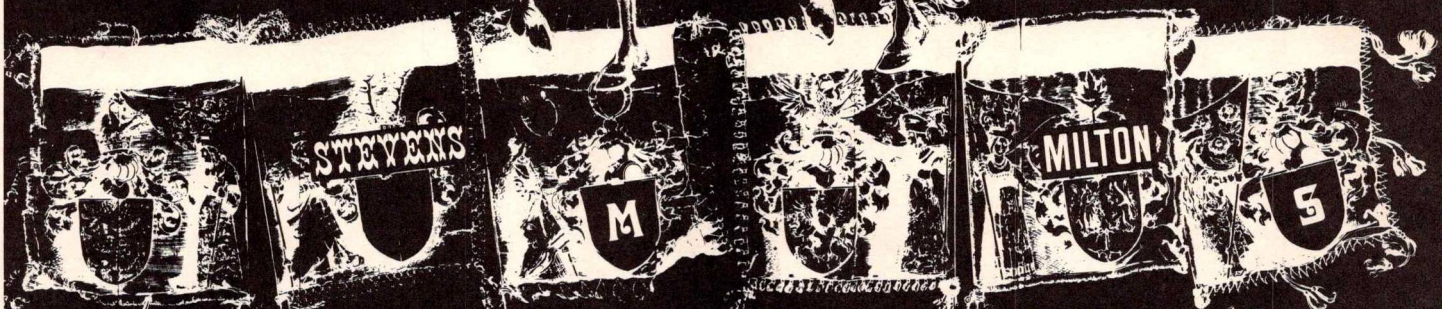
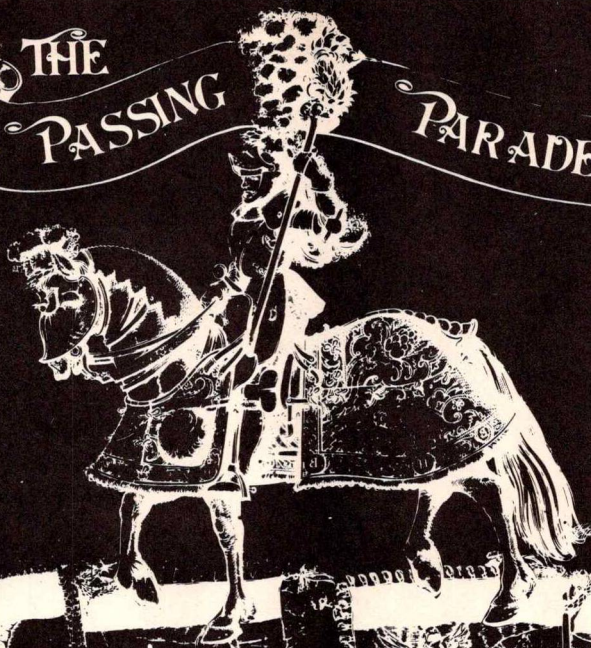


THE  
PASSING  
PARADE



Milton  
Franklin  
Stevens

M. Franklin  
Stevens

M.F. Stevens

Milton  
Stevens





## THE PASSING PARADE #2

Written by Milton F. Stevens, 9849 Tabor St. #3, Los Angeles, California 90034  
for the 141st mailing of FAPA. Copies available for trade, loc or 25¢ 4/31.  
Cover by Bea Barrio. November 1972.

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### THROUGH SPACE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE

You may notice that this issue is devoted almost entirely to the worldcon. I'm not sure exactly when was the last time that a person involved with running a worldcon did a write-up on the subject. I think I'm at least the first in several years. Now that I've finished, I can think of a number of things I left out. I intended to omit descriptions of any simple socializing which would have been included in a normal con report. My main interest was in the problems of running a convention. I tried to be fairly objective, although I'm not high minded enough to pass up the opportunity to take a few digs at people I don't like. You will at least gain a picture of what I thought I was doing and why I thought I was doing it. It's not often that you have the opportunity to view the loathsome inner workings of the mind of a fan organization man.

This issue has reached what I consider to be the ideal size for a fanzine. If my plans go well, I will continue to produce something on the order of a twenty page quarterly. With the next issue, I'll start running letters and I haven't come to a decision as to how to handle the letter/column ratio. If I receive much over six one page letters, it would pretty much swamp a twenty page issue. I received five one page letters on the last issue. Maybe I'll run letters in addition to the twenty pages or at least so they don't crowd out all original material.

This fanzine is going to be pretty much of a one man show. I'm not soliciting written material or interior art work. If something I say inflames you enough to write a couple pages on the same subject, I'd probably run it as an article, but I'm not twisting anybody's arm. The main purpose of this fanzine is to encourage me to write things. Once I've got the completed product, I'm most interested in trading for other fanzines. That lets me know what else is going on in fandom. Of course, letters are nice too. I have nothing against sticky quarters either, but that's only really necessary in extremis. I'll actually give you a copy if you ask me, but I won't keep you on my mailing list forever. Oh yes, some copies also go through FAPA. I'm thinking about doing mailing comments. Honest, I am. But I certainly won't be doing them in this fanzine.

I wrote a couple page article on Joanna Russ' article in Clarion II which was crowded out of this issue. I also wrote another article which I rejected because it was crud. I have very stringent editorial standards. Next issue, I may get around to making a few comments on the novels which were Hugo nominees this year and I most certainly will have something to say about the Old Testament. I'm taking a course on the Old Testament at the moment and anything which crosses my mind may end up in this fanzine. Besides, I've got a lot of opinions on the subject.

We'll see how much my mind has changed on the subject of fanzine editing by next issue.

## CONVENTION PIG

I've mentioned previously that I work for the Los Angeles Police Department and that I was a member of the LACon Committee. Because of these two facts, my nametag at the convention read;

Official Pig  
"To Protect and to Serve"  
Milt Stevens, Hotel Relations

The title doesn't tell all, but it does tell some. Among other things, I was in charge of enforcing rules at LACon. In case you haven't noticed it elsewhere, people who enforce the rules are not universally popular. Such was the case at LACon, where I made more enemies in four days than I have in four years. But to give a full account of my activities at the convention, I suppose I should start at the beginning. As they say, chronology is the last refuge of tired minds.

Since I had extensive contact with the International Hotel before the convention, the hotel fell into the habit of referring any questions they received regarding the convention to my home phone number. In the last two weeks before the convention, the number of phone calls was becoming fairly large. Most of the callers seemed to have an uncanny ability to reach me while I was taking a nap. Fortunately, I have admirable powers of concentration and it was seldom necessary to really wake-up in order to answer questions. Sometimes I wonder what information these people may have gained from my subconscious mind. Two of the most common questions were, "Who's going to be there?" and "What's going to happen?" I regard the first question as being sorta dumb and my usual first reply would be "Lots of people." Then if they mentioned who they were interested in I would try to tell them whether or not they would be present. The second question is more reasonable, but a little hard to answer in a limited time over the telephone. Usually I resorted to broad generalities.

One call I received was from a group of eight people who wanted to come to the convention for one day to hear Kathy Kurtz read part of her forthcoming novel. This led to a series of calls on my part trying to find out information and relay it back. Somewhere in the process, I saw there was enough demand to meet Kathy Kurtz to set-up another Meet the Author Brunch and did so. Since Kathy Kurtz is a beautiful girl, I imagine there would be considerable demand to meet her even if she had never written a word. I ordered the brunch for Sunday and the hotel proceeded to foul-up my good intentions by setting it up on Monday. All was not lost however, because Kathy Kurtz let her fans stay over at her apartment on Sunday night and they attended the brunch on Monday.

