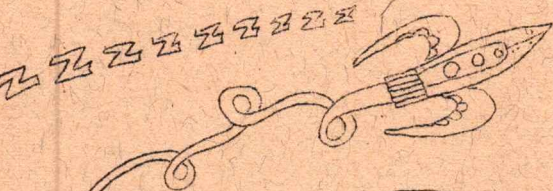


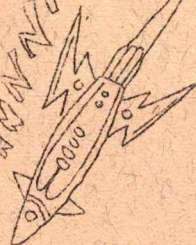
# Potlatch

JANUARY 1971 • NUMBER TWO

BZZZZZZZZZZ



NNNNNNNGGG



# SMACK!

DAMN MOSQUITOS!



Jay Kinney







# CARRYING ON

Christmas, I have discovered, arrives just as unrelentingly and just as unmercifully, in Brooklyn as it does in other parts of the country. Perhaps, in fact, Christmas arrives even more garishly in the East than elsewhere. Even before Halloween, stores began to bedeck themselves in ornament, and mundane walkways began to change into some advertiser's dream of a fairy play-land, with lights and garlands and plaster-paris statues of manger scenes and Santa's workshop, all mingled together in a mind-warping, eye-twisting display of beautifully bad taste. For weeks, each outing led Arnie and I, almost hypnotically attracted by the displays, into first one and then another department store's toy land; we spent hours each weekend playing with the gadgets on display there. We each assured ourselves, by telling the other, that our real interest was in the adult games, and indeed the games sections of each store did receive our devoted inspections. However, the array of dolls and trucks and lincoln logs and jigsaw puzzles and stuffed animals and teasetts and toy soldiers and space helmets...displays designed to enrapture big-eyed children...these all received their measure of adoration, as we each darted down the aisles saying "ooh" and "aah" as we spied some new development of the toy-makers art.

The excitement of Christmas finally became more than we could bear..more than we could sustain any longer..and two, almost three, weeks before The Great Day, we decided we wouldn't wait. Five am one crisp morning early in December found us excitedly exchanging gifts; when each of us had finished unwrapping our booty, we sat amidst a spectacular assortment of books and games and crayons and coloring books and puzzles and god-knows-what-all, topped off by a stuffed lion with a wooly mane and beady brown eyes.

I drifted off into satisfied sleep, toys clustered around me, my lion sitting on my stomach staring with unwaveringly devoted ferociousness as if to ward away all dangers, and dreamed the dreams of a happy six year old.

++++++  
+ POTLATCH #2 comes from Joyce Fisher, 59 Livingston St., Apt. 6-B, Brooklyn, NY 11201 +  
+ January, 1971. The cover and all other art in this issue is by Jay Kinney. "Entropy +  
+ Reprints" is a column by Terry Carr. "Down In The Mouth" is an article by Bruce +  
+ Telzer. "The Golden Bagel" is a column by Arnie Katz. "Letters" are letters by the +  
+ letter-writers. All this good stuff, or some other good stuff in the same vein, is +  
+ available to you on a monthly basis if you'll just come through with suitable re- +  
+ sponse. Suitable response, in this case, would be a LoC, a contribution, or by way +  
+ of arranged trade. (I don't want to trade Potlatch for any zine that is already +  
+ coming to the Katz household in trade for Focal Point.) If you are crude and boor- +  
+ ish and ill-bred, you may also obtain Potlatch for 35¢ for one issue, but I won't +  
+ accept subs. Some people, though very few, also receive Potlatch at the whim of +  
+ the editor, and will probably continue to get it for the same reason. +  
+  
+ Special thanks to Terry Carr for not only doing "Entropy Reprints", but for also +  
+ actually typing his own stencils. Thanks also go to Arnie for production assistance +  
+ which includes the mimeography of the issue, and all lettering-guide work. +  
+  
+ I appreciate the letters received in response to the last issue, and will mention +  
+ that in addition to those printed, I also heard from: Seth McEvoy, Alpajpuri, Hank +  
+ Davis, Jerry Lapidus, Dave Hall, and Jonh Ingham. Hope to hear from everyone again. +  
++++++



It has always struck me as very unfair that I was born early in January. Any other person with a January or December birthday will know what I mean. When I was a child, there was very little to-do made over my birthdays, coming as they did immediately after Christmas and New Years. Since I've been an adult, however, there has been a tendency for those around me to over-compensate for the deprivation of my childhood -- which has made the advancing years easy to bear.

The birthday season started early when two days in advance Arnie decided to give me my gifts: my liking for jigsaw puzzles was indulged to the extent of two circular puzzles - one of mushrooms and toadstools that reminded me somehow of Robert Jennings' artwork, and the other of a very old astrological chart of the southern sky, with the zodiacal figures running along the side. But the most beautiful gift was an object of art - a wonderfully colored moth, permanently imprisoned inside a cube of lucite.

