

# P O L A R I T Y

FALL 1957

Number 1



bob silverberg

barbara silverberg



alan e nourse



boyd raeburn



edmond  
hamilton

leigh  
brackett



ted white



bea mahaffey

robert bloch



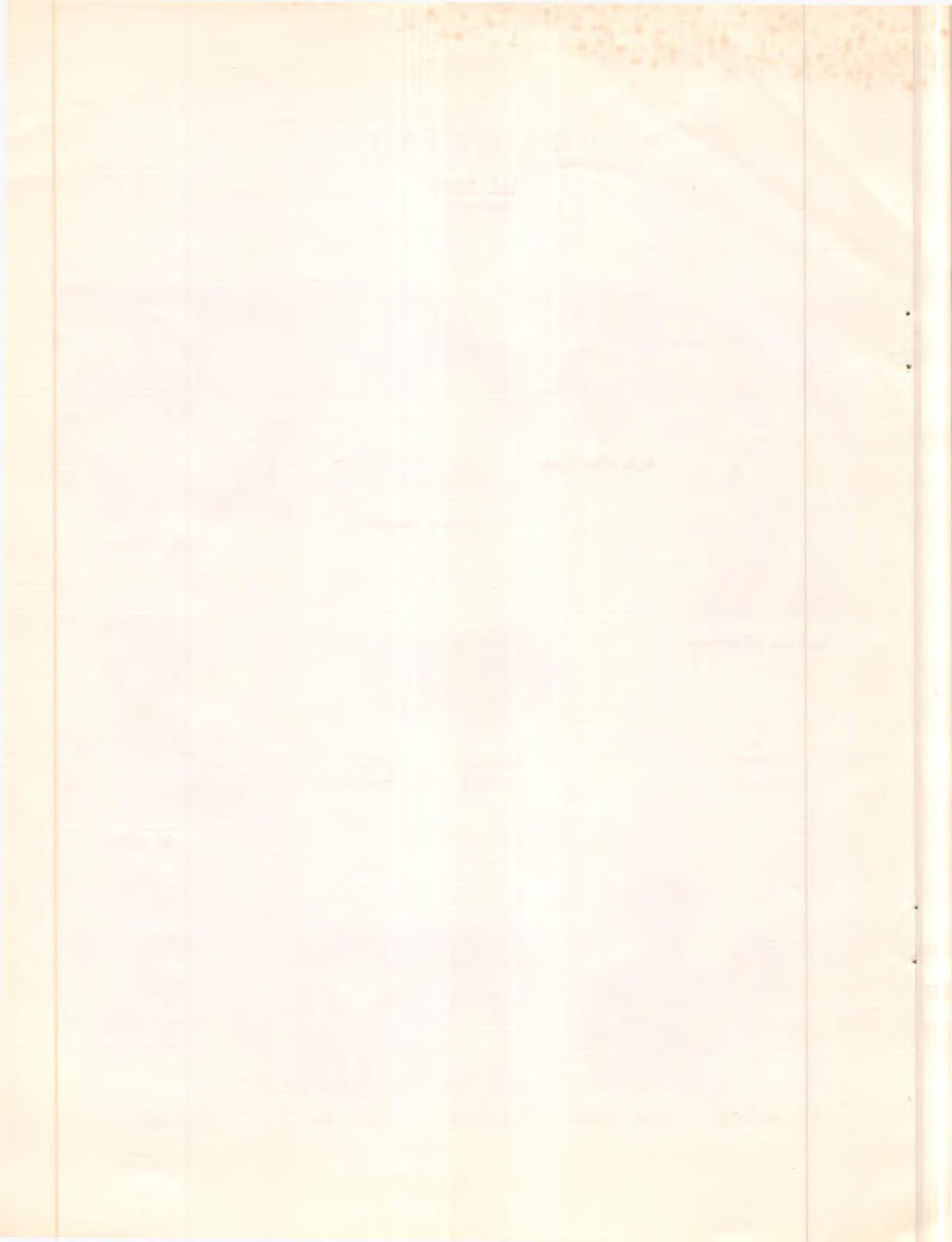
g m carr

frank carr



bob tucker

*a  
FENDEN  
publication*



POLARITY I

FALL 1957

A FENDEN  
PUBLICATION

F M & E BUSBY  
2852 14TH WEST  
SEATTLE 99 WN

F M Busby takes in this type-face; in the other column is Elinor with the Bodoni type. That's one of the rules. POLARITY is our first magazine, after a year in SAPS (and on the FAPA WL) and 2½ yrs. of collaboration with Wally Weber and B. Toskey on CRY of the NAMELESS.

Although no deadline schedule is planned for POLARITY, we'll probably wind up with a more or less quarterly effort.

This one-track issue is not designed to set a precedent; while our own maunderings will doubtless predominate, we also welcome contributions, verbal or pictorial. Both ditto and mimeo are available at Fenden Press, and outstanding artwork stands a good chance of being reproduced by photolith.

We like letters; all published letters bring a free issue, along with all published contributions in word or ideograph. (This issue is of course being freely distributed for the purpose of recruiting native bearers of the Subr tribe). Subs are 15¢ or 2 for 25¢ -- should we fold POLARITY all subs will be fulfilled in CRY of the NAMELESS (which hasn't missed a monthly issue since 2 mos. before Horace Gold missed one) or if specified by the subr, cash return will be made. CRY is 10¢ or 12/\$1 and is probably a better buy, ranging from 22 to 40 pages this last year, but we have to turn the crank ourselves on this one.

Then there's the usually over-  
(cont. on page 21)

The cover pictures by Elinor Busby (me) were photolithed for joint use by CRY of the NAMELESS #106, GMCarr's "Midwestcon Report" (FAPA) & POLARITY I. The photolithing is by Pilgrim Press and the multigraphing is by Burnett Toskey. All pics were taken at the Midwestcon, with the exception of the shot of Alan E. Nourse, which was taken at the NullCon in the Busby living-room, and the shot of the Carrs, taken in the Carrs' basement.

There's a line through Barbara Silverberg because I cut too much off the picture. The fellas around here protested vigorously -- "You cut off all her cute li'l figure!" -- so we spliced. We thought the splice wouldn't show, but it does. But it's still better than having an inadequate amount of Barbara Silverberg.

.....

It does seem that the time has come to do some serious thinking about TAFF. This year's TAFF representative, Robert A. Madle, is an excellent choice. He is a man whom we may well be proud to have represent us in England. However, he was probably elected mainly by the fringe-fan vote. Well, the fringe-fans did very well indeed by us this time. But what if they hadn't? What if they'd elected -- someone else! We know now it can happen here.