On the Monday before the convention, I had to reshuffle several of the minor function rooms. We wanted to use room 1209 as a secondary huckster room and the activities which had been planned there had to be moved elsewhere. The first thing to go was the bridge tournament which was canceled with the chairman's approval. I moved the Hoyer Tea up to the Penthouse which at least was a better location. Brunches and seminars went this way and that in something which resembled a Chinese box puzzle. At last everything was somewhere. I hoped things would stay that way.

I moved into the hotel Tuesday afternoon. On Sunday and Monday, I had been receiving twenty-five to thirty phone calls a day, so I wasn't entirely unhappy to get away from my home phone. Bruce Polz had rented a flatbed truck to move registration material and the Combined Book Exhibit. When I arrived Bruce and

Elayne were just bringing in one truckload of material and I helped them move it into Bruce's cabana. During the afternoon and evening, the three of us moved two more truckloads of material into the cabana. Aside from being decorative, Elayne proved to be of extremely sturdy construction when it comes to moving boxes of books.

We were picking-up registration material at Chuck Crayne's house when we heard about George Senda's activities in Albuquerque. Senda had attended the Bubonicon the previous weekend. He had bought everything in sight in the auction and from the hucksters, and he had paid with bouncing checks. The story came to us from Hank Luttrell who had tried to cash one of Senda's checks in Los Angeles. He discovered that Senda's checking account had been closed for several months.

When I heard the story I didn't realize how soon I was going to be seeing George Senda again. Bruce, Elayne and I returned to the hotel at about midnight with our last load of material and we decided to get something to eat at the coffee shop. By pure chance, I decided to stop by the front desk and introduce myself to the night manager while I was on my way to the coffee shop. I arrived at the front desk and George Senda was standing there with a credit card in one hand. This looked like a job for my Wrath of Ghod trick, so I buzzed up to the desk and authoritatively informed them that Senda's checks and credit cards were not to be trusted. Senda backed-off without an argument and I noticed that he had several boxes of material with him. I told him that if that was the stuff from Albuquerque that he should return it to its rightful owners. He mumbled something and left. As of that moment, I thought I had stopped him from checking into the hotel. Not so. What I had stopped him from doing was getting cash on his credit card. He had checked into the hotel earlier that evening and run-up a \$32 bill including \$16 in the coffee shop. The hotel checked on the credit card the next morning and found that it had been canceled in July. The hotel slapped an innkeeper's impound on Senda's luggage and changed the locks on his room. Near the end of the convention, we offered to pay Senda's bill if we could retrieve whatever had been in his room. The hotel couldn't do that legally, so we didn't manage it.

It wasn't until Wednesday evening that I called Bob Vardeman in Albuquerque. He had suspected that there might be something wrong with Senda's checks, but he hadn't known for sure until I called. I explained that I didn't really know about the legal complications of a person passing bad checks in New Mexico on a California bank and then returning to California with the essentially stolen goods. Bob said that he would check with Jack Speer before he left for the convention on Friday and I would have Hank Luttrell check with the local detectives for any additional legal advice we could get. Hank did check and we discovered that the local police could do nothing unless the state of New Mexico was willing to extradite. The opinion we obtained from Jack Speer was that the state of New Mexico would undoubtedly not be willing to extradite. This left us legally nowhere.

It's a little uncertain what Senda was trying to accomplish in bilking Bubonicon, since Senda is neither particularly bright nor particularly sane. I can only imagine that he intended to buy the material at Bubonicon and donate it to the auction at LACon for a percentage split. If he meant to sell the stuff some other way, it would have been more sensible to hit LACon and leave Bubonicon alone. He could have hit us for a thousand or two in nothing flat. Then again, it's possible that Senda never even thought about information being passed from Albuquerque to Los Angeles. As I indicated, his mind doesn't work all that well. If in the future you notice that convention committees have an obvious desire to stay as much in the black as possible, it's because of little unforeseen factors like George Senda. A dedicated bad check artist could eliminate your margin of safety in the twinkling

of an eye. Your donations to fan charities may disappear, but hopefully the house and car won't join them.

It was about a week and a half after the convention that George Sonda was arrested for burglary in a case which made crime history. Or at least, he is the only person I know of who ever used a yellow cab as a getaway car in a burglary. Now there once was a burglar in Southwest Division who always used the RTD bus, but a yellow cab is ridiculous. Sonda arrived in the cab and broke into the home of Gary Lowenthal, a local fan. He then loaded six thousand comic books into the cab and went to Bond Street Books. Bond Street paid him \$250, he paid for the cab and left. Sonda was arrested the next day.

Meanwhile, back at Wednesday morning. At breakfast, I met Bill Wright from Australia. He mentioned that he'd known things would be different in America, but not that it would take him twenty minutes to figure out how to turn on the water in the bathroom. The bathroom faucets were one of those pieces of modern engineering that look like they ought to work but don't quite. Bill Wright proved to be a real life saver for the committee, because he supplied us with beer and soda while we were working on the second floor and couldn't get away. As a result, when Rita Ratcliffe asked us to get someone to guard the belly dancers' costumes during their performance I gave the job to Bill Wright. Shows what you can get by bribing the committee.

Bill Wright and I were just finishing breakfast when Lois Newman arrived with dread voice prophesying work. Bill invited me over to the Australians' cabana to see their promotional film, but I had to beg-off and go see the hotel convention manager. It wasn't until the Thursday after the convention that I finally got a chance to see their film which was quite funny.

During my morning meeting with Sandy Stubban, the hotel convention manager, I told her about a few additional arrangements which had to be made before we began set-up and I also told her about some of the other bad check risks who might be in attendance. This latter was largely prompted by the Sonda Affair and it just so happened that we had recieved bad checks from a couple other people. One of the people in question later upbraided me for telling the hotel a terrible thing like that. I informed him that he had sent us a bad check and therefore was considered to be a check risk by the committee. "Well, you can change that; you're the chairman aren't you?" he protested. "No" I informed him. After that, he wandered away and I didn't hear from him again.

At the end of our meeting, Sandy Stubban gave me the keys to the storage area. She also gave me the beeper phone which I was going to be carrying during the convention. For those of you who have never seen a beeper phone, it is a small unit which can be clipped to your belt and which goes BZZZZZZ when it is activated by the hotel switchboard. When it goes BZZZZZ you must go to a telephone and see what the operator wants or it will do it again. In the period of six days, the beeper phone was activated somewhere around three hundred times. The damn thing caught me three times while using the sanitary facilities, twice in the middle of the escalator and once while on the elevator bound for the twelfth floor. The thing had an uncanny knack for going off as I was about to order something in the coffee shop. After a couple days, groups of fans would gather to watch me approach the counter with ratlike furtiveness and say "Give me BZZZZ." You might wonder what people were calling me about all that often. Well, they were calling me about newspapermen, fire inspectors, Norman Spinrad, keys, carts, ice, glasses, extension cords, lost daughters, lost children, and anyone else who might be attending the con.

On one occasion, I was standing near the hotel engineer when his beeper phone went off and I answered the telephone. It got to be a little hectic after awhile.

After looking over some of the preliminary set-up activity, I became involved with moving registration material from Bruce's cabana to the storage room on the second floor. To be quite honest, I wasn't overly enthusiastic about the idea of moving a couple of truckloads of stuff again. Elayne had to do quite a bit of pestering before I seriously considered the idea. Then Dave Hartwell called via the beeper phone looking for Theodore Sturgeon. As it happened the house phone I picked-up was across the lobby from the phone Hartwell was using to call me. Once we discovered this we decided that we might as well talk in person. I couldn't help him in contacting Sturgeon, but he offered to help Elayne and I with whatever we were doing. Since he also brought a friend named Steve (I disremember his last name) the odds against the registration material looked suddenly better.