The real highlight, though, came the next day at my office. My boss sent word he wished to see me in the conference room, producing thoughts of "what'd I do now" in my mind. I knocked on the door, and he cracked it with a gruff look ..then threw it wide open to reveal a birthday cake with my co-workers gathered about singing "Happy Birthday To Joyce". I was surprised and delighted...and we had a very nice little party gathered around the conference table, eating cake and drinking coffee. The cake was a marvelous confection like none I had ever had before...between the layers was a gooey filling of chocolate pudding, and covering the entire cake, top and sides, was a thick frosting of whipped cream.

By the time I left the office I was having vague stomach pains. By the time I reached Brooklyn Heights my discomfort was more than vague; as I walked into the grocery store I realized things were getting rapidly worse. I turned around and ran out of the store just in time to disgrace myself on the street.

My actual birthdate was spent mostly with me curled into a ball, moaning now and then as a wave of nausea passed over me.

Just how many people do you know who get food poisoning on their own birthday cake?

+ + +

I would hope that, high among your New Years Resolutions, you have determined to vote in the Egoboo Poll. The most observant among you may have noted that I enclose ballots with this mailing. I had thought to, in true Machiavellian manner, publish my own ballot. However, when I actually started to complete my ballot, I found myself having much difficulty in ranking the order of preference, or even in choosing the subjects most worthy of votes, from the list of deserving eligibles. Therefore, instead of reproducing the ballot, I'll simply list suggestions in each category, with the (Machiavellian) hope that I may remind you of someone you may have overlooked. In no particular order:

For Best Fanzine, thanks to the rise of insurgent zines, there are many fine choices, some of which are: Focal Point, Warhoon, Egoboo, Metanoia, Microcosm, Horizons, Gilgamesh, Energumen, Speculation, Nope, Embelyion, and SFR.

Fanwriters are also plentiful among the fannish insurgents: Terry Carr, Bob Shaw, Arnie Katz, Rich Brown, John Berry, Harry Warner, Ted White, Dick Bergeron, Calvin Demmon, Greg Shaw, Steve Stiles, Liz Fishman.

I was able to select five Humorists from the following list: Arnie Katz, Calvin Demmon, John Berry, Colleen Brown, Bob Shaw, Terry Carr, Greg Benford.

I could only think of five critic-reviewers I wanted to mention; they were: Ted White,



Terry Carr, Alex Panshin, John Berry, Ted Pauls.

I couldn't think of five artists, but the top three I definitely feel are: Alicia Austin, George Barr, Tim Kirk.

Cartoonists were easy: Jay Kinney, Steve Stiles, Bill Rotsler, Joe Staton, Ross Chamberlain, ATom.

Columns were hard to decide among; here's a list from which I made my choices: Infinite Beanie by Terry Carr; All Our Yesterdays by Harry Warner; Bosh Tosh by Bob Shaw; Maverick by John Berry; White Trash by Ted White; Totem Pole by Rich Brown, Trenchant Bludgeon by Ted White; Greg Shaw's Editorial; Richard Bergeron's Editorial.

#1 Fan Face was a very hard category, and I wouldn't even begin to list all of the names I considered. I finally decided, though, to cast my vote for Terry Carr. Best New Fan: I considered Grant Canfield and Liz Fishman, but finally settled on Colleen Brown. There were a number of fine candidates for best single publication: I debated between Focal Point 12.5 and Warhoon...and finally decided that Warhoon #27 should get my vote.

Most Important Event: Here again, there were several things from which to make a choice: Heicon. 40th Anniversary of Fanzine Fandom. Fannish Insurgents Rise. The Bob Shaw Fund.

The "Best All Time" categories are definitely the most interesting on the ballot, and deserving of very careful consideration. Frankly, I still haven't voted in the "All Time" categories; I've been compiling a list of favorites from which I expect to make very difficult choices. So far, for best all time Fanzine, these are the ones I've listed: Innuendo, Hyphen, Quandry, Void, Quip, Stellar, Ape, Warhoon, Bem, A Bas, Oopsla, Grue, Xero, Lighthouse, Frap, Flying Frog, Opus-Fanvariety, Fanac....and I'm certain I'll expand the list by numerous more titles before I even begin to make my choice.

Some suggestions for All-Time Fan are: Burbee, Laney, Rotsler, Carr, White, Hoffman, Willis, Warner, Bloch, Tucker, Moskowitz, Ackerman, Wollheim, Speer....and a skimming of All Our Yesterdays will, I'm certain, produce another dozen or so names worth considering.

Right now, while you're thinking of it, take time out to vote....

+ + +

My second resolution for the New Year (the first being to complete and mail my ballot) was far less fannish, though much more self-interested.