We can't disallow fringe-fan votes. If we did, we'd never in the wide world get enough dough to  
(cont. on page 21)

# TWO FANTISTED

by the MidWestCon and all that:

F. M. & Elinor Busby

The NullCon of Nameless Anonymous (more properly known as Fabulous Seattle Fandom) was held on Saturday and Sunday, June 22nd & 23rd. Sunday night Buz and I bottled homebrew.

First thing Monday morning I bundled the dogs into the car and took them to a boarding kennel way to hellangone south of the airport. I got lost three times, and didn't get home again until almost noon.

There I found Buz all packed and ready to go, happily chatting with Toskey. I fixed a bite of lunch, sat down to eat, yelled "My gnod I still don't have a knitting bag!" & ran out of the house and drove to Ballard, where in the third store investigated I found a suitable article of this nature. Then I came home and ate lunch, packed my clothes, took a shower & got dressed. By this time Buz had been champing at the bit for 2½ hrs. We were just about to leave the house when I remarked I hadn't packed any reading material yet. Buz yelled "Get out of this house!" and I scooted. Sans reading material, a horrid state for a fan to be in.

We left the car at the garage to be worked on, and Toskey drove us to the station. (Noble Toskey! He boarded our bird, took in our mail and newspapers, and watered our lemon tree while we were gone.) We arrived at the station in plenty of time.

Ha! If you've ever traveled with a wife, you know the routine: two hours of insisting that we can't possibly be on the train on time, two hours of assured relaxation, and a casual last-minute mention that there yet remains a shower, shampoo, and the mowing of the lawn. But really, I didn't knock her out the door at all hard.

No reading material until Spokane! And when we got to Spokane we found a singularly poor selection. I did find a Fred Brown murder mystery I hadn't read, and a book called "Eat, Think, and Be Slender" (a type of thing I always enjoy); and Buz picked a historical novel and "Tunnel of Love" by Peter de Vries, which turned out most amusing.

Eastbound on the Empire Builder we spent all our days in the domed car. We looked at scenery and read and looked at scenery; and it was all most enjoyable.

There is of course the fact that a lower-berth totals about 2 centimeters wider than we are. It isn't enough.

We got off the train at a town called Savannah in Illinois. From here we were to go by bus to Davenport, from there by bus to Monmouth, and from there to Roseville to visit Nan Gerding possibly by flying carpet, as there is no way of getting to Roseville by public transportation, and the Gerdings don't have a car.

We had thought we were going to a Davenport in Illinois, and when we found the bus was going to the one in Iowa we were quite confused and frightened, but the driver said it was the correct and only Davenport so we got on the bus.

Then the busdriver ushered a blind woman on, and put her in the seat just ahead of us. Another woman of about the same age and general appearance (middle-age, middle class) got on at the same time, and said to the driver in a dulcet carrying tone "I'll sit beside her and take care of her."

When this Noble Soul started to sit beside the blind woman, the latter leaned over the empty seat and said with quiet desperation, "Please, couldn't we sit separately?"

The Noble Soul said "I'm sorry -- the bus seems to be filling up." This was the truth.

The blind woman said "I'm sorry, I didn't know," and made room for her. The Noble Soul then endeavored to take charge of the blind woman's bus tickets, but when the latter refused to relinquish custody generously admired her ability to handle them.

Then the Noble Soul really started to talk. She began by reassuring the blind woman as to the neatness & propriety of her appearance, and the fact that her blindness did not render her repulsive. Then she asked her how she had lost her sight, and how long ago. Finally she discoursed on the horrors of blindness, how infinitely any other fate on this earth was to be preferred to it. "Why," she said, "I'd rather lose both my arms and both my legs than my sight"

The blind woman was really angry. "That's very foolish of you," she said. "You couldn't do anything then. I like being able to get around." The Noble Soul shut up for a minute or two, and when she spoke again it was only about how much she disliked living alone; but I think the blind woman and I were almost equally relieved when she got off the bus at the next town.

I remember reading on a record jacket that Josh White, who got his start in the folksong game leading Blind Lemon around, said "Blind folks is the meanest folks there is." I don't know any blind folks and don't have any data as to whether they are mean or not, but if they very often have to put up with the sort of conversation I overheard I'd be inclined to overlook almost any amount of meanness.

That was the first of two bus-rides: this first guy never heard of arterial highways; he doted on back roads and waiting at stop-streets. Leaving us at Davenport, Iowa, he undoubtedly went back across the Mississippi by way of a convenient ford.

The bus out of Dav. took off into roller-coaster terrain; the driver did his best to get the front wheels off the ground at each and every rise, probably to save wear-and-tear on his tires. It was exceeding good to get into Monmouth, Illinois, where he couldn't do it any more.

We got off the bus at Monmouth around 5:30, and the first thing I saw was a man with a sensitive fannish face leaning against a wall. He didn't look a bit like Nan Gerding, though, so I knew he wasn't for us. I peered around the bus station, & didn't see anybody who could possibly be Nan, but when I looked back Buz was shaking hands with the man with the sensitive fannish face and loading suitcases into his station wagon. I didn't catch his name when introduced, but when he started talking about Jack Daniels why, of course, I knew that this was Lynn Hickman. He didn't throw us out of the car when we told him how much we hated Jack Daniels, and this is as good a place as any to state that Lynn has a sensitive fannish nature as well as a sensitive fannish face, and we liked him enormously.

Not only our nextdoor neighbor with the cast-iron tonsils, but even Blotto Otto Itself concurred in our cowardly reaction to the bottle of JD we bought last spring. Ah, well — one man's neat, is another man's poison. We'll have to get Lynn out here sometime and try him on Vodka gimlets, which bore from within. Matter of fact, we'll have to get that ol' Lynn out here, period. A good man.

As I saw Nan running across the lawn to meet us I immediately began to feel glad that we'd gotten off the train. Nan is a very attractive girl: shorter than I and stockily built, with black hair cut in bangs across a broad forehead, big brown eyes, a pointed face and a warm & friendly manner. Buz and I liked all the Gerdings very much indeed. The children are attractive, interesting and polite (the girls very cuddly); and Phil Gerding is an awfully pleasant fellow.

After supper the possibility of putting out a one-shot was broached. 'Twould be difficult to say who suggested it: Lynn & Nan had previously concocted this evil thought between them, and Buz & I had also previously concocted it between us.