After we moved enough material to get us through registration on the first day, I offered to buy Dave and Steve a drink. In the bar, I met Don Markstein and John Guidry, who had the honor of making the first official complaints of the convention. Guidry noted that the hotel was nowhere near Hollywood Boulevard. "No," I replied, "It never has been anywhere near Hollywood Boulevard." His complaint was based on the fact that he wanted to go book hunting on Hollywood Boulevard and it was a long trip to Hollywood Boulevard. Markstein's complaint was that the hotel had no Coke machines. That point was mentioned several times during the convention, and I also missed the Coke machines.

We chatted in the bar for awhile and then I dropped by Bruce's cabana. Bruce had returned from running various errands, so Bruce, Elayne and I went to dinner. We discussed things which had to be done on Thursday, and I made a fair number of notes on the clipboard which I had started carrying around with me. After dinner, I made a number of calls including the one to Bob Vardeman in Albuquerque before going to the cocktail party which was being hosted by Chuck Crayne. Convention business continued right through the cocktail party. At one point, a stranger asked me who was in charge of the babysitting room at the convention. I told him that the Trimbles and the Lundrys were jointly responsible. He then introduced himself as Don Lundry and said he knew nothing about it. "Hm" I said, while scribbling yet another note to myself.

Thursday started on a rather strange note. I was eating breakfast as I often find myself doing at the beginning of the day. Then as I was about to leave a woman approached me and asked me if I was involved in running the convention. I was unquestionably involved and I made the mistake of copping-out to it. Then she pounced. Despite her unobtrusive appearance she was in reality selling acrylic fur all-weather blankets and wished to do so at the convention. I explained that our convention was not particularly a merchandising convention except for books and we'd even sold all the space for that. It soon became apparent that she was a salesman in the worst sense of the word. I couldn't get rid of her. Suddenly I had one of my occasionally brilliant notions. I explained to her that if she wanted to sell her product at our convention she should bill them as Super Tribbles. I then pointed her in the direction of David Gerrold and suggested that she try renting part of his table. As it turned out, she offered him a commission and he did try selling them at his table. I don't know what luck he had, but at least I didn't hear from the woman again.

I stopped by Sandy Stubban's office to pick up the keys to all the function rooms and then went on a tour of inspection. A few tables had to be added and a few couches had to be removed, but basically things were in pretty good shape. Of course, we had given them twenty pages of instructions on how we wanted things set-up, so it was merely a matter of seeing that things ended-up the way they had been described.

While I was touring, I got a chance to see the space war games for the first time. I'd heard them mentioned during committee meetings, but I really had no conception of what they would be like. The machines were television consoles which displayed a field of stars and moving flying saucers. When you dropped a quarter in the machine a rocket appeared which you could navigate. The flying saucers could shoot at the rocket and the rocket could shoot back. It was a fascinating machine. Unfortunately, it was so fascinating that there were always a half dozen people waiting to play each of the machines. As a result, I didn't get to play with the machines myself until the Thursday after the convention. There was one negative side effect of having the machines in the convention suite. If you sat in the convention suite for any length of time, you'd start developing shell shock from the sound effects which accompanied the machines. The players didn't seem to notice that at all.

During the morning, I was told that Bjo Trimble had gotten into an argument with the fire inspector, who was now threatening to close down the art show. A piece of information like that can really improve your digestion when you're running a convention. It seemed like a good idea to have someone other than Bjo talk to him when he returned for his final inspection. I instructed everyone at the information table to give me a call when he appeared and I'd try to smooth things out. Despite my misgivings, when the fire inspector finally appeared that afternoon there was no problem at all. However, he did say that there would be other inspectors around during the weekend. There were. The second group of fire inspectors accounted for the major interruption of my dinner Friday evening. They made ominous noises and ordered us to clear away the trash in the registration area. Craig Miller took charge of a work detail to do that and I retreated to my corned beef sandwich. A third group of fire inspectors hit the film room during the early morning hours. I didn't hear about the third group until after the convention was over. They made more ominous noises and made Bill Warren stop people from sitting in the aisles. It seems that we were getting a large amount of attention from the fire department during this convention.

Thursday was the beginning of the attack of the journalists. A few journalists had contacted us earlier, but the main hordes appeared during the convention. The first thing that these hordes wanted was free admission to the convention. It was my job to decide how many free admissions we were going to give and to whom. My basic policy was to give passes to working journalists who had press credentials. I did not give passes to people who claimed to be free lance writers, people I knew to be science fiction fans or pros, or the friends and family of working journalists.

As with everything else, there were some dubious cases. One woman arrived from Voice of America. I don't know whether I really accept the idea that Voice of America was going to use any material on the convention, but the woman had impeccable press credentials, so I gave her a pass. On the other hand, I didn't give a pass to Men's Wear Monthly. The woman who called me from that publication informed me that she didn't think I was a very good public relations man. I informed her that we weren't that interested in publicity. That is generally



a good attitude to take with journalists, if you want to keep them within tolerable bounds. For instance, a man from the Associated Press wanted me to read the entire program over the telephone. I declined to do so. He told me that AP hadn't even sent a man to the AFL-CIO Convention and they represented millions of people. I told him that I understood how busy his schedule must be and that it was too bad he wouldn't be able to do anything on our convention. After that, he was much easier to deal with and I did set-up a couple interviews for him.

A radio journalist from the Canadian Broadcasting Company presented me with a list of a hundred and fifty names of people he wanted to interview. I told him who was dead and wished him luck on finding the other people. The radio types seemed to be the most numerous class of journalists and they were all over the place interviewing everybody. Most of the committee members were interviewed at least once on radio and some of the pros had been interviewed so often that they wouldn't talk to anymore newsmen for any reason. I even saw one radio newsman interviewing a member of the Count Dracula Society on the space program. The mind shudders.

In addition to the Mon's Wear Monthly folk, there were a few other people I didn't give press passes. There was one young Negro fellow who claimed to represent a publication called Science Fiction Soul. He didn't have any press credentials and admitted that Science Fiction Soul was a newspaper that he and his friends were thinking about publishing. Not quite good enough. Art Joquel was the only person I refused to give a press pass because of fan status. He wasn't too happy about it, but I still think that he was mainly at the convention to amuse himself. I also refused a press pass to Brian Kirby the editor of The Staff on the grounds that he was a pro and that I'd already given two press passes to his publication. Kirby accepted it with much more grace than Joquel had. Charles Platt, who also did a write-up for The Staff on the convention, never asked for a press pass. I think that he would have fallen into the pro category. I didn't even know Platt was at the convention until I saw his write-up in which he seemed to be trying to show how much of a sorehead he could be when he really tried. One of his lines particularly caught my attention. He was referring to the self indulgence of fans "as was exemplified in the fancy dress costumes, where grotesque women exposed their bodies as if posing in a fold-out section for Famous Monsters magazine." I think there may be something seriously wrong with Charles Platt.

Newsmen from three television stations also showed-up at the convention. One group covered the medieval wedding and a second group took pictures of some of the costumes from the fashion show. Somebody else took charge of the third group, so I don't know what they covered. Before the convention, there was a man named James Ruxon who had expressed interest in doing a documentary film on the convention. He had even gone as far as visiting the hotel and checking out the lighting in all the function rooms. After that, we never heard from him again. It was probably just as well. I have the feeling that making a documentary film would interfere extensively with the convention functions.

Registration was scheduled to open at 5 p.m. on Thursday afternoon. We didn't quite make that one. To be exact, we opened registration at 5:23 by my watch. The problem was in alphabetizing name tags which wasn't finished by 5 p.m. Once registration was opened, the whole process ran smoothly and rapidly. Aside from the line we had on Thursday afternoon, there were never any extensive registration lines during the rest of the convention.