For the past six months I've been reducing the number of cigarettes per day. Actually, to be more accurate, six months ago I was smoking two packs per day, and by 5½ months ago, I had reduced this to one - perhaps two - cigarettes per day. One would think that, having recognized the necessity for stopping and having actually gone through the withdrawal hassel involved with such a drastic cut-down, it would then seem to follow that the one-per-day habit could easily be done away with. Not so...and in fact my lack of continued determination to finally be done with the habit has been particularly lowering to my self-respect. I was able to almost totally keep from buying cigarettes, but rationalized that it was ok for me to smoke any freebees that came my way. As disgusting result of this rationale, I developed a tendency to peer longingly into ashtrays. I cursed as unfeeling the stranger on the streetcorner who so casually threw away a half-smoked pall mall. I wistfully eyed the long butts in the gutter, and was saved from temptation only by the bum who beat me out of it. -- Now seems as good a time as any to actually take the final step and be done with it. So, as of 1-1-71, I declared myself an ex-smoker.



# ENTROPY REPRINTS <sup>TERRY</sup>CARR

Several years ago I published the first issue of a fanzine called ENTROPY that was devoted to reprints of fan writing from the past that I felt deserved a better fate than to languish in the files of a comparatively few collectors. At the same time I published the first Entropy Booklet, CRIME STALKS THE FAN WORLD by F. Lee Daldwin, containing two long fan-fiction parodies, one the sequel to the other. Both ENTROPY and the Entropy Booklets were planned as the beginnings of series, but unfortunately I didn't manage to continue either one (as a result of someone losing half the stencils I'd typed for the second issue, among other things).

But Joyce came along with POTLATCH, and said she was interested in doing fan reprints regularly, so I suggested that I revive the ENTROPY idea as a column. She agreed, so here we are.

As in ENTROPY the fanzine, the format here will be fairly standard: for each piece I dredge from the mists of time past I'll do a short introduction putting it as well as I can in its historical perspective plus making whatever other remarks I may have about it. Then the title, byline and heading drawing (presumably), followed by the piece itself. Very like the layout you see on the next page, in fact, though in this case the introduction on top isn't by me, but rather by the anonymous writer of Operation Armageddon.

Operation Armageddon is reprinted from EYE #2, October 1954; it belongs to that period of British fandom when HYPHEN was in full flower and fannishness o'erswept all of Britain. You don't hear too much about the other fanzines of that period these days -- HYPHEN's brilliance seems to have thrown all the rest into shadow -- but fanzines like Ron Bennett's PLOY, Paul Enever's ORION, Harry Turner and Eric Needham's NOW & THEN and, far from least, the London Circle's unofficial organ, EYE, are worth remembrance. EYE was edited by "a triumfanate" of A. Vincent Clarke, J. Stuart Nackenzie and E. C. Tubb -- yes, the very same Ted Tubb who. It featured a style of free-wheeling fannishness that was in the great tradition. One issue, for instance, presented half a dozen fannish stories each beginning with the line "He was an old fan, and tired..." and this line immediately passed into the fannish public domain as a fit remark to be dropped here and there, or punned upon ("It was an old fire, and tanned").

The background of Operation Armageddon is explained pretty well in the author's introduction, though I should add that there was a bit more acrimony between the London Circle and the "Bloody Provincials" of the north than the author wants to admit. Aside from that point, all that needs clearing up is the matter of names. As I said above, Operation Armageddon wasn't signed in EYE, so I can only make an educated guess that the author is Vinç Clarke. As for all those people whose names are carefully not mentioned, initials alone being used, it's easy to identify Ted Tubb, Vinç Clarke, Shirley Marriott, Ron Bennett, Dave Newman and Ken Bulmer; I'm reasonably sure that the C.H. who suggested "Project Pandemonium" was Chuch Harris, and I'll make a guess that the J.W. whose scheme comes just before Harris's may have been James White, since lines between the London Circle and the Wheels of IF were wide open then. Don't ask me who C.D. was, though.

That's that. What follows is a piece of fannish history...one of the funniest, I think.

-- Terry Carr



No one looked forward to the SUPERMANCON more than the active members of the London Circle. The nerve-wracking job of acting as hosts to all the previous post-war Conventions had earned them little but criticism, and when the Manchester Group finally rushed in to claim the '54 Con, Londoners sat back with a sigh of relief. To be guests instead of hosts! To be able to enjoy oneself and not feel responsible for every little thing, in front of and behind the scenes! To be ordinary members of the audience, and to have fun!

Fun?

Was there going to be hilarity? Or would the Northern fans act on the stage as they had in the audience? Awful visions of row upon row of fans, sitting grimly silent, arms folded, foreboding frowns on sensitive fannish features whilst the rain beat down outside dismayed the Southerners. The Mancunians and others had talked so much about organisation and London's lack of it....