SAPS will already have seen "The White Ghodysey." About this small masterpiece I will merely state that the title was, I believe, arrived at simultaneously by Nan and myself. We had been talking about "The Green Odyssey" which Philip Farmer dedicated to Nan, and when someone mentioned a book entitled "The White Goddess" something within our minds snapped. Buz and Lynn were not favorable impressed with "The White Ghodysey" as a title, but when two women agree on a matter of this kind they automatically constitute a majority.\*

Yeh, let's face it— 8

They sure do— 8



This whole deal was real great. I'll stand with Elinor's writeup, but would like to add that Phil Gerding really sent me with his next-day description of our one-shot antics which he'd observed from the next roomt hile we trufans thought him immersed in the teevy; Phil is not only a trained observer, but would be one helluva good trufan if he had the time and inclination.

The next day passed all too quickly. It was arranged for a taxi to come and pick us up at 3:00 the following morning. Buz felt that we should get to bed early that night, so as to have lots of sleep before then. I would rather have just stayed up. Gee -- I enjoyed Nan's company so much; it was pleasant just sitting across the table from her. And who knows when I'll see her again?

We compromised, and went to bed at twelve; but then I couldn't get to sleep for quite a while because I suddenly realized who Nangee reminded me of. She's very like Buz' mother. The only actual physical resemblance was the large bright brown eyes and that both might be described as handsome rather than pretty. Both had the same sort of vigorous, alert minds. Both were brisk in movement, and both had a rather charming flickering expression: a sort of speculative stare at one which suddenly softens into an affectionate smile.

Mom, by the way, was a potential fan. She thoroughly enjoyed the fanzines we showed her (though as an English teacher she was appalled by much of the spelling and grammar); and only two weeks before her death last year she bought her first science-fiction magazine and sent us a most spirited critique of it.

Back to Roseville: we were awakened at 3 the next morning by the taxicab driver's hammering on the door, and dressed and left rather hurriedly.

Our trip to Chicago was uneventful. When we tried to get a taxicab from one depot to the other we ran into a slight hassle which I shall not go into, so we angrily stalked out of the depot and found ourselves our own taxi in a matter of seconds.

I almost regretted it at first, because our taxicab driver rather alarmed me. He was a very thin taut young negro who spoke in a rapid, toneless voice, &, having recently read Evan Hunter's "Quartet in H", I immediately decided that he was a junkie overdue for a fix. I made two or three soothing remarks, and Buz made two or three cheerful & interested remarks, and all of a sudden our driver perceptibly relaxed, laughed, and said "I've been dying for a smoke for the last two hours and I completely forgot that I've a carton of cigarettes right here beside me!" Then he lit a cigarette and made two or three remarks about Music and Literature and we parted at the depot in a great flood of rapport.

There wasn't as much rapport as all that, but the cabdriver had rather floored me by asking wasn't I a writer, on account of the way he said I was expressing myself. Actually I was still expressing muted rumblings of my volcanic reaction to the Chicago foulup on changing trains, but endeavoring to present a reasonable front. Can it be that this is what constitutes great literature, t is conflict and all?

We had breakfast at the second depot, and lunch on the New York Central. I want to warn you all about the New York Central. As Buz tells it: "We looked at the prices on the menu. \$2, \$3, \$4. Then we looked for the sandwiches. Those WERE the sandwiches!" Two dollars and thirty cents for a chicken sandwich! Hardly at all inferior to the chicken sandwich we'd been paying 90¢ for on the Great Northern. To add insult to injury half an hour later a man came through the coach selling packaged sandwiches for 35¢. I wish somebody'd warned us!

## T\*H\*E M\*I\*D\*W\*E\*S\*T\*C\*O\*N

### FRIDAY

We arrived at the North Plaza Motel about 6:00. We registered, examined our room, freshened up a bit, and wandered around until we found someone to show us to the Seascope Room. The first person we saw there was G. M. Carr, and it was such a pleasure to find a familiar face amongst all those strangers! She introduced us around, and after a little conversation Buz and I went across the street to Howard Johnson's for a bite to eat.

More people had arrived when we got back to the Seascope Room, and here impressions get a bit kaleidoscopic. It was weird seeing & hearing (& even weirder being seen & heard by) so many people whose books I've read.

Item. I met Isaac Asimov. He peered at me very closely as I took my coat off and said in a tone of joyous discovery: "She's a girl! Hay look fellas! She's a girl!" I didn't realize it at the time, but of course he was referring to the fact that my hair was cut very short for the Midwest, shorter than it had ever been before. But how could I relate him to the Second Foundation, or to R. Daneel?

Item. I met Edmond Hamilton and Leigh Brackett. They looked just as they ought; a most attractive couple. Edmond Hamilton is a lean, dark, quietly handsome man who looks gentle, introverted and humorous. Leigh Brackett's pic on the cover is not a good likeness. She is a pretty woman with crinkly brown hair parted in the middle and clasped at the nape, regular features, large candid blue eyes, and a cheerful expression. Brackett takes me out of the goshwow in me, but I didn't tell her so. It didn't seem the fanish thing to do.

Somebody asked where Randy Garrett was. And somebody else answered that he had recently been converted to very high-church Episcopalianism and was staying home. The first person (Asimov?) said that in that case he'd undoubtedly go into a monastery if the Episcopal Church had monasteries. Leigh Brackett said she knew they had nunneries, but although she herself used to be an Episcopalian she didn't know whether they had monasteries or not. I said I still was and I didn't know either. We smiled at each other in mutual sorrow at not knowing whether Randall Garrett was to be allowed to fulfill his destiny.

Barbara Silverberg came in, and Ike Asimov greeted her with the question "Aha, Mrs. Randall! Did you bring your disgusting husband with you?"



She answered pertly and promptly "No -- I brought the other one!" I admired this remark highly as it neatly sidestepped the trap of disloyalty and the plonkery of defense.

The Silverbergs are a very attractive couple. They both seem completely self-confident and friendly, which is a nice combination of characteristics. Bob looks like a handsome, cheerful and intelligent monkey, if you can imagine such an incongruity. Barbara is an elegant tawny girl who was elegantly clad in a black sheath and tawny pumps.

As soon as possible I challenged Bob Silverberg about that aSF serial. It made me mad. I thought the Earth people had no right lousing up a perfectly good culture just because they were lonely of all furshlugginer things! And I couldn't forgive the hero for murdering his best friend and benefactor.