There were two events scheduled for Thursday evening; a LASFS meeting and a meet the authors party in the Penthouse. I attended both events for about five or ten minutes apiece. The rest of the time I was around and about. From my brief glimpse of the meet the authors party, it looked like the bar was doing great business. The bartenders were handing the stuff out with both hands as fast as they could go. I was surprised to find out later that the receipts were only \$400. Maybe I'm not a good judge of such things. I was interested in how the bar was doing, because it's a truism that hotels are much easier to deal with if they're doing good business.

When the fire alarms went off later in the evening I got a call via the beeper phone to go talk to the resident manager. He just wanted to tell me what was going on and didn't seem to be particularly concerned at all. Somebody had left the twelfth floor on the stairway and set-off fire alarms on the twelfth and tenth floors. The somebody had been seen emerging from the stairway on the ground floor. The person had then jumped in a car and left. I don't know whether that individual ever came back or not, but there were no more fire alarms set-off during the convention.

As a normal convention attendee, it's standard operating procedure to look for room parties. When you're involved in running a convention you sort of hope that room parties won't be forcibly brought to your attention. They may be practicing human sacrifice in a room party on the eighth floor, and that's OK as long as nobody notices. Apparently nobody did notice, because there were no complaints. After wandering around for awhile, I decided it was quiet enough to go to bed and did so.

Friday morning I got up early enough to open the function rooms at 8 a.m. I reached the second floor with five minutes to spare and encountered my first problem of the morning. Bjo informed me that the art show room was already open because some workmen had opened it to check the air conditioning and had never locked it again. This sort of thing has happened at previous conventions, and we specified in our written agreement with the hotel that the function rooms were not to be opened without a member of the committee being present. I referred to my clipboard and showed Bjo that the hotel's general instructions for the convention said the same thing. Obviously some lower echelon employees had not gotten the word. This at least satisfied Bjo that we had taken reasonable precautions. My next step was to go see the shift manager for a little ass chewing session. I seem to have gained my desired results, since the hotel convention manager later went around and personally collected all the keys to the function rooms. After that, the problem didn't reoccur.

My second problem of the morning was to clear the sleepers out of the movie room. The hotel had requested that I do that little thing. There were about a dozen people with sleeping bags stretched out on the floor in there. I informed them in resounding tones that they must go elsewhere. My imitation of the tone and inflections of a Chief Petty Officer wasn't a great imitation, but it wasn't too bad. The secret of the whole thing is in the initial inarticulate growl which precedes a serious request. Once you've got that down, the rest is simple.

I was informed a little later about the people who had been trapped in the elevator for an hour and a half. When I was first told I thought the person might be kidding. Maybe he was just trying to liven up my day or something. No, apparently some people were trapped in an elevator for an hour and a half. Fred Prophet was the only fan in the group and he realized that there wasn't much that

the committee could have done about the whole thing. Even an inarticulate growl wouldn't have helped.

During the morning, some of the hucksters stopped by to voice complaints about the security guards for the huckster room. Jack Chalker was the most notable member of the group. I never knew he could make steam come out of his ears that way. The people who were complaining felt that the guards were discouraging business and that the system wouldn't be effective for security purposes. In retrospect, I don't think that the guards did discourage business. As far as effectiveness was concerned, there was only one possible theft reported from the huckster room. I say possible because the dealer in question thinks that the items may have been stolen when he was moving them into the huckster room on Thursday. There were also no thefts from the art show, so the security guards accomplished the desired result. The system would have been better if we had established a uniform system of receipts for the huckster room. That's one of the little details which sort of slipped through the cracks in the floor during our planning sessions.

There were five thefts in other areas of the hotel reported to me during the convention. One of these was definitely committed by hotel employees. In two cases, there seems to have been a pickpocket working the convention. It was mentioned several times that having guards at a convention was antithetical to the idea of fan brotherhood. Well, fan brotherhood is a nice idea, but there are people who attend science fiction conventions who are thieves and appropriate precautions have to be taken. It's sometimes necessary to be realistic even when nice ideas are at stake.

One item became apparent during the day Friday which had been a matter of great concern for the committee. What became apparent was that the hotel had not overbooked rooms. We had told the hotel not to do it and we had it in writing that they wouldn't do it, but there is always an element of doubt that things will really happen as planned. We had only filled the hotel two weeks before the convention, so at least overbooking was a fairly late worry. I presume there were people from the convention staying at the Sheraton which was about a block away, but I never encountered anyone who said they were staying there. It's my personal feeling that anyone who doesn't make room reservations until two weeks before a convention deserves not to get a room in the hotel. Of course, the members of the sleeping bag set didn't really intend to get rooms in the hotel. That sort of thing isn't too much of a problem if you have a full hotel. If the hotel isn't full, the management tends to be a whole bunch more intolerant of people not renting rooms.

During the day, I experienced one thing which might have caused heart failure with a less sturdy type. There were a number of people looking for our treasurer Dan Alderson and nobody could find him. So I called the operator and asked her to ring his room. The operator told me Mr. Alderson had checked out of the hotel that morning. Now I haven't the slightest reason to distrust Dan Alderson's honesty, but news like that can certainly give you a sinking sensation. Since Elaine was standing next to me, I told her what the operator had told me. She expressed immediate disbelief and tried calling Dan Alderson's room herself. The operator told her that Alderson had checked out of the hotel. We stood there for a minute wondering why we had ever had a man who navigates spaceships for a living act as our treasurer. For all we know, Alderson was already on his way to the asteroid belt with our funds. Before we bought tickets on the next flight for Rio ourselves, we decided to check Dan's room personally. We made it one flight up and came to a skidding halt in front of the appropriate room. It was only with a mild degree of hysteria that I kicked on the door and demanded entrance. Of course, Dan Alderson

was in the room. He had been taking a nap and had no immediate plans for checking out of the hotel. It's amazing the trouble a little misinformation can cause.

Friday morning, the art show had opened late because the fire proof cloth hadn't been returned from being fire proofed yet. That wasn't one of my immediate problems during the morning, but it did cause a couple collateral problems which I did become involved in later in the day. For one thing, there were several huckster tables located in the art show room and the hucksters felt that their business interests had been damaged by the late opening. I had to agree on that point and I offered them a partial rebate on the price of their tables. I guess they figured \$5 per table really wasn't worth worrying about, because they never took me up on the offer. The second problem was that the cash bar hadn't made its minimum. I had the alternatives of paying a \$30. bar tender fee or buying \$15 worth of beer in order to make the \$100 per four hours minimum. Naturally, I decided to buy the \$15 worth of beer and have it sent to the convention suite. Since cash bars strangely enough only accept cash, I had to pay for the beer out of my pocket rather than charging it to the master account.

Aside from one minor interruption by the fire inspectors, Friday evening was fairly quiet. There were no complaints about noise or anything else that the fans may have been doing in the hotel. When no problems presented themselves I spent my time socializing until I decided that it was safe to go to bed.

Maybe I should start my account of Saturday the way you start a Navy deck log, "Steaming as before." Many of the things I've described up to this point were ongoing phenomena and they were still going on Saturday. However, in order to reduce the subjective chaos into some sort of order, I'll just describe the things I haven't described as yet.

For instance, there was the coffee shop. The coffee shop was definitely an ongoing phenomenon. We had specified in our agreement with the hotel that the coffee shop would be fully staffed throughout the convention. As far as I could tell it was fully staffed, but it still wasn't running very well. If there was something being done wrong and I could discover it, I could tell the hotel to start doing it right. I studied the situation every time I was in the coffee shop and my final conclusion was that the place was poorly designed. The kitchen was too far away from the main serving area. The kitchen may have been poorly designed as well, but I never had a chance to look at the kitchen. In any case, it doesn't seem to have been a problem that we could have done anything about.