OPERATION ARMAGEDDON was born at a fan party, in fannish good humour. Not malice, but laughter, was its key-note, and when it became apparent that the organisers were running into difficulties, planning on various pre-Con items was quietly dropped. In the event, the fears of the Londoners proved groundless, and only a few items were even thought of, and those mostly planned in the last few weeks. The written ideas blow off a little happy steam and set the atmosphere, and it's therefore as an example of fannish ingenuity that "i" proudly presents the first public history of the plan from the original documents:

# ARMAGEDDON

"A plan to brighten up the Supermancon...without the co-operation of the Manchester group...." (N-----)

HISTORY The project was first discussed on Coronation night at a party given by T--- T---. Later, on his return from the AVCON in Belfast, V---- C----- announced to certain members of the London Circle that Item 6 on the Business Sessions there had been "In Secret Sessions: Proposals for brightening up the Mancon." Serious and constructive ideas had been forthcoming.

It was then announced that the Woolwich Science Fiction and Vargo Statten Appreciation Society (with which was incorporated the Plumstead Flat-Earth Club) had also discussed the subject, and it was decided to pool talents in an ANARCHS INTERPLAN project to be known as OPERATION ARMAGEDDON. The first meeting was held 10/9/53....

## BULLETIN ONE

It was generally agreed that in these early stages frequent meetings are unnecessary as well as injudicial, and news will be circulated via bulletins and perhaps chain letters....Members are asked to take an interest in all ideas discussed, and to note opportunities for forwarding the projects, i.e. second-hand articles that might be useful; spare copies of notices ditto; material for making banners, beards, etc.; joke



items; etc., etc. Some notice must be given to the possibility that, although this project is and must be kept in the spirit of good clean fannish fun (or words to that effect), the Mancon Committee's ideas of good clean fannish fun may differ in important respects from ours, and it's not impossible that they might stalk out in a body and high dudgeon after a few hours of OPERATION ARMAGEDDON in action. We must be prepared to carry out some part of a semi-official programme as well as any "set-pieces" by the Circle which will be expected of it and which will be included in the official SuperMancon programme and freely discussed with the Mancunians.

The following ideas were discussed at the first meeting. Please refer to number and letter designations when writing, and KEEP THIS BULLETIN!

- (1) Fake programmes. Several ideas were discussed, and the final product will require a good deal of work and probably cash. Initially, possibilities are
- (a) a parody on the actual programme, if there will be enough time between its publication date and the Con. The parody would have to be a better job of work, which might be difficult in a short time. Tentative only.
  - (b) a fake programme, and the biggest "prestige" job possible...photolith? engraving? card-bound? silver-tasselled?...etc. To be circulated to fandom about zero minus 14 days. Likely to be impressive but expensive.
  - (c) a fake programme, messily hektographed (preferably) or duplicated, issued at roughly zero minus 4 weeks, followed approx. two weeks later by a second fake indignantly denouncing the first and offering another and deadly serious programme...with, as we don't want to reduce membership to ourselves and the SuperMancon Committee, a "give-away" item on the back, such as "Come to the Mancon, financed by the London Circle," or similar. This second programme would be a well done job.

1c is definitely fiendish, & altho. not needing more physical work than 1b, calls for extra gags as well as a (serious-sounding) parody.

ACTION Please indicate choice, ideas, alternatives, etc.

- (2) Suggested we have printed or engraved cards to be given to all and sundry at the Con. Visiting cards bearing insulting/fannish messages, such as "I'm a London Circle member, who the hell are you?" and "A. E. van Vogt, California, USA" and "I like Vargo Statten," etc., etc.

Notices..."GENTLEMEN," "LADIES," "NO SPITTING EXCEPT AT THE PLATFORM," "VD IS CURABLE," "THE SUPERMANCON COMMITTEE SLEPT HERE," "FACTORY EXCURSIONS ARRANGED BY THE MANCHESTER GROUP -- APPLY CHAIRMAN," "MONEY BACK GUARANTEED," "GET YOUR RAIN HERE," etc.

Forged entrance tickets, with a "London Circle" message on the back.

Paper bags printed "IN CASE OF SICKNESS...MANCON COMMITTEE" to be pinned on backs of seats.

- (3) Costume.

- (a) "Committee" badges, if it doesn't mean too much involvement of innocent bystanders. (Opinions?)
- (b) If not too bulky, items emphasising Mancunian weather, to be worn when entering hall...macs, umbrellas, frogmen's flippers, etc. Any war-surplus life-belts, rubber dinghys, etc., available? (Idea: inflatable rubber belts painted and fashioned to look like regulation lifebelts with SUPERMANCON '54 lettered on them.)



(c) Waterpistols. Is there a gadget for simulating squeaky shoes? Other items...toy trumpets, banners, special costume for S----- M----- (?), playing cards, etc., etc., will be mentioned under separate headings. Jokes involving the discomfiture of the audience...stink bombs, etc....must be barred. Our object is to brighten things up, not wreck the joint.