Bob said (if I remember correctly) that the story as published did not have the story line he and Garrett originally planned, and that he didn't even remember what the original plot had been. He said the serial was written to Campbell's order, and that Campbell often held up to them "The Cold Equations" as the ideal aSF story. Well, I agree that "The Cold Equations" was the ideal aSF story, but I think the resemblance between it and "The Dawning Light" was more apparent than real. I couldn't quite figure it out at the convention, but I've got it straight now and I'll give you the benefit of my afterthoughts. In "The Cold Equations" the pilot jettisons the pretty girl stowaway; in "The Dawning Light" the hero jettisons his friend and the earthmen jettison the Nidorian culture. But the theme of the former is that you can't always pull a rabbit out of the hat, that sometimes all you can do is say goodbye. And the theme of the latter is that the end justifies the means -- a crummy philosophy at best, but when the end is as morally unsatisfactory as the means one sees the philosophy at its worst.

Jack and Juanita Coulson showed up about this time, bearing copies of their latest YANURO. I'm sorry to say that I never did get a chance to get the Coulsons as human beings in focus with the Coulsons as fanzine-putter-outers. I only saw them for a few minutes before I got involved in a party and before I recovered from it they had gone home again. But this is to anticipate.

Well -- this party now. Ed Chamberlain was host and the guests were Bob & Fern Tucker, Ted White, Boyd Raeburn, Ger Steward, Ron Kidder, and P.M. & E. Busby. Bob Tucker, Ted White & Boyd Raeburn appear on the cover -- excellent likeness<sup>es</sup> of all three. Fern Tucker is a pleasant-looking, quiet young woman with a very nice smile. Ger Steward has a type of looks that I have always particularly admired. He is tall & lean, with a long head, straight black hair, and a high-boned face with dark eyes beneath heavy straight black eyebrows a real beak of a nose, and a pleasant & unaffected manner. Ron Kidder is a goodlooking but very quiet youth, the most conspicuous feature of whose face is thick glasses for far-sightedness -- most unusual, considering how fans in general tend toward myopia.

I sat on the floor between Ger Steward and Bob Tucker and very soon informed the latter that I didn't approve of his naming his characters after fans. "It's insincere," I said.

"It doesn't matter at all," Bob replied. "Nobody recognizes fannish names except fans, and fans don't buy my books anyhow."

I said it was the Principle of the Thing. Bob Tucker was quite unimpressed, so I started off on another tack.

"I cannot think with serenity," I said, "of Walt Willis as an evil ol' international spy."

Bob gave me a thoughtful look. "You know," he said, "Willis has never mentioned my using his name. It's quite possible that he agrees with you!"

Then I remember telling Ger Steward of his striking resemblance to a young man whom I had a few dates with in Albuquerque in 1951, also named Jerry, oddly enough. However Jerry-in-Albuquerque drove a red Ford convertible, whereas Ger Steward has a Glacier Blue MG, so the resemblance is clearly most superficial.

And I remember Buz insisting on singing (much to my chagrin) his favorite improper song, "Cocaine Bill and Morphine Sue." Tucker was good enough to admire this song, so naturally I wanted to sing my favorite improper song, "Violate Me in the Violet-Time"; but nobody wanted to hear this except Ed Chamberlain and I was not about to sing that song to him, as I was afraid he might take it to heart.

Lynn Hickman showed up, and very shortly after he arrived I became aware of feelings of insecurity in the female Busby interior. Addressing a few parting words of tender affection to Lynn, Bob Tucker, Ger Steward and quite probably also Ted White and Boyd Raeburn, I departed to the Busby abode -- of my own volition and under my own power, whatever unkind folk might say.

I went to bed and to sleep immediately, but not without feelings of dire foreboding.



This evening got dim even before I took Elinor home to bed. Tucker was convinced that Raeburn had passed out and was determined to parade Boyd back and forth past the pool a few times and then "leave him propped up in front of G. M. Carr's door in an attitude of supplication". Boyd claims that the only out he passed was going home to sleep. Possibly as a result of Bob's powers of persuasion, I do visualize Boyd in loud pajamas trailing a listless arm as the High Priests of Boondoggle parade around the pool. But all I can truthfully say is that we did all parade around and about, chanting. Whether anyone was carrying Raeburn, I dunno; I was busy carrying me.

This was My Evening with the Pro's — Tucker, Harmon, Sky Miller, Scortia (this is late in the evening I'm talking about; Hamilton, Doc Smith, Asimov, Bloch, de Camp and Leigh Brackett I'd met earlier) — oh there were some terrific sayings, but I can't recall a word of those deathless pro's. Anyhow, everyone was speaking to me the next day.

#### SATURDAY

I awoke about 9:00 Saturday, and was just lying quietly wondering how I felt when the phone rang. I climbed over Buz and answered it. It was Mary Young; she wanted me to meet her for breakfast and I said I would.

By the time I was dressed and ready to set forth it was quite clear to me that I really did not feel very well. But I met Mary as we had arranged, and although she did not look at all like my preconception of her I recognized her immediately.


You know, I am very much interested in what people look like, & I had hounded Wally Weber with queries as to Mary's appearance until he shut me up. "She looks sort of like you," he said, "only with black hair." Naturally, Mary & I found practically no resemblance at all. Our features are not too unlike, but as she has rather a small head and I have a large head, and as our personalities and temperaments are most dissimilar we are far indeed from twinhood. Actually, Mary looks more like my younger sister Dede.

We went out to breakfast with George Nims Raybin. He and Mary carried on a gay and sprightly conversation, and Raybin smiled and smiled and smiled, and my insides felt so sad, and I felt very sad. Finally I cancelled my order, asked Mary to bring me some soda crackers, and left. I made it to the room just in time.

I didn't wake up for this. After a 5 am sackout, I heroically arose about 11. It wasn't the best morning I've ever had, but navigable and improving as it went along.

Outside our door, I found a large black hangman's noose depending from our porch light. Under this was a placard:

Start Your Day

The  Big Way.

Welcome

Fabulous Seattle Fandom!

Surely, this could only be the work of Big-Hearted Howard DeVore, I thought. And when I finally ran him to earth (figuratively, in the 2nd-floor Detroit suite) he acknowledged authorship with a modest air of quiet pride. "It's the thought that counts," affirmed Howard, proving his point by steering me to the fixings. With a glass of vodka, water, icecubes, and lemon juice in my hand, the world brightened perceptibly. I stayed with this same glass, adding icecubes from the "OFFICAL (sic) MSFS BLOG BUCKET" until the original pick-me-up was buried under a quart or so of ice-water. This readied me for the Death of a Thousand Anticipations, or a ride down any normal street with GeoYoung driving. Harlan Ellison rode to the Frisco and back with George, whatever that proves. Actually the YoungFan collided with Nobody Whatsoever, mainly because the latter had good brakes. The sound effects were outstanding; every time Geo hit the go-feed, the heavily-loaded White Phantom dragged its rump on the rough macadam during acceleration, and the tires screamed of imminent dissolution at every mid-block U-turn in the face of oncoming traffic. Had it not been that our goal was the State Liquor Store and then lunch, our stout hearts might have quailed and put our stout feet to a lot of work. Oh well, I have a few little driving ticks myself that the National Safety Council probably wouldn't care to subsidize, and besides Mary says that George is Virtue Itself on the open highway -- he got HOME, didn't he!