Later in the morning, I encountered my first problem with a program conflict. The Art of Animation panel was scheduled in the north section of ballroom E-F at noon and the Burroughs Bibliophiles Luncheon was scheduled in the south section at 1 p.m. The Animation panel was a very popular item and it showed signs of running over its time limit. First I had to find out what would happen if it did run over the time limit. So I checked with the hotel staff and discovered that the lights and sound equipment for both sections were on the same system. I also discovered that there was a problem because the hotel staff was going to move one of the doors in the temporary partition between the programs. If the animation panel ran over, I had to give the hotel staff new instructions for the placement of doors. I did a lot of running back and forth between the animation people and the Burroughs people to try to arrange a mutually compatible set-up. Seemingly I succeeded, although for the life of me I don't remember what I did.

Another ongoing activity which I was engaged in was the hasslement of deadbeats. Since I've been active in L.A. fandom for a number of years, I knew most of the local deadbeats by sight. These are the people who don't pay for anything in fandom if they can possibly avoid doing so. In this particular case, they were not paying to join the convention. On my first encounter with one of these individuals, I'd simply ask them if they cared to join the convention. With most of the deadbeats, the one request was sufficient. If it wasn't, I escalated for my second, third and fourth encounters. My second encounter was usually a day later and I would inform the deadbeat in question that if he didn't join the convention I'd have to ask him to leave. There were only three individuals who progressed beyond that point; Jack Jardine, Mitch Evans and Evans' wife. I never succeeded in terrorizing any of the three into joining the convention.

I was particularly aware of Jardine, because he had deadbeated his way entirely through Westorcon a few months ago. I'd noticed him doing it, but I had other things to worry about at the time and harrassing deadbeats did not fall under my jurisdiction at that convention. On our third encounter, Jardine became quite indignant and demanded, "Are you threatening me?" I told him that I had no particular objection to him regarding it as such, but that the two alternatives were paying or leaving. After that, I didn't see him again and I think I can take credit for at least chasing him off.

Mitch Evans proved to be more dedicated. He and his wife were around for the entire convention without ever paying. I finally reached the point of trying to get him thrown out of the hotel, but unfortunately I did not succeed. It was a good try at least. I'll have more to say about Evans a little later.

After the convention, Jack Harness brought up the idea of allowing people who had no money to get a membership by doing some work for the convention. That impresses me as being an eminently fair idea. Of course, Jardine and Evans did not claim that lack of money was their problem. They both claimed they had no interest in the convention and refused to pay. I think that they also would have refused to do any work for the convention. But it's still a good idea for future convention committees to keep in mind. If anyone had approached me during this convention saying that they couldn't pay rather than they had a right not to pay, I'd have made some sort of an arrangement for them. It's the idea that some people have the right to get a free ride at fan functions that I object to.

Up until dinnertime Saturday, I had been keeping the keys to the function rooms in my possession. I guess that part of my mind was aware that I was reaching the end of my physical resources, because I finally turned the keys over to John Trimble so he could open the art show and the huckster room the following morning. Consciously I had every intention of going on, but I did intend on going to bed early and sleeping late the next morning. Of course, I hoped to have a fairly quiet evening, but things didn't quite turn out that way.

After dinner, I went up to the International Ballroom to see how the masquerade preparations were coming along. George Scithers asked me to round up some gophers, which I did, but in general it didn't look like there was going to be a great deal for me to do at the masquerade. I went by the main entrance to check that the guards were in place, which they were. The major purpose of the guards at the masquerade was to back up our claim that we were not offering nude or topless entertainment to the public. This year's Westorcon did not have guards and some mundane did call the police. At that point, some fan guards had to be appointed rather rapidly. There was also the consideration that the masquerade

attracts outsiders more than any other function at a convention. While we did not expect to be sharing the hotel with the Canadian Legion, it never hurts to be on the safe side. After checking the guards, I grabbed a beer and wandered over to the photography area to take a look at some of the costumes. I was still there when someone informed me that the guards were having trouble at the door and wanted me to come over.

The guards told me that there was a man who demanded to be admitted to the masquerade but refused to show any membership identification. He'd left for the moment, but they expected him to return. Craig Miller told me that the man was George Clayton Johnson. This looked like a definite problem, so I stationed myself at the door to see what happened. Later, it occurred to me that I could have simply have gone back to the masquerade and told the guards to do their job. If I had done that, Johnson would have been able to complain that we had hired goons keep him out of the masquerade. As it is, he can only complain that the free goon kept him out of the masquerade.

It wasn't to many minutes until Johnson came steaming into sight and it looked like the time for my Horatio at the bridge trick. I'd already stepped in front of the door and committed myself to action when Johnson stopped to talk to Harlan Ellison. He was obviously trying to talk Harlan into taking the action. This didn't look so good, because Harlan Ellison can rip me limb from limb and I know it. During this brief pause in the action, I thanked Craig Miller for helping me on the convention and gave him \$20 to help cover his expenses. I figured that if I didn't make it through the next caper I might as well see that at least one thing was set right. Craig had worked ontirely through the Westecon and had gotten nothing out of that, so I wanted to make sure that he got something out of LACon. However, my concern proved to be a little bit premature. Harlan chose not to involve himself in this squabble and buzzed into the masquerade without a backward glance.

So Johnson decided to try browbeating me himself. He maintained that we had no right to make people show identification to get into convention functions. I told him we did have the right and we were going to do it. In the next blast of invective, he called me a Nazi, a fascist, and a couple other things in that general direction. He also said that he would personally see that we never got another worldcon. At that point in time, his threat impressed me as being almost as terrible as saying you'd never get another hemorrhoid. In other words, I wasn't exactly reduced to shuddering terror. However, I might note in passing that threatening me is a good way to bring out my innate capacity for inflexibility. In this particular case, it didn't make much difference, but there were a number of other people during the convention who threatened me with one thing or another. In at least one instance, a threat managed to make up my mind in a hurry when otherwise I would have been in doubt. There was no doubt in my mind about the idea of breaching our security system to make George Clayton Johnson happy, but I was becoming more annoyed the longer he talked. I finally told him that if he wanted to enter the masquerade without showing any identification he'd have to go through me. That sort of ended the discussion. Johnson then grabbed Bob Silverberg and wanted him to do something about this terrible situation. Silverberg tried to calm him down but without much success. Next, Johnson went to Poul Anderson as the president of SFWA and demanded that he do something. Anderson also tried to calm him down. That wasn't quite what Johnson was looking for, so he left and I didn't see him again that evening. I later thanked Bob Silverberg and Poul Anderson for trying to calm down George Clayton Johnson. I'm not sure that was really the appropriate thing to do, but at the time I was thankful for any calming influence I could find.

While I was definitely aware that George Clayton Johnson was still around the convention, I didn't come into face-to-face contact with him again until Monday morning. You can imagine my joy at getting up in the morning and encountering George Clayton Johnson, Mitch Evans and Evans' wife all arguing with the guard at the art show room. Three of my favorites together for the first time. It had been the preceding evening that I had tried to have Evans thrown out of the hotel and he had maintained steadfastly that he had no interest in the convention whatsoever. His story had changed a little by Monday morning. It seemed that his wife had material in the art show and she wanted to see how the bidding was going. Uh huh, no interest in the convention. When I arrived Johnson had been arguing with the guard for awhile and had started trying to enlist Bjo Trimble in his cause. There were apparently a couple of points which Johnson wasn't aware of. One point is that Bjo is 105% in favor of having guards for the art show and would probably provide them herself if the convention committee didn't. Second, Bjo likes Mitch Evans a whole lot less than I do. If anything came of Johnson's attempt, it was a decision to require people with material in the art show to buy at least a supporting membership in the convention.