(4) R-- B----- will be arriving early, and is delegated to try and put another mike in parallel with the relay system...if they have one. Messages?

(5)(a) Mancunians have an idea that Convention time-keeping is easy. Suggested 1 minute before advertised starting time, C----- D----- (surrounded by us) yells "Minus 60" and gives the seconds count on "Minus 50--40--etc." The last 5 seconds chanted by all Londoners, and on "Zero" a starting pistol or similar is fired. (Or a less loud noise...comments?)

(b) On the second day, alarm clocks mark zero hour. Suggested everyone brings one, conceals it on self or in bag, pre-sets it accurately.

(6) A "Window Smashing Joke" can be bought...a dozen aluminium (?) plates approx. 3" x 1½". When dropped in a bunch they make a hell of a clatter, like breaking glass. Suggested sets be bought or made, at intervals a beery voice is heard from the bar singing in a Scottish accent "I beelongs t' Glasga!"...CRASH!!!! ACTION: Obtain plates.

(7) D--- N----- will be supplying chemicals for making explosive paste, smoke producing chemicals, explosive top-hats, etc. Also wanted in this line...explosive cigarettes, etc. Suggestions wanted. Nothing fatal, tho.

(8)(a) A banner reading "You can't tell me Conventions run at a loss...SPACE TIMES Vol 2 No 5"

(b) A banner for the coach, or/and for mounting over any London exhibit.

(c) A large placard..."During the last year (2 years?) the London Circle have held X meetings and its members have edited X magazines, written X stories, been published in, etc., produced, etc."

#### BULLETIN TWO

PROGRESS REPORT I am happy to report that up to the date of writing no snags have arisen, and comments upon OAl show an attitude of restrained approval. K-- B-----, for instance, read his copy in a doctor's waiting room and was nearly thrown out by outraged invalids for laughing out loud.

(10) The Mancunians seem quite taken with the idea of putting Bert Campbell on trial. It is a good one, but it can be jazzed up a little. Besides odd comments from the body of the hall ("That man is the father of my child!") BC should make a grand entrance accompanied by a bodyguard with toy trumpets, Roman Candles, etc.

(11) One of the wilder ideas...during a dull moment S----- M----- or another femme fan rushes into the hall in a torn, dishevelled dress and a state of great excitement, screaming, and when the centre of attention, lets go with a crack such as "The sun's shining outside!" or "The strain of waiting for something to happen... it's too much!"

(12) Londoners wear "Committee" badges and issue alarming reports to neo-fen ... "Yes, it'll be a good Con if the Treasurer comes back"... "Are you staying to see



the magic lantern?"..."Toilet? Haven't you got any control?"..."Oh, the Committee resigned this morning...I'm a substitute" etc.

COMMENTS ETC. Errata in OAL. Page two, second para: for "fiendish" read "fannish."

ACTION REPORTS R-- B----- industriously gathered together a collection of metal scraps, working on (6), and a bunch of us accompanied him upstairs to the WH lavatory, where the collection was emptied on the tiled floor. It was horrible ...like a large plate-glass window falling in. Lew came dashing up the stairs two at a time, which proves something. R-- is continuing investigations...his attention is directed to the following from J--- W-----:

Ref: Section 6: REPORT OF ADDITIONAL RESEARCH INTO THE "BREAKING GLASS" WEAPON, WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR ITS USE BY MEMBERS OF A SMALL GROUP (splinter group?) ACTING IN CONCERT:

Research It has been found that the effect is greatly increased if it is thrown first against a wall or ceiling -- this results in a double-crash, rather like a brick going through a window. Also, when the weapon is thrown diagonally at a wall or ceiling, it makes a horrible scraping crash -- indescribable, but should be effective.

Suggestions Between two and six operatives enter a room (preferably without windows) and begin to talk loudly as if starting a fight (various accents could be used for purposes of misdirection), then they would begin to throw the weapon about as fast as possible while raising their voices still higher (the sound made while picking up the weapon after use is not very loud, but it sounds remarkably like someone walking over broken glass). All entrances to the room would of course be sealed. If the room chosen was one used to contain glassware or china, the effect on responsible persons outside would probably be great. They'd think someone was wrecking the joint.

END QUOTE FROM J---- W-----

ADDITION FROM C----- H-----:

Suggestion of "Project Pandemonium" (or "How to construct a 10-stage racket")

Phase 1 Five minutes after the beginning of the Guest of Honour's speech, a live mouse is liberated.

Phase 2 Girlish screams, cries of "Rat!" all the London Circle women climb on chairs.

Phase 3 "Hunt the Rat"

Phase 4 Lull. Then Dot or Daphne faint.