I believe that there are two kinds of hangover: the headachy kind and the insecure stomach kind. I have always felt that if I ever had the first kind I could be stoical about it -- or possibly a bit Byronic. But no. The only kind of hangover I have ever had is the urpy kind, the kind that inspires one with an ardent attachment to one's little home and toilet. In this connection I should mention that at the North Plaza we had a most lovely pink toilet; and the many many times that day that I knelt before it and gazed into its pink porcelain depths I felt that it added an esthetic note to an otherwise sordid experience.

I lay in bed all day while a series of waking dreams passed before my eyes. I got up just long enough for the maids to make the bed, then went right back. Mary brought me the crackers; and Buz when he went out to lunch brought me an egg salad sandwich and a little carton of milk. G. M. Carr dropped by during the afternoon; she found me quite chilly and kindly turned off the air-conditioning. About 4:30 Carolyn Rickman called up & asked me to go out for coffee with them, but I told her somewhat sheepishly that I wasn't up yet.

Yes, I had taken a bottle of milk and an egg-salad sandwich from our lunching-place to my ailing girl. The sandwich was held over to a later date and I helped officiate at the resurrection of the milk. My trouble was that Blinor hadn't had a hangover since the summer before I met her. Looking back, I can see that the firm cruel approach of up-&-at-'em would have had her in shape for at least the latter part of Saturday -- the walk-around, the drink-milk-til-it-DOES-stay-down, and etc. Well, she sez it'll never happen again, and I say if it does I'll give her no more mercy than I give myself. Wanna bet?

I was determined to go to the banquet, because Buz had already bought the tickets and I didn't know that he could get his money back. So I took a shower, dressed, and really looked quite healthy in my rosy-pink garments.

We went to the banquet with the Detroiters, and the only seats we could find were so far from the speakers' table it was improbable that we'd be able to hear the speeches. Internal sensations warned me that I would be ill-advised to stay; and when a Michifan sat down beside me and offered to tell me a joke I immediately got the key from Buz and left. I made it home just in time.

I went to bed and immediately fell into a deep sleep. A few hours later I woke up; dressed, ate the egg-salad sandwich (which tasted very good), and went back to the banquet. I arrived just in time to vote for a motion since forgotten, but which didn't pass anyway.

I'd had a fairly quiet afternoon, mostly up at the headquarters of the Detroit Mob (a Fine Flock) but also roaming a bit between trips aimed at raising Elinor toward the vertical. Got into a great ol' session with Doc Smith re the Lensman series and his upcoming Vortex Blaster hardcover, which has a most provocative pitch or two that I don't intend to miss. Discussed the tribulations of monthly fanpubbing with Buck Coulson, and learned that YANDRO is apt to bi-month if Buck & Juanita last through to FAPA membership from their #14 WLspot (this will never happen to CRY of the NAMELESS -- advt. -- as long as we have a sturdy monapan Ioskey to carry the hose).

As banquet time approached, I surrounded another vodka-and-lemon-juice and went to dragoon Elinor onto her feet. At 5:30pm this still was no simple task; eventually, however, a fragile and taciturn girl accompanied George, Mary, me and the Archers (in the latter's car) 150 yards down the road to the banquet-restaurant. The story goes that MidwestCon expenses would have been ZERO had Lou Tabakow not insisted on a banquet, necessitating tickets. However, the MWCCon expense-sheet was kept clean after all; Lou had to pay for the ticket-stamp himself. Story courtesy of Don Ford, appropriately enough, as he's the soul of courtesy and went well out of his way to make us welcome so far from home.

As Elinor mentioned, our seats were at the very back of the banquet hall (until another table was edged in behind us); the only speakers we could hear were Asimov, Bloch, deCamp, and a few called-upons sitting near our end of the place. I imagine Doc Smith and a couple others barely within line-of-sight range at the speakers' table made good speeches, but the best I could do was to determine when they finished, so I could applaud at the right time. We did hear Asimov dissect a Bloch story from OW, Bloch reciprocate on "Naked Sun", Jim Harmon explain how nothing comes between him and Harlan Ellison (not even locked doors), G. M. Carr apologize for having forgot to bring her vitriol, and other noteworthy items -- so we can't claim we were entirely robbed by the lack of a PA system. Elinor, of course, missed all of this and also the spaghetti dinner. Everybody at close range seemed to think this was the best spaghetti they had ever eaten; if this wasn't sheer overenthusiasm, those folks have never tasted really choice spaghetti; to me it was passable but not outstanding. This is not a gripe but only a comment -- at \$3 it was a better buy than the \$7+ raw chicken reported at the KyleCon. And I think it was Boyd Raeburn who explained how he couldn't consider going to London on the chartered plane, because he had a vision of Dave Kyle stalking up and down telling the passengers "You can't sit HERE!".....?

Oh, yeh, the TAFF voting problem got solved after a fashion. The assembled voters gave up on a rather good plan which on any recount after a no-go would have counted second-place votes of all who had voted for the original defaulter, in favor of a one-vote system. Thass what Elinor mentioned above.

Then Buz, Mary, Dave Pollard and I went back to the Detroit suite. Mary said, "Elinor, shall I turn on the record player?"

"No," said I, in my fortunately inimitable manner.

"Oh," she said. "Well, then, I guess I'll turn it on." I give her credit. She would have preferred to turn it on as a favor to me.

Apparently I was not quite myself yet after all. I listened to the music for a minute or two, then went back home and back to bed.

Elinor wanted to be walked home, but I had one of those unreasonable fugues of not wanting to be uprooted from a comfortable seat, so she had to be satisfied with the company of Dave Pollard (no great sacrifice) who was going that way. Then I felt a little ashamed of myself, which didn't help out, as Mary and I sat there and discovered little in common except fierce fannish orientation from entirely different roots, and a fatigue-diluted desire to find common ground (which seemed to be that, once again from separate histories, we both were sort of pooped). Rallying, we emerged into a spatter of rain and looked around for parties, while banquet-stayers steadfastly peered through smoke and other assorted murk, at movies. We had a narrow escape from a Chicago group who wanted to hear all about fanzines -- Mary was all shaken up by this but I'm more blasé -- I run into people who don't know about fmz quite often, and am inured.

