of an enormous ingroup joke.

Plot development, characterization and motivation--yes, I suppose I'm getting the theoretical mixed up with reality again. You are right, of course, a plot outline is supposed to convince an editor that the story is satisfactory, and a few pages should demonstrate that the writer's style is passable. It is a better guide than nothing, and saves an editor the chore of reading a complete manuscript at that stage of the game. I guess it's like buying a house on the strength of the architect's renderings. One gets the general idea and hopes for the best.

Can't you buy unsalted butter in Canada, Boyd?

WILLISES: I avidly second your proposal of Chuch Harris as a Lilapan!

It seems terribly strange to see you referring to yourselves as "not 'real' members". You mean because you are not in there--bang, bang--with stuff in every mailing, the way GMCarr used to be in the 'Good Old Days in FAPA? Well, frankly, I have felt much the same way myself--especially when I put up DVA for membership. It is strange, isn't it, how we can speak of others as more than making up in quality for what they lack in quantity (I speak of you this way), but we don't feel the rule applies to ourselves. I mean, like, for a long while I felt like not a "real" member of Lilapa because I wasn't in there with a lot of stuff or commenting on the things other members commented on and all that. And then just a few weeks ago I was telling Mr. Tucker how the rules of Lilapa set no minimum mlg requirements and that a few pages of Good Stuff was better'n lots and lots of nothing, and such. Well, when I talk like I'm talking now I am assuming that my stuff is good enough and mayhap that's a bit braggardly, but after my visit to Quebec, I have had the feeling that I am a real member of Lilapa and that all this blathering on stencil is of some value to at least some of you.

Well, what I'm trying to say, Willises, if you are Good People and should not put yourselves down because you aren't Publishing Giants these days. Damned few of us are and prolly a lot of us feel kind of not-real members because of it. Foosh to us all.

ELINOR: Media is really (secretly) the plural of medium, isn't it? I dunno what the OK word for 1967 will be either. I usually don't hear what the new word is until it has become last year's word.

I read one of Dave McD's UNCLE books and did enjoy it. I've been warned off the ones by Michael Avalone, but wouldn't have read them anyway. UNCLE is not my speed on TV and I'm not eager to read the books at all.

I think I read a pretty fair amount. I've read close to 200 books in the last two years, and also a fair amount of magazine stuff. But I never seem to have read any of the books that people mention to me. It is embarrassing to have others continually saying have you read _____? and having to answer no, especially when the

books in question are by people I know, or are the Big Things being done in SF today, or something like that.

I bought a stack of pbs the other day, but avoided getting the STAR TREK novelization with them. I'm sad to see your comments about it. Yes, one would hope for something more under Blish's name. There is certainly potential in the STAR TREK set-up, but so far nothing has been done with it that I can see. I enjoy the program, but am (like so many others) bugged that it is not far more than it is. By me, Shatner is either a lousy actor, or being badly handled. I've met a few persons who disagree--but to me, he comes across as a nebbish, a slug, a cardboard pretty-boy. When he makes those so-very-right decisions I get the impression it is not because he is wise and competent, but because he is the Hero and Heros make Right Decisions. So far I've seen more human emotion from Spock--and that gimmick is wearing a bit thin too.

I did have a Christmas tree this (er--last) year, and I took it down about two weeks ago. My rule-of-thumb for the removal of old Xmas trees is that they come down when I get around to it. No sooner, no later.

Back when I was a lot younger and so was the world, we used to go out and cut our own Xmas tree--and never got a permit to do it. I think that technically we were stealing them. That never occurred to me at the time though.

BUZ. Yes, nature abhors an open space in the house/home. It despised any horizontal surface not completely covered and does the best it can to clutter all the vertical spaces, too. It has even looked with disgust at the wasted area of the ceiling (which I will admit is small).

Agree with you about dialect in the public media today, and would like to add as well that much of the bad speech on the TV would seem to be pure unadulterated ignorance.