Phase 5 Chaos. "Give her air!" -- rush to open all windows -- "Brandy!" -- towel flapping -- indignant speech by husband about "verminous hall," "wife in delicate condition" (this need not be strictly true).

Phase 6 Law and order prevail. Guest of H. carries on with his speech.

Phase 7 Release second mouse.

END QUOTE FROM C----- H-----

- ooOoo -

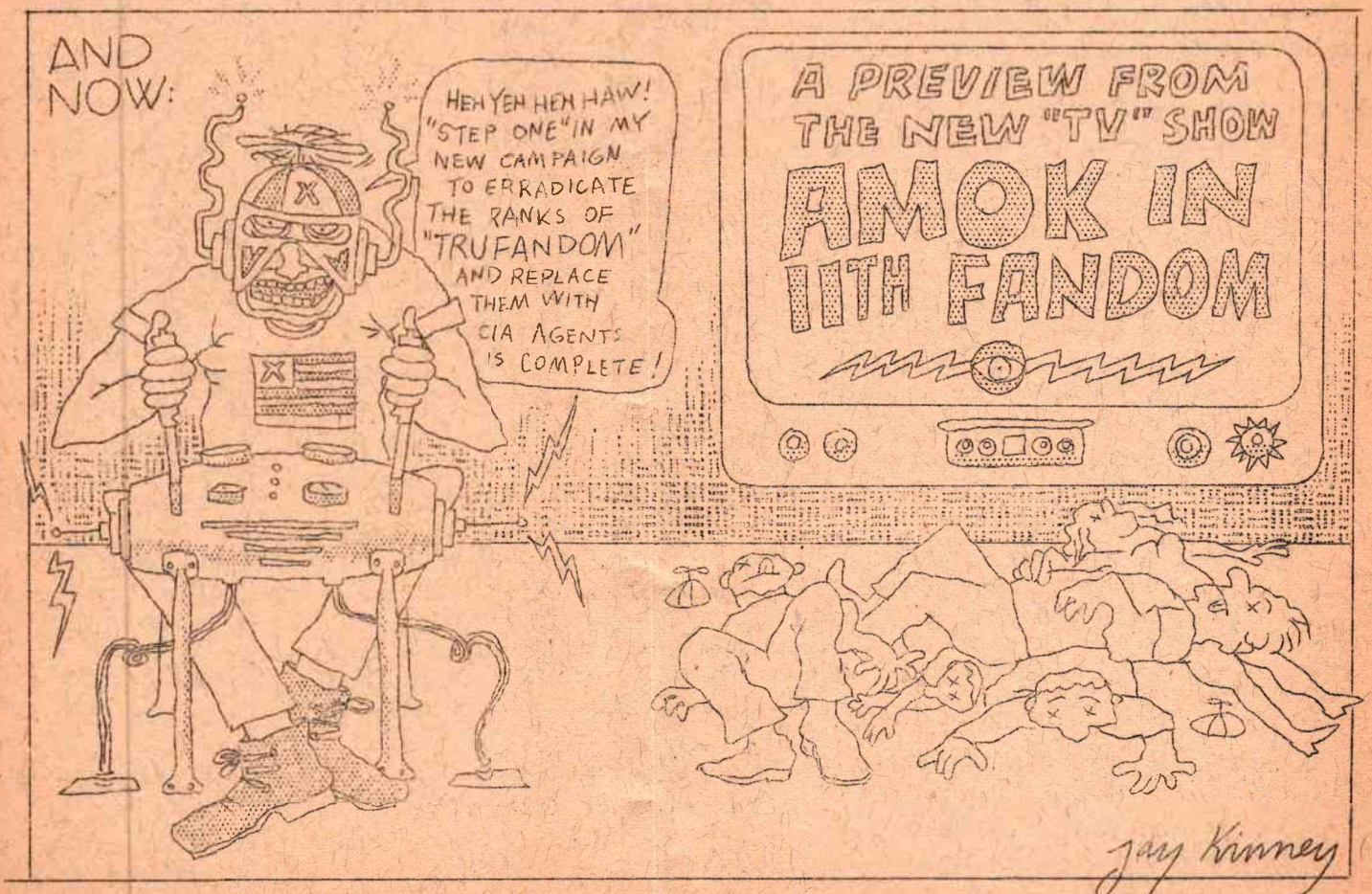
((There followed various other suggestions and comments in the original bulletins, few of which have any relevance now. A number of ideas never saw the ink of a duplicator; they were discussed and argued over at the White Horse and later at the Globe, till everyone knew them. Such a session was partly reported verbatim in the Xmas SPACE TIMES, in the story "Scrooge on Ice"; nobody thought it had any basis of fact.