There was a good yak-session with the Toronto Tribe, under an inadequate front-porce canopy, before we returned to the restaurant. We arrived to stand behind all the movie-watchers; I couldn't see through all that smoke at that distance and so repaired to the bar and got into a dissertation on how to make home-brew, to TAFF-winner Bob Madle. Reva Smiley joined us, and shortly there was an exodus from the scene which evolved into the Detroit Suite party.

This was one good party. I had first shuddered at the ingredients being poured into the Blog Bucket, then tried it and decided that anything that held so much miscellany and tasted so good would have to be treacherous. Oddly enough, the Blog was trustworthy; I need, now, the recipe from George or Howard for future NullCons here.

Things kept getting better all around. The showing of color slides of previous Cons in the bedroom was only slightly marred by people stepping into other people's drinks in the dark -- I was thoughtfully keeping my own drinks up out of the way so I was not disturbed except by splashes, slightly. After a run-and-a-half through the slides, I repaired to the front room and bar, and was pleased to see that Nancy Moore Shapiro looked nothing like seven years older than she looked seven years ago at Portland.

Somewhere along in here, Bill Rickhardt discovered that alcohol would affect him if he drank enough of it -- Bill was quite restrained in his

revelations, but the listener gathered that bighol this stuff would get to you eventually, as Bill was eloquent on the subject between drags on the bottle of vodka in one hand and Rock'n'Rye in the other. For a youngster, he has talent.

Bill's discovery came after a bunch of us had been over to the Cincinnati or host suite. This was a good deal; George Young recited his trip to Frisco with Ellison and others; Roy Lavendar and I discovered a mutual addiction to model-A Fords (I've owned five); Bob Bloch and Jean Carroll reminisced (in imitation) on the routines of burlesque-theater barkers; the fellow downstairs called up to promise cops if we didn't all clam up, and got no more satisfaction than he had from the management -- I tell you these MidwestCons are WELL set up.

Later, back at the Detroit suite, with everybody out of firecrackers (wouldn't you know that only the Detroiters would bring fireworks, AND rent a suite right over the motel office??) and steam, I bethought me that Elinor would sleep right on through all the festivities unless aroused. So ---

#### SUNDAY

When I awoke the birds were tuning up and it was just beginning to get a little bit light. Buz was nowhere around. I was feeling lonely and wondering whether it would be worth while to go out and look for him when he came in.

"Honey," he said, "you've got to get up and come on. Everybody's going home in a few hours and you mustn't miss it all."

We went back to the Detroit suite, but there was nobody up there but a very drowsy Mary, so we went to the Seascape Room. There we found Big-Hearted Howard DeVore. We asked him to come have breakfast with us. He said he'd eat breakfast with us if we'd drink breakfast with him. So we went back to the Detroit suite and Buz and Howard had a drink, and then we went across the street and had some breakfast. Howard told us quite a lot about Michifandom and Buz and I were thrilled.

I just loved Howard DeVore. We had been quite sure ahead of time that we would like him, because we enjoyed his zines so much; but we were surprised to find him so warmly amiable, so courteous, and so good-looking. True, he is rather bald and overweight, but the total effect is still very good.

Then we went home and to sleep. I'd been up nearly four hours.

I'd been up more like twenty-four hours, or 21 anyway, and I think Howard had forgotten what it felt like to lie down. The discussion at breakfast had an odd musing quality -- here was Elinor all bright-eyed and vivacious, while Howard & I were operating on a two-second lag: hearing a remark and waiting while the answer swam up and formed itself for utterance. Nothing seems quite real when I'm that much underslept, but it's a quiet and pleasant form of mild disorientation.

Elinor & I regret that time and money ran out on us to the extent

that we decided against the Detroit leg of our junket as planned — we certainly would have liked to become better acquainted with the Detroit Mob under less hectic conditions where we could get a little better in-phase. As it was, they drove all night to get in early Sat. am, had to leave about Sunday noon, and throughout their stay we were mostly in the position of swing and graveyard-shifters trying to get together. Better than no meeting at all, though, and better luck next time (Southgate?).

I got up by myself about 11:00 and went out for lunch, and then a while later I went swimming. There I made a horrid discovery. I was quite unable to breathe a word to a soul; I was positively paralyzed with shyness. This is a disease which I had thought I had almost entirely outgrown; but I was never in my life more afflicted with it than on Sunday morning. So I bullied Buz into getting up and coming out with me, and then everything was okay.

We had lunch with the Silverbergs, and chatted about this & that. Bob asked Buz not to soft-pedal his criticisms of Silverberg opera in his pro-zine review column (CRY OF THE NAMELESS - advt.), and Buz assured him that "Renfrew Pemberton" would be meaner'n hell. I told Barbara that this was the furthest east I'd ever been, and she told me it was the furthest west for her. This struck a pleasing note: east is east and west is west, and the twain shall meet at the MidwestCon.

We chatted most of the afternoon with Boyd, Ger, Ron, Ted White, and Ray Schaffer. Boyd Baeburn is an attractive and amusing young man with a powerful personality. Ted White and Ger Steward we enjoyed very much also.

We went out for supper with Ray Schaffer. If we hadn't had him to ourselves for a while we wouldn't have gotten acquainted with him at all, and naturally we were particularly eager to know fellow-SAPS. I was reminded of the Baconian saying: "Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man." Ray is, we know from his zines, as full and exact as any fan can reasonably be expected to be; but it seemed to us that there had been a deficiency of conference. The remarks we got from him were very sound; some comments most pungent. But getting anything out of him was rather like digging claws, or occasionally like digging geese/ducks, which are a particularly elusive form of life. Poor Ray! I'm not sure it's very pleasant to have people dig at you!

We sat on the terrace after supper. Bob Tucker, who was celebrating the completion of 25 years of actifandom, sat near us for a while. I remember whispering pitifully that I didn't like his sneering at SAPS. He informed me that it was the thing to do. He assured me that he sneered at PAPA too, and that when he got up in the morning he looked in the mirror and sneered at himself. "It's the thing to do," he said. Since then Buz and I have, with neofannish enthusiasm, been practicing sneering, but with only moderate success. To sneer at PAPA is quite easy because, after all, we've been on the waiting list a year and are still only #24; and I personally was born sneering at myself, but I do not believe I shall ever be able to sneer at SAPS. Toward SAPS I feel most tender and loyal. But we still remind one another that "It's — the thing to DO," reproducing as well as we can the Tuckerian intonations.