For his next act, Johnson demanded that I put in writing that Evans' wife was not being admitted to the art show. I wrote it out and even added her name when he demanded that. She then complained that I spelled her name wrong (her name isn't Evans, but I don't remember what it is at the moment). Johnson then rushed over to a man he billed as a lawyer to see about the possibilities of suing us. If the man was a lawyer, undoubtedly he told Johnson that he didn't have a chance in Hell of suing us. Elayne, who was in the area while all of this was going on, said that I looked like I was very close to losing my temper at Johnson. Very possibly I was; however, I did not lose my temper. In fact, I did not lose my temper at any point during the convention. All things considered, that's some sort of an accomplishment.

George Clayton Johnson appeared briefly at the critique session on Monday to denounce the "ruthless oppression of fans" which had been perpetrated by the committee. He appeared for a considerably longer time at the dead dog party in the con suite Monday evening. His most notable activity there was to light some marijuana and start passing it around. That's rather considered to be a no-no at open parties. Since we were on the twelfth floor at the time, the urge to throw him out was almost overpowering. However, we realized that he was baiting us in order to get something else to complain about. So Bruce Pelz got rid of the marijuana, but Johnson was left undisturbed. For all I know he spent the rest of the night there. During the party, Jerry Pournelle relayed a message to me from George Clayton Johnson. "Milt Stevens I hate your ass," were the exact words. Those literary types are always very clever with an insult.

Meanwhile back at Saturday night. The masquerade was over by the time I finished my first encounter with George Clayton Johnson. I must admit that I was a bit shaken by the whole thing, but not badly enough that I wouldn't do it again if I had to. I wandered around outside the International Ballroom for awhile, took a few drinks and talked to people. As I was talking I was doing a fair amount of ego tripping. I'd been running the convention to a large extent for the past five days and for at least that moment I was taking an active delight in being in charge. I don't generally approve of credit grabbing, especially by me, but I suppose there have got to be some psychological compensations for feeling like you've been kicked in the head.

After I finished that phase, I decided to see what was going on out at the pool. In the room assigning which had been done by the committee, we had tried

to isolate the major party givers in the cabanas around the pool. We had also arranged for all the non-fans to be blocked on the third and fourth floors. Since we never did have any noise complaints during the convention, it seems that our room blocking was a fairly good idea. On Saturday night, we ended-up with an almost continuous party around the pool. Of course, there were a number of nude swimmers who left the pool and started attending room parties. I could see a potential problem in their activity. Before things got too far out of hand, I figured I better do something. So I found myself addressing a room full of naked people telling them please not to go through the lobby or the coffee shop in their present state of attire. Fortunately, none of them did.

While all this was going on, the hotel shift manager was standing next to the pool watching. I don't know which amused him less, all the naked people running around or all the non-hotel purchased booze which was being consumed. Whichever, he didn't look particularly amused. At about 2 a.m. I heard him give instructions to close the pool. I went skidding up to him and pointed out that our agreement with the hotel specified that we had the use of the pool 24 hours a day. I told him that I had the copy of the agreement which had been signed by Mr. Burroughs, the vice president of the hotel, in my room. He believed me and decided not to shut down the pool. Written agreements are great things to have.

During the time I was out by the pool, I only heard one fire cracker go off from the roof. It isn't really worth the trouble to take an elevator twelve floors up just to investigate one fire cracker. When I read the Staff write-up on the convention I discovered that there was a gang of dope crazed comic dealers on the roof. It said that they were trying to use sky rockets to shoot down passing aircraft. Somehow I suspect that the reporter wasn't in much better shape than the comic dealers. If he'd had the use of his normal senses, he would have realized the dreadful peril he was in. He wasn't sharing a roof with just any gang of dope crazed comic dealers; he was sharing a roof with dope crazed SAN DIEGO comic dealers. You may recall San Diego fandom as those wonderful folks who brought you The Turd. They are justly famous for their putrid conduct at conventions. Dye markers, smoke grenades and explosives of all sorts are some of their favorite toys at conventions. Some of them seem really surprised that hotel people get "uptight" when you drop a smoke grenade down an elevator shaft. I didn't know that those people were up on the roof at the time and if I had known, I'd have left them there in the hope that they would fall off.

During the latter part of the evening, I was drinking a fair amount as I was wandering around. This wasn't entirely responsible for my condition the next day, but it didn't help things any. Most of Sunday I was out of action. I slept as much as I could during the day, but I continued to do some business via the telephone. Sometime during the afternoon I established a personal management objective to get-up in time for the banquet. This I managed to do. I reserved my ritual of shaving and putting on a suit and tie to give me the last necessary push to get me out the door. This is a ritual activity I engage in whenever I have to collect myself from various parts of the room. I suppose it's based on the idea that being physically organized leads to being mentally organized. It seems to help in any case.

Since I was only called away to do something three times during the banquet, I judged it to be fairly quiet. Fred Patten and I were located at one end of the front table and neither of us had eaten during the day. We started out by devouring all the rolls on the table and did the same to anything else edible that came our way. We thought the food was tremendous. There were some other people who liked



it too. Of course, there were also some people who didn't like it. Craig Miller was sitting next to a fellow who complained several times about the quality of the chicken. Since the choices were turkey and halibut, it's a little uncertain what he may have been eating. Maybe he had more to worry about than he realized. After I finished eating, I propped myself up on my elbows and tried to look like I was being thoughtful. Fred made the mistake of leaning back in his chair and he fell asleep. It had been a long convention. I did stay awake enough to listen to the speeches and I even enjoyed them. Considering my state of mental acuteness, I don't know whether that's good or not.

The banquet was one of our major money losers at the convention. I shudder to think how much money we lost on that single event. We set the minimum too high and we didn't make it. The minimum was 700 and we sold 589. You might wonder who was the shithead who said 700. You can keep wondering about that one. But it didn't seem like a bad idea at the time.

It was after the banquet that I tried to have Mitch Evans thrown out of the hotel. I've mentioned that before. I didn't succeed because he was in a public area of the hotel when I caught up with him. However, there's a sidelight to that. While I was being my usual piggish self and reading the riot act to Evans, who should be dragged from a passing elevator car but Harlan Ellison. A chorus of voices arose calling upon Harlan to save this poor lad from the staff swine. On the whole, Harlan looked like he'd have rather been in Chicago. Harlan tried to settle things by offering to pay for a membership for Evans and his wife. Evans steadfastly refused to join the convention, even with Ellison's money. That's what you call dedication to principle.

In my various encounters with Harlan Ellison, he was polite and reasonable throughout the convention. He even tried to calm Norman Spinrad down when Spinrad was being other than polite and reasonable. Before the convention, my impression of Harlan Ellison was not very good. I even told Bruce Pelz that I thought he was out of his mind to have Ellison at a convention. As I saw it, we had more than enough potential for trouble without looking for it. In the course of the convention, my opinion of Harlan Ellison was revised upward by a considerable margin.

After the encounter with Evans, I stopped a few little kids from playing on the escalator and went to bed. By Monday morning, I was back in pretty good shape for my confrontation with Johnson and Evans at the art show. After that I was ready for breakfast. I wandered down to the coffee shop and had breakfast with Jerry Pournelle and Alva Rogers. I was almost through with breakfast before the beeper phone went off and I was called to do something about Norman Spinrad. As I was leaving, I said something to the effect that we were having trouble with Norman Spinrad on the second floor and I had to see what was going on. Later, my exact words became a minor issue of controversy. Jerry Pournelle was upset that we had not informed him of what was going on in his capacity as SFWA liaison. I thought I had informed him, although keeping him informed was not my primary concern at that moment. I realized that I didn't really know what was happening, so I couldn't have told him about it. It doesn't seem to me that special problems with writers fall under the jurisdiction of SFWA in any way. As I told Jerry, SFWA may represent writers collectively, but it certainly doesn't represent them individually.