A number of ideas have been excluded even from the present account. Some were too fanciful...chalking a letter on the soles of about a dozen shoes and sitting so that those on the platform could see a word or words but no one else, for instance. Some...just not good enough. Some...too good. Those are being saved in case of future need.

Operation Armageddon was top secret; the first time that any Northerner heard of it was approximately a month before the Convention, when, discussing the open programme scheduled for the Londoners at the ManCon...a programme wonderfully distorted by the non-appearance of Bert Campbell (who wasn't in OA) and its spontaneous revivification by Ted Tubb...Stuart Mackenzie said, restlessly, that there should be some greater gimmick with which to have fun...supposing the Con died on us? Brian Varley, ManCon Treasurer, was shaken when someone said "There is a gimmick" and, giving Brian a kind smile, said "Operation Armageddon -- we'll tell you later, Stu." Thus giving the fevered imaginations of the Northerners something to think about. On the other hand, the OA organisers had to be careful that fans not acquainted with the atmosphere in which OA was discussed but who knew of it shouldn't take it too seriously.

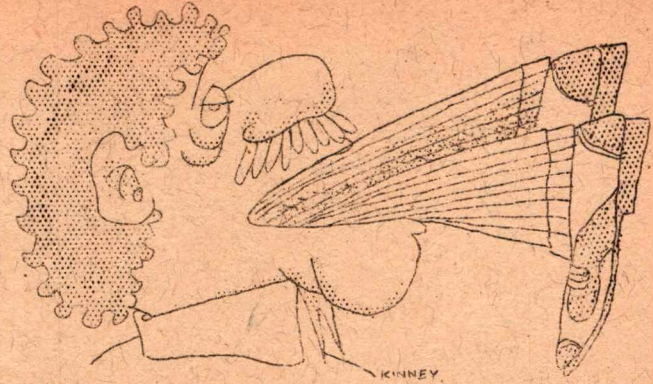
There's not likely to be anything like Operation Armageddon again...or, at least, not in the same sort of context. Whatever else the SuperMancon did, it showed that putting on a formal programme with one item straight after another, expecting an audience to sit through an entire morning or afternoon session for one half-hour-or-less item that they want to hear, is one of the stupidest traditions ever to have grown in fandom. Future conventions will have to have not only strictly timed events with appreciable intervals between them, but adequate provision for those fans who don't want to listen to certain items to get together and talk out of the way of the official proceedings. Otherwise, someone is going to plan an Armageddon and carry it through. And who could blame them?))





# DOWN IN THE MOUTH

BY BRUCE TELZER



Going to the dentist is rarely a pleasant experience. That any sane person would voluntarily place himself in a position where another human would drill holes in his teeth and inflict pain within his mouth immediately casts grave doubt on his sanity. But then, of course, the dentist's lot is not an easy one either. I mean, what with having to endure an endless series of "you're looking down in the mouth" jokes, who needs the grief.

I've never had much luck with dentists although when dentists see me, money signs apparently light up in their eyes. It seems that everytime I get the courage up to go to the dentist, I end up with something like 25 cavities. How I've managed to get what seems to have been hundreds of cavities in only 32 teeth is best known only to god and my dentist. It's almost got to the point that while giving me an examination, my dentist excuses himself for a moment, calls his travel agent on the phone, and makes reservations for a trip to Florida with what he plans to get out of my mouth. There have even been times when he'd get carried away with his drilling and would merrily rummage through my mouth, madly poking holes as he figured that they were bound to turn into full-fledged cavities by the next time he saw me. I always had a feeling that he was secretly financing next year's car by this nifty practice, but I could never pin him down for sure.

However, for all my dentist's faults, he had one thing to make the agony of a visit almost bearable -- laughing gas, known to the privileged few as nitrous oxide. This wonderful gift of science would get me pleasantly and positively stoned to the point where I simply didn't care. Why, the dentist could have pulled out all my teeth in one fell swoop, and I'd think that it was real great, secretly wishing I had even more teeth for him to yank out. And on top of this, there was a great pair of stereo headphones to while away the time while he picked and dug his way among my teeth. From the age of twelve on I can still recall many fond hours spent in the dentist's chair as I happily stared at the colored blobs, wierd cartoons and wild monsters I could conjure up floating among the florescent lights in the ceiling as I floated away in another world.

Leaving history aside, though, my most recent encounter with a dentist occurred only a month or so ago. Having poked around in my mouth and thereupon noticing several holes and the like, I decided that it was high time to get them looked at. The only problem was that, between working and staying in the City, I wouldn't be able to see my own dentist some thirty miles away on Long Island. Undaunted, I gave him a call, explained my predicament, and asked if he knew of a good dentist somewhere in midtown Manhattan.

"I know just the man for you," he said. "Dr. Robert Needle. He's an old college buddy of mine."

"Dr. Needle?" I questioned skeptically.

"Yes. He's located at 2 Pennsylvania Plaza in New York."