Don Ford, Lou Tabakow and Dale Tarr were around for a while — very pleasant people, all of them. Don Ford is a very tall dark man with a sort

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"I told Margaret I wanted to be a completist, and she asked if it was safe to flush the toilet."  
Don Ford

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of energetically languid look that is most faunish.

The Toronto three left around 10:30, and as we shook hands at parting it was for me a somewhat poignant moment. Boyd at least we shall meet again in the foreseeable future — at Southgate in '58 — but Ger and Ron do not plan to be there. We had had no idea that we would like them so much. I was not at all surprised to find Boyd amusing in person — but I was surprised to find him amiable and by no means unduly lifemanlike. As for Ger, when he was in SAPS we felt somehow at odds with him. I remember insinuating in a mailing comment that I thought he was rather pompous. Egad! How wrong can an Elinor be! He's the least pompous person alive. He's downright charming. If he will return to the Sappish fold I shall know better how to appreciate him.

There's usually a bonus or two at doings such as this, above and beyond the folks you'd previously planned on meeting; the unanticipated bonhomie of the Toronto Gang and Ted White was such a bonus. We seemed to gravitate together with them more often than mere chance would permit, and the resulting sessions tended to continue indefinitely until broken up by external events — midFriday evening, early Saturday evening, Sunday midafternoon and part of the evening expanding into the Terrace Finale, which was all the late-stayers quietly enjoying having stayed. The drinking had ebbed off; only 2 or 3 nursed loaded glasses — Ed Chamberlain couldn't get a customer for his Mint-Flavored Gin. The Torontans, with characteristic good sense, declined any alcohol before their upcoming night drive, and the overall mood was nostalgic rather than celebrant.

I should have written this MWC on up immediately — now, with Elinor breathing down my neck to get this insert finished so she can get it on master, I'm having to skip over 20 or 30 swell people whom I have no wish to slight. There could be pages and pages of how much we liked Mr. or Mrs. or Miss Phann, and mainly why. So, one and all, if we met and I didn't kick your shins and make rude remarks in a thick guttural voice, just insert your name here:

It was a GREAT pleasure meeting \_\_\_\_\_ and I hope we have the chance to get better acquainted in the future.

Towards the close of the evening there were just Ted White, Bob Bloch, Ed Chamberlain, Baz and I, sitting on the terrace by the pool. Bob Bloch talked a bit about conventions — about how only people who stayed until the last really knew the convention ended — about how people who left while it was still going strong might imagine it going on forever — about the feeling one might have that there was always a convention going on somewhere, if one only knew how to find it —

I saw some flashes in the sky that looked almost like shooting stars. Bloch said he thought they were bats, shining from the hotel floodlights.

Talking of various things, we watched the small bright darting shapes for some time, and when we said goodnight we said goodby.

#### AFTERTHOUGHTS

The Midwestcon could not be improved upon. The Cincinnati Fantasy Group is to be congratulated and thanked most heartily for putting on an absolutely ideal convention. Never in my life have I met so many delightful people in such a short period of time.

#### HOMEWARD BOUND

We stayed three days in Lebanon, Indiana, with Buz' cousins, and had a most pleasant though unfannish time. I learned how to make home-made noodles, and, even more important, I saw fire-flies for the first time. I was thrilled with them -- they looked like sparks rising upward, and englamored whole meadows. We caught quite a few of them and put them in a glass jar, but they were unimpressive there so we let them go again.

Then we spent a night and a day in Chicago. Quite early in the day I made a pilgrimage (by myself) to Marshall Field's to buy a new dress. The store was enormous, being comprised of an intolerably large number of very small shops arranged according to a mysterious pattern of their own. I gaped like a country cousin at the crystal chandeliers on the first floor, but this was actually sheer affectation on my part, as there are stores in Seattle that have them too. What really fascinated me was being able to use my Frederick & Nelson charge account. What a thrill! Charging stuff about two thousand miles from home!

Then Buz and I went to the Art Museum. It really interested me very much to see how some pictures suffer so much in reproduction, and others very little if at all. For example, Cezanne's "The Bathers" struck me as being, in the original, just about exactly as I have seen it in prints, and so did a picture by Rousseau. Monet, on the other hand, in prints always seemed to me distinctly unimpressive; but some of his pictures in the Chicago Art Museum are downright breath-taking. One, I think called "Irises by the Side of a Pool", we came back to again and again. The picture I was particularly eager to see, Seurat's "Afternoon on the Grand Jatte", we looked at for a long long while, and kept seeing new beauties in it. (When we got home I looked at my print of it, and vowed never to hang the damn thing up again!)

We had lunch at the garden restaurant there. It was most attractive in appearance: picture a gray stone terrace with little tables with bright yellow umbrellas surrounding a shallow lily pool with a large fountain of four mermen carrying spouting fish over their shoulders, the whole surrounded by large trees in full summer leafage. But our enthusiasm waned as we spent an hour waiting for our lunch, and when it arrived lukewarm, flavorless and incomplete, though very expensive indeed, we felt that we might have been happier in a less esthetically pleasing spot.

Later during the afternoon we took the elevated train to Evanston. Just waiting for and boarding the elevated was an uncomfortable experience for a height-deprecator such as I; and the trip was most clattery, jouncy

and noisy. I was impressed by a handsome young man in a beard & sneakers, who, sitting sidewise, was reading and eating a sandwich. He was doing three things with apparent content any one of which would have made me rather ill. Some people are truly durable.

The trip back to Chicago was worse. The elevated suddenly turned, in a manner reminiscent of the Lord Chancellor's nightmare, into a subway; and the noise was nightmarish indeed, rising to all sorts of supersonic heights and subsonic depths. The people ahead of us put their fingers in their ears; but I refrained. I felt that it was probably the only time I would ever ride a subway, and I might as well absorb the full horror of it all.

As on my late-'54 visit to Chicago, I found that the Elevated can be tolerated; the Alaska Railroad jounces worse and the rides last longer. But the subway part was much worse than before, when the windows had been kept closed due to winter weather. With the windows open, the noise is definitely in the decibel-range that will impair hearing over a period of time. I had never believed in a literal Hell Under the Earth until I rode the Chicago subway in summer, but now it seems quite plausible.

Our run out to Evanston was to have a look at 806 Dempster St., the address given for OW. Actually, Palmer stays in Wisconsin and puts out OW and Smirch from there; only FATE comes from Evanston, but the address is used for postal-permit reasons. Also, we walked over and said howdy to the folks who rented me a room for 3 weeks in '54 — they had called us and been given a fast Seattle tour when they came through here the following spring.