By the time I reached the second floor, Spinrad had already left for the business meeting and I never actually saw him. The problem had developed from the Meet the Author Brunch which we'd tried to set-up for Spinrad. Only one

ticket was sold; so the brunch was cancelled. Leslie Swigart, who was in charge of the brunches, had tried to contact him earlier in the morning, but she hadn't succeeded. He contacted us first. He exploded all over the information area on the second floor. He verbally reamed Leslie Swigart and then went on to knock things off tables and yell at just about everybody in sight. He then went to the business meeting and yelled a few more things. The things he yelled were generally pretty vile. He cooled off after awhile and apologized for at least some of the things he'd said. Spinrad made himself a few permanent enemies, but that is one of the drawbacks to losing your temper to quite that extent. This incident served as a springboard for the SFWA meeting which was held in room 1262 on the subject of conventions. I'll have more to say about that meeting a little later.

What could we have done to prevent this incident? Presuming we had to cancel the brunch, Leslie Swigart would have seemed the ideal person to tell Spinrad. She's an attractive girl of the quiet, refined sort and she probably had the best chance of doing it diplomatically. Her mistake was in waiting until the last minute in the hope that she could sell some tickets. I would not have been a good choice as the person to break the news to Spinrad. I can soft talk a fire inspector or a hotel official, but mod authors are a little out of my line. My hair is too short and I dress wrong. This would add cross cultural problems to any other problems which might be going on. Chuck Crayne is in about the same situation, if he had been anywhere around to do any soft talking. Bruce Pelz can be diplomatic, but it's generally not his image. So Leslie was the best choice, but it didn't work.

It was suggested that we might have simply rounded up some people and given out free brunch tickets. Unfortunately, it wasn't thought of at the time. Even if we had thought of it, we might not have had the time to do it. You might note that cancelling a brunch is more honest than papering the house. For a little dishonesty, you might be able to avoid a lot of trouble and bad feeling. I'm not really sure which is the better thing to do.

It was Jerry Pournelle who told me about the SFWA meeting in room 1262. He told me about it a couple times. I might note that Jerry is not very diplomatic at even the best of times. After the Spinrad incident, Jerry was mad at the committee and that may have had a great deal to do with his delivery. What Jerry communicated about this meeting was that some people who were generally regarded as nice guys were planning the big shakedown and it would certainly serve us cheap, thieving bastards right. That wasn't what he said, but that was what he communicated. During the last rendition of this number on the Thursday after the convention, I finally became mad and said some rather uncomplimentary things about the people who were taking part in that meeting. Jerry immediately asked if I wanted to be quoted in SFWA Forum to that effect. It's no smarter for me to lose my temper than for Spinrad to lose his. Of course, I didn't want to be quoted in SFWA Forum. When an insult of mine appears in print I want it to be well thought out. Does he think I first draft insults? By the time I got home that evening, I was still so furious I couldn't sleep. It was awhile before it occurred to me that Jerry's interpretation of that meeting might be somewhat slanted and maybe I was becoming upset over nothing. Only the future will tell.

According to Jerry's account of the meeting, the people involved had figured out that we had netted \$20,000 off the convention. That figure was based on the suppositions that all attending and supporting members paid \$10 apiece, which is untrue, and that a worldcon only costs \$5,000 to run, which is also untrue. However, the people in that meeting apparently decided they wanted a major piece of that \$20,000. They seemed to progress from the goal of money

to planning the boycott in one step. They seemingly did not discuss how they were to be individually paid.

I've heard of two suggested plans for paying pros at conventions. One of them is to pay a \$100 speakers fee and the other is to pay for their rooms at the convention. There were about fifty people on the program at LACon. Say thirty-five of them were pros and fifteen fans. That would be \$3500 if you paid only the pros and \$5000 if you were fair and paid the fans as well. After all, equal pay for equal work. A hundred dollars is a ridiculous price for participation on a panel and I'm not entirely sure whether that would be part of the suggested plan. If not, the price might be considerably less. Then again, they might expect to be paid for seminars and brunches which would bring the price back up again. If the 50 participants at LACon had each been given a single room, the price would have been \$2800. However, at Boston the price would have been \$4000. This playing with figures isn't very accurate, but it appears that either plan would have a couple definite effects: At first, convention committees might try to pay all the people on their program, but after awhile I imagine they would only pay the pros. At that point in time, committees would probably try to fill their programs with fans and outside professionals as much as possible and keep the science fiction writers for a few talks.

There is one important point in considering either of these plans. SFWA will never be able to push either one of them. Obviously, there would be a decreased demand for science fiction writers as speakers at conventions. In particular, it would totally eliminate the newer writers. I rather doubt SFWA will ever be able to back a plan which would effectively ban 90% of its members from speaking at worldcons. So if the proponents of these plans are still serious, they're going to have to do something outside of the framework of SFWA. If they tried packing a business meeting, the vote would be ignored for one year and rescinded the next. They may think of something else or drop the idea, again only time will tell.

After LACon, we decided to refund the memberships of the people who had been on the program. It cost about three or four hundred dollars, but we were in the black by a safe margin. There was some thought that this might look like we were trying to make a pay-off. I'm sure that there are some people who will say exactly that. Aside from that objection, it seems like a fair idea if a convention is in the black. We felt that we should follow the principle of equal pay for equal work and refund the memberships of the fans as well. That is really a major rub when pros start talking about being paid by conventions. They expect \$100 for a day's work (one hour speaking and maybe seven hours preparing) and I'm not supposed to get anything for several hundred hours. Normally, I make a good deal more money than the average pro does, so I do not consider my time to be worth nothing. In my last issue, I said that I was in favor of running conventions on a percentage basis. I've reconsidered that point. At the time I made the statement, I was in the middle of doing room reservations and I was more than a bit bored with the whole thing. Ted White's editorials had annoyed me and I wasn't too appreciative of all the keen egoboo of being typified as either a thief or an associate of thieves. So I figured there had to be some reason for putting up with all this crap. I later realized that if you did operate on a percentage basis the money involved wouldn't be enough to worry about. If there was enough money to make it worthwhile, conventions would be vastly more expensive than they are now. While the current system may not be perfect, it is a way to continue running conventions. Some of the alternate plans may not have that virtue.

You might wonder what my exact take from the convention was. I got free room, free meals during the convention and \$174.10 in expenses. The expenses included

my membership, banquet ticket and the money I had spent on the convention over the last year and a half. For this I get represented as a cheap, thieving bastard by Ted White. I don't like Ted White very much at the moment. That shouldn't really be too surprising. I don't think much of his ideas on running a convention either. Of course, I do not regard cheapness as the primary virtue of a convention. Since fandom is relatively democratic, anyone who really likes White's ideas can always form a bidding committee and try to get a worldcon themselves. I suspect that they would lose, but they always have the right to try. If they won the bid, they would most likely lose their shirts. Probably the most conclusive argument against Ted White is that nobody seems willing to risk their money on his ideas. If there was any merit in what he has been saying, certainly someone would step forward to take the risk.

The last item on the convention program was the critique session Monday afternoon. The general trend of the comments was to request more services rather than less. Two of the specific requests I recall were for tourist type tours and open parties every night. Nobody requested that we eliminate anything. If Ted White had any supporters, they apparently didn't show up at the critique session. Several people didn't like the name badges. At least they were durable. One fellow complained that the hotel was too large and that the waitresses in the coffee shop had treated him like a weirdo. This fellow had long hair and a beard and was wearing an orange stocking cap, a blue bed sheet and stocking slippers. I can't imagine why anyone would treat him like a weirdo.