T'other day I was over getting groceries--well bundled in my peacoat and such--and the girl at the check-out counter muttered, "Thank you, sir" when she gave me my change. Well, the way things have been going in this neighborhood (it is directly between the East Village and the West Village) it is understandable. I think someone ought to start issuing buttons that say "Girl" or "boy". But then it really isn't important most of the time, is it? I'm certain that if I can't immediately tell which is which, it is not going to matter to me. Like--if a man doesn't look like a man, I'm not going to care whether he is ~~mx~~ or not.

GINA: Gee, I would be delighted to receive a box of rocks from you. Yes, I really would. The rock scene is sad at the moment. It is winter, you know, and I am not only adverse to cold but also just don't get out much--especially not beyond the bounds of concrete, and so no new rocks have come into the house lately. I got a handsome book about rocks for Xmas though.

I glee that you've shipped your book off to a publisher and wish you good fortune. All of fandom seems to be plunged into pro-writing these days. It certainly is a wonderful thing.

BILL: Expo '67 -- I trust some of the Canadians will go into detail.

Tsk, I make good pizza. Haven't made one for a couple or more years, but I remember what it tasted like and it was delicious. But different from Gina's.

Yes, I tend to feel that TV is an audio-visual medium and that if what I want is music I can get it out of the radio or the phono. When TV runs music it should supply something worthwhile in the line of visual accompaniment. I don't think the educational channel in NY fritters away its time playing record albums. Every time I turn it on, it is either broadcasting something educational or something meant to be, or something in the line of uncommon entertainment. Last night it did THE BEGGAR'S OPERA--very fine show. I don't want a lot of its dramatic presentations because they tend to be arty, but once in a while they come up with a swinging bit.

GORDON: Will heartily second your comment about hating people who applaude in the middle of things. One of the many reasons I rarely go to movies anymore is that the audiences are such a damned nuisance. They keep laughing over lines, etc. There are certain people whose presence is not too welcome here for the same reason--let me explain a bit--I have a couple of TV-less friends who drop over every Wednesday evening to watch I SPY and I have several other friends who are prone to come over then just to join the sociable crowd. I would welcome them if they'd keep their talk for either end of the show and the commercial breaks. It is a good show and I want to watch it. I will forego watching it altogether for a good conversation. I don't want an intermixture of the two and I don't want to miss lines because somebody hasn't the self-control to chortle quietly. I hate, loathe and despise people who talk about a film or a show during it, especially the "wits" who anticipate what is going to happen next. (This applies to good shows and moderately good shows. If something is such a real clinker than conversation is the only way one can entertain oneself during it, I'll go along--in the privacy of the home.

I, too, wish I knew how the novelization of a movie thing works. Maybe BVA who is novelizing (Novelizating?) LOST IN SPACE can tell us.

ALVA: Re the Invaders, to my way of thinking it is a flub. And the format is definitely an imitation FUGITIVE. I wonder what they expect to gain by making two shows so superficially alike and putting them both on the same net so close together. (here, at least, they are both on Tuesday evening just an hour, or half-hour apart.)

For my money, all the similarities between the two shows are superficial, though. THE FUGITIVE is, basically, Les Misrables. Kimble is one lone individual, unjustly accused and in effect pursued by the entire relentless world (though he continually meets people who are happy to break the law in his behalf because he has a charming smile or something like that). The Hero on the Invaders (whose name I disrecall) is not persecuted in anything like the same sense and he doesn't even have a charming smile. Personally, I think he's a kook and don't believe a word of what he says about an alien invasion. And if I were the Law and this joker kept being involved in some many odd deaths, I'd find a way to stow him in an institution where they could suds off his brains.

I have a copy of SFFY set aside for you but have never mailed it because for some reason I am under the impression that I do not have your correct address. Would you drop me a pocsarcd or something with it?

Gee, it's nice to see people agreeing with me about Chaplin.