It was a relatively comfortable day (only Indiana had been really sultry for us in the Midwest tradition) but it left us quite, quite sure that we won't save up our pennies to move to Chicago.

We got on the train that evening, and the next day at 2:30 got off at Hillsboro, North Dakota. There we were met by Wrai Ballard and driven through Hillsboro (a metropolis of two or three hundred people) and Blanchard (a store) and to his home. His mother is a slender, rather pretty woman who looks much too young to be the mother of a contemporary of mine; his father is a quiet, pleasant man, and they live in a house which is very nice inside except for the lack of plumbing. Wrai has a wonderful room. He has a whole upstairs to himself (the house has two upstairses) and he keeps his mimeo and tape-recorder and books and like that up there and it's most fannish.

We listened to a tape Wrai had just received from Richard Eney, and made a tape to send him. When it was played back I thought it would have sounded better with fewer inane remarks and inane giggles from lovable li'l occasionally inane me.

We talked fannish talk all evening and the next day until it was time to go, and had by no means run out. If we'd realized in advance how welcome we'd be we would have made arrangements to stay longer; but we have

a brother-in-law who is a farmer, and understand that farming is a serious business during the summer months.

We definitely goofed in allowing for a mere 24-hour stopover with Wrai — could have spent a week just looking over and discussing old (before our time) SAPS mailings, to name just one of many facets. Even an extra day or two would have allowed us to put out the one-shot which fannish custom and inclination dictate, in which case you'd've had a fresher version of this report and about a month sooner. As it was, we covered a lot more ground discussionwise than the non-fan would believe possible, and came away feeling like party-poopers for leaving so soon. A concentrated barrage of propaganda should be laid down to get Wrai to Southgate next year EVEN IF THE GOPHERS DO EAT ALL THE ALFALFA.

Wrai loaned us "Ah, Sweet Idiocy" to read on the train, and I must say it was truly delightful train reading, especially since we were feeling so particularly fannish anyhow. It's hard to believe Laney wrote the book on stencil; it reads so smoothly and lively and well. As to his themes — we thought that Laney would have found fewer weird types in fandom if he had fanned in a city with a smaller proportion of weird types; and we thought that his discovery that fandom was merely an escape from an intolerable situation he should have taken direct action upon earlier was not applicable to our situation. Buz and I are not total fans, as Laney was, and never will be total fans. We think fandom's just a lovable ghoddam hobby. (As 'twere).

Eventually we arrived in Seattle and got our car out of lock. On the way out to the boarding kennel to pick up the fellas Buz said gloomily "What do you bet, we'll find Lisa about four days in heat and we won't be able to take her home."

I thought he was just being his normal pessimistic self, but one of the first things the woman there said was "Well, your little female came in season about four days ago." Psi, you know. That ol' Buz is not without talent.

So we left Lisa in the kennel and came home, & we got her a few days later and here we all are.

Here we all are indeed, fannishly much enriched (if financially a mite poorer) from our 15 days of mostly fantouring. It does give to think. Here we have the obviously intelligent Laney writing fandom off as nearly a total loss, while we ourselves find at least 90% of fans and fanac to be a great good deal. Laney erred in identifying himself and the LASPS with the average fan and fandom-in-general, respectively, and yet wound up his 120-page opus with nobody to be thoroughly mad at except Walter J. Daugherty. TotalFan-dom would seem to be the spare-and-delusion; the loss of a sense of proportion is fatal. But for me, Fandom is the most rewarding hobby extant with the possible exception of life as a whole. Hence, there could get to be altogether too much to say, here — POL#2 may contain an article on Laney's opus, written for the haven't-read-it crowd. I think the deal is far enough back to be less than familiar to many, and fanhistorically important enough to be of interest. Comment will be appreciated.

MidWestCons worthwhile? Well, I guess it depends on what you want. If you dote on panel-discussions and authoritative speeches on the state of the Satellite Project and how long before the Air Force will land a slight but wiry young Major on the Moon and not tell you about it for Security reasons, Doc Barrett et al don't have much for you. But if you want to meet, gab with, booze with, and thoroughly enjoy some of the best doggone people -- fans and pros alike -- that you ever ran into in all your misspent life --

Well, I just hope we make it back there again sooner than appears likely. It will be tough having to sit out next year's, here at home.

(cont'd. from page 3)

stressed matter of Editorial Policy: any flat statement of what's-acceptable would result in UNacceptable contributions fitting the description, and lots of stuff we'd love to get, NOT sent here because it doesn't fit the verbal definition.

Except for some of our own clunkers (the Editorial Prerogative), fan-fiction (except humor) prob'ly won't loom large in POL. Faaaan-fiction is another matter -- we love it.

Articles? Sure, from most any slant that hasn't been exhausted lately. New slants always sell (as the prz keep telling us).

But we won't have any of this hypocrisy about a "free forum" -- anything here either reflects the opinions of the editors or at least doesn't offend our sensibilities too much.

"It ISN'T the principle of the thing; it's how it affects ME."

We're not exactly narrow-minded -- though we don't want stuff like "Flying Saucers Interpret the Book of Revelations", or "Fandom is a Bunch of Slimy Bastards".

For all contributors not specifically rejecting the offer, we'll do it like this: anything received by but not suitable for POL (by our own twisted standards) will be offered to Wally Weber and Burnett Toskey for CHY of the NAMELESS, that monthly paragon with a larger circulation than ours is likely to be.

Anyhow, salud! -Buz

send anybody from Abilene Texas to Kansas City Co., let alone from New York to England and vice versa.

There's one point I'd like to bring out: fringe-fans don't know they're fringe-fans. Fringe-fans think they're just as fannish as anybody.

Why, during my fringe-fan days I actually nominated a candidate for TAFF. I believe she was rather embarrassed about the whole thing. She had started campaigning for Lee Hoffman before she found out she was nominated (I told her I was going to nominate her but either she wasn't listening or she thought I did but jest); and since nobody had ever heard of Elinor Busby she was accused of nominating herself under a pseudonym.

As I say, fringe-fans don't know they're fringe-fans. Only we actifans can tell the difference. And if anyone says to me "Elinor, you're still a fringe-fan" -- well -- that's merely further proof of my point.

To return to TAFF: TAFF is one of the most interesting fannish projects ever conceived. 'Twould be a pity indeed for it to lose impetus and fall by the wayside, but it might possibly do so unless rules can be set up that will make it more completely satisfactory.

I believe somebody suggested that all nominations should be made by the host-country, with both hemispheres voting. This seems a likely thought. Are there any better suggestions?