During the dead dog party that evening, Bruce and I loaded his van with the remains of the combined book exhibit and two glass cases. At least, we didn't have to take the registration material back. It wasn't until breakfast the next morning that we started talking about our next bid. I'll be treasurer for the L.A. 1975 Nasfic bid. That should mean that I won't have to get into quite so many confrontations. You might wonder if all this conventioning has unhinged my mind. After all; I said that I was never going to pull a stunt like this again. That's true, I did say that. But so many people who I detest would be delighted if I retired at this point. Besides, there's a strong element of cussedness in my personality. Plus some sort of team spirit I suppose.

It was Stew Brownstein who estimated that it would take about a week to recover from the convention. That estimate proved to be correct. In the course of the seven days at the convention, I had lost five pounds and in the next seven days I regained it. I didn't do much else in those seven days except regain the weight. I suppose that doing this write-up was a necessary catharsis to finally get the convention out of my system.

In the time since LACon, two other convention committees have decided that they wanted me to work security at their conventions. I suppose that's equivalent to a good review on my performance, but working on four conventions in one year is a bit much. Even if they do offer me exclusive rights on pushing George Clayton Johnson out of twelfth floor windows, I just don't think I can manage it. After all, everyone has their limits and being on more than two convention committees in one year is ridiculous. You can quote me on that.

\*end\*

## FANZINES, A REVIEW THEREOF

Amra 57 (Box 8243, Philadelphia, PA, 50¢ 10/34) This has been one of my favorite fanzines for years despite the fact that I'm not particularly a sword and sorcery fan. The best item in this issue is L. Sprague de Camp's article on the Nordicism of H. P. Lovecraft. It appeals to my love of obscure history.

Awry 3 (Dave Locke, 915 Mt. Olive Drive #9, Duarte, CA 91010 sample for six 8¢ stamps) This issue contains an article by me which is obviously a sign of excellent editorial taste. I like the other people in the issue too. Reminds me, I must get back to writing "A Dwarf Dancer from Atlantis" before the next issue of Awry comes out.

Title 6 (Donn Brazier, 1455 Fawnvalley, St. Louis, MO) A letterzine which impresses me the way Apa L impresses some outsiders. There are a bunch of short comments going back and forth. In the two issues I've seen, I haven't figured out what's happening yet.

Dzarmungzund 8 (Joanne Burger, 55 Blue Bonnet Ct, Lake Jackson, TX 77566) Aside from the cover, the artwork doesn't add much to this issue. I enjoyed Buck Coulson's article on the Avon pulps. I'd forgotten that Sol Cohen was the editor of Avon Science Fiction and Fantasy Reader. Maybe it was just as well.

Peculiar 4 (Alpajpuri, Box 69, Ocean Park, WA 98640 two 8¢ stamps) Another letterzine, this one being somewhat easier to follow. There doesn't seem to be a full fledged controversy going as yet, although Jim Allan is trying to introduce the subject of eugenics. Maybe I should write something inflammatory, like an article in favor of Asian Flu.

Prehensile 5 (Mike Glycer, 14974 Osceola St., Sylmar, Calif. 91342) This issue contains a picture of me which is obviously a sign of demoted editorial taste. When I first saw this picture I thought that it represented me as looking atypically tired. I realized that I often do look that tired. It's all these conventions. However, in real life, I do have a chin.

This issue also includes excerpts from Earl Evers' ~~zine~~ done by Dan Goodman. It's funny, the excerpts seem more interesting than I remember the publication as being. These excerpts are on fannishness which is a subject which doesn't interest me particularly, so that might be the reason I think it benefits from condensation.

No 11 (Ruth Berman, 5620 Edgewater Blvd, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55417 25¢) Dave Hulan's comments on Ruth Berman's article, "Kosher Science Fiction" was the most interesting item in the issue. I agree that there is no particular reason to put current religion in a science fiction setting if you want to talk about current religion, but you might want to talk about religion as an evolving phenomenon. Most of the attempts in that direction have not been very convincing, but it is always a possibility.

Placebo 4 (Moshe Feder and Barry Smotroff, Smotroff's address is 147-53 71st Rd., Flushing, NY 11367 35¢ 3/31) This is fairly similar to what I'm trying to do with this fanzine only there are two people doing it. They rely on the long, rambling editorial which is quite common in the personalzine type of operation. I suspect that it is common because it's fairly easy to do and fills a lot of space. I'd probably do it myself except that I'm more of a sprint writer than a long distance writer. That may not be apparent from my convention write-up, but it's true.

Beardmutterings 2 (rich brown, 410-61st Street, Apt. D4, Brooklyn, NY 11220 sample copy available for free, after that available only for response) Despite this being the "Maybe-Not" issue, Beardmutterings is unquestionably the fanzine of definite opinion. Of the opinions in this issue, I agree about Andy Offutt, disagree about Locus and have no opinion on Mario Bosnyak. I wonder what he thinks about Asian Flu?

I don't like the policy of making fanzines available only for response. There simply isn't time to respond to every fanzine that comes in and this policy is almost like blackmailing people for personal response. If they feel like responding, they'll respond. If they don't feel like responding or don't have time, you might as well accept their sticky quarters. The money exhibits at least some degree of interest.

The Greatest Sensation of the Century--Swales and Forrests Grand Stud of Racing Horses and Flying Cockerels 1 ((That's a title?)) (Frank Denton, 14654 8th Ave. SW, Seattle, WA 98166 25¢ 4/\$1) This fanzine consists of forty quarter sized pages. This is such an intimate format that you feel almost sneaky while you're reading it. Dick Geis should consider using this format.

The Anything Thing 3 (Frank Balazs and Matthew Schneck, 19 High Street, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520 25¢ or 3 eight cent stamps) Again we have a two editor personalzine. In this case, the editors would like to get outside material but haven't yet. Under fanzine reviews, I noted Mathew Schneck's comment that the artwork in Amra left much to be desired. Wow, that's what I call tough fanzine reviewing. Wow!

Moebius Trip 14 (Ed Connor, 1805 N. Gale, Peoria, Ill. 61604 50¢ 5/\$2) A fanzine with a definite sercon emphasis. The article by John Windsor and the article by Loslie Fiedler on Philip Jose Farmer were the best items in the issue. Both of them contained some ideas I hadn't thought of before. It seems that every issue of Moebius Trip has an interview with somebody or other in the science fiction field. Most of these interviews seem to be rather diffuse. It's probably just the way interviews work out, but they're far less interesting than an article on the same subject would be.

Maybe 21 (Irvin Koch, 835 Chattanooga Bank Building, Chattanooga, Tenn., 50¢ 3/\$1) Letters and fanzine reviews make up the bulk of this issue. The editor apparently receives a number of NFFF fanzines which I've never even heard of. NFFF publishing activity only comes to my attention every second or third year, since it's largely a thing onto itself.

Richard E. Geis 2 (Richard E. Geis, P.O. Box 11408, Portland, OR 97211 \$1 per copy) This fanzine includes everything you could possibly want to know about Richard E. Geis plus a number of things you probably don't want to know. I don't think that the degree of self revelation which is exhibited in this fanzine is a good idea, but it doesn't make uninteresting reading. Strangely enough, I'm not sure Geis is telling me a great deal that I didn't know before. Even several years ago, I was more-or-less aware that he had massive personality problems. The exact nature of the problems isn't particularly important. I suppose it comes under a sense of delicacy to allow people to draw their own conclusions about your personality without telling them all the grim details.

Is 5 (Tom Collins, 4305 Balcones Dr., Austin, TX 78731 \$1.50 4/\$6) This issue is on SAPS which interests me a good deal more than the August Derleth issue did. Both issues taken together make Is a very strong contender for the Hugo next year. It's an impressive publication, but it looks like more work than I really care to think about.