Re being a reasonably established writer to sell on the basis of a presentation--well, that's what I thought in the beginning. I have sold two books on the strength of presentations (and I still neither understand nor approve of the process). I sold Blackjack Sam--which was actually an assignment. Terry Carr had read the mss of my first book (Laramie) and when he got the idea of publishing a "funny Western" he called me up and asked for a presentation. I figured this was a freak instance, and that it was because Terry knew me and Wollheim sort of knows me and all that, that I got the assignment. Well, so far I have only two books in print (Blackjack and Laramie--and Laramie was cut to something like two-thirds of its original length--Ace had me deftly remove all the characterization and such before they accepted it).

My first venture into S-F is a half-length novel for a forthcoming series. This was sold on the strength of an outline and a sample chapter. In view of my previous published works, I do not think I could exactly be considered an established writer. But perhaps the fact that I've got more sales (though in the Western field) and I have a good agent, may have helped.

Dick Lupoff is said to have made his first novel sale on the presentation, but perhaps the fact that Larry Shaw knows him in a factor. But what about you, Dave Van Arnam? You sold STAR GOOGIE on an outline (no sample chapters) didn't you? And as of that sale, your only credit was collaboration on an as-yet unpublished book, no? But then you, too, have a good agent.

As to getting paid, I can tell you how it's worked for me. On Blackjack Sam I got one-third on contract, one-third on acceptance of the completed manuscript and one-third on publication. On my SF thing, it is one-half on contract and the balance on acceptance. Keep in mind that payment is always technically an advance against

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royalties and some contracts at least will specify that if you don't produce a publishable/acceptable ms, you are supposed to give back the advance.

Page 4 of my copy was untouched by ink! How horrible for you. If you'll drop me that pc I will enclose a duplicate copy with the SFFY.

Actually not much did happen, but I'd like to fill out this stencil, so I'll tell you all about my Xmas tree.

It was supposed to be snowing. The radio said that down to around 400 feet, it was, but then the stuff melted, so it was all rain by the time it hit me. I bundled up and traipsed out in it, to the Xmas tree stand on the corner. There, a fellow was hunched up under a canvas lean-to warming himself by an oil-drum full of fire, in the proper city tradition. As I stopped to discuss business with him a youngster came up and offered me a donut. I politely declined, but went on to purchase a Scotch pine about 4' high--which was twice as big and far more expensive than I'd planned.

I dragged it home and set it up on the end table in the corner. Then I went out and bought more lights, and some ornaments and stuff. I made a batch of ornaments out of metallic foil and seed beads, and some strings of pseudo-popcorn, and decorated it and all, and it was quite nice. I really enjoyed having it here.

But I didn't spend Xmas Eve sitting around a blazing TV set. Instead I had Xmas dinner then, with Don & Jo and some other friends. We had a really festive board--roast goose and all sorts of trimmings. Then more friends dropped by, including some nuts who were out carolling, despite the icy cold and deep snow that was still being added to. They led us all in song--lots of stuff about Christ and things like that, although I don't think there was a Christian in the crowd. We had some present exchanging and opening and lots of bright-colored paper and ribbon scattered all over the place. I got two books, a rock and a turtle (and a subscription to National Geographic). The rock is fluorescent, the turtle is ceramic (and Nat'l Geo is monthly). The party broke up sometime between 3 and 4 a.m. and I ended up staying the night on their couch. All in all it was quite a lovely Christmas.

Well, right now, it is snowing again and according to the radio it is 20° (F, I assume) in Central Park. I dunno what the temperature in here is. I've been meaning to pick up a thermometer, but haven't gotten around to it yet. Anyway, the heat is turned off in the afternoon, and right now I am f-r-e-e-z-i-n-g. All winter it seemed that once the heat went off the apartment would chill much too rapidly. Saturday I discovered the reason. The window in the bone room was open. I have closed it and am hoping things will be better now. Frankly, there are several disadvantages to living in a slum. Like, I will have to wait until the heat is on again--or the weather improves, before I can mimeo these stencils. I hope I get them done before spring...

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