"But that's Penn Station!" I protested.

"No, not quite. Actually, it's in Madison Square Garden on top of Penn Station," my dentist answered.

Swell, I thought to myself. I suppose that he can take care of me between time-outs in the hockey and basketball games. Happily, I later found out that his office was loftily situated on the 24th floor of the building just adjacent to the Garden, so at least I didn't have to suffer the debacle of having my teeth knocked out by a hockey puck when I was in the dentist's chair.

And so I set out with more than a slight case of trepidation for the dentist's one cold, gray dismal morning at 9:00. Getting near the place was no easy task as frenzied hoardes of glassy eyed, Times-carrying commuters poured out of Penn Station below and knocked over anything in their mad rush to their offices. Finally, after a boring, Muzak filled elevator ride to the 24th floor, I managed to find the dentist's office, neatly tucked away next to an office of Merrill, Lynch, Pierce, Fenner and Smith.

Dr. Needle's receptionist turned out to be that sort of pimply, fat, stringy-haired blond that everyone remembers in high school who was never asked out for a date, but managed to be president of ten clubs and liked by all because she had a "great personality". Before I had even the chance to introduce myself, she had handed me a green form and with a sweet, virginal smile, motioned me to have a seat and fill it out. Aside from normal questions like name, address and phone number, there were a couple of intriguing ones that went, "How might I be of service?" or "How shall I address you? Mr., Mrs., Miss, First Name, Nickname or Other."

While I was contemplating several answers like "Call me Tooth", the good receptionist got up, motioned me to follow and led me to Dr. Needle's office. I always thought that being left alone in a doctor's or dentist's office was the first trick taught in medical or dental school. Like, you're supposed to stare wildly about the room and get impressed by all the diplomas and various molds of teeth, jaws and dentures lying about the desk.

After a few moments, Dr. Needle walked in, introduced himself and sat down behind his desk. Surprisingly, he almost looked quite like any other human despite the fact that he pillaged the mouths of others.

"Now what can I do for you?" he asked.

I quickly explained how I couldn't see my own dentist and how I was recommended to him.

"Fine," he said. "Let me ask a few questions."

After a few simple ones concerning my prior dental work and the like, he really hit me with a few good ones.

"Now, how many times do you brush your teeth each day?" he asked. I vividly recalled a similar scene in my sixth grade hygiene class as our spinster school nurse passionately brushed a two-foot high tooth.

"About two times," I answered.

"But when?" he asked.



"I guess in the morning and night," I said.

"At exactly what time though?" he persisted.

"Oh. About 8:30 in the morning and maybe 11 or so at night."

"Aha!" Dr. Needle exclaimed, his eyes a-twinkle as he madly wrote all this down. "And now -- what do you eat?"

My gawd. Who wants to even think about a pepperoni pizza at 9:30 in the morning. Seeing the quizzical look on my face, Needle asked me if I were some sort of fresh vegetable freak.

"No, not really," I replied. "I'm really big on Green Giant frozen vegetables though."

"But do you eat raw carrots?"

"No", I answered.

"What about celery?"

"Nope," I repeated, feeling that I was gonna fail the interview and have all my teeth pulled out.

"Now tell me," Needle intoned rather solemnly. "What do you think about your mouth?"

"Huh? I don't think I really understand the question," I meekly answered.

"Well, is your mouth a source of concern for you? Do you often think about it, or dream about it?"

I was caught totally off guard.

"Well, er...ah...I really don't think about my mouth," I stammered. "I mean, it's there all the time, and I suppose that I'm kind of fond of it what with all the chewing and stuff that it does for me, but I don't really sit and think about my mouth in my idle moments."

"That's a very good attitude," Needle beamed, writing down my every word. "You see, there are many people who are very concerned about their mouths. We like to know about these things before we begin work on a patient. Now, what we'll do today is examine your teeth, take some x-rays, and arrange for your next appointment at which time we'll discuss the future prognosis of your mouth for maybe an hour or so before we begin work."

"The future who of my what?"

"Why, the future prognosis of your mouth. We like to have well informed patients, who really sincerely care about the state of their mouths and what the future holds in store for it."

I was almost on the verge of panic. I had heard about people with all kinds of wierd mouth fetishes, but I certainly never expected to find it in a dentist, my own much less. I wanted to run out of the place -- but I was already being led to "the chair" for the examination.



While Needle stood over me and poked around in my mouth, he'd call out to his assistant who would studiously take down every word.

"The gums and tongue are a healthy pink," (I didn't need a dentist to tell me that) "but there seems to be a slight hardening of the soft palate." (No--not that, I trembled.) "There are several caries on the bottom left molars and the wisdom tooth in particular... getting into that will be like performing a tonsilectomy on an elephant in a phone booth." (He's got to be kidding. Is she really writing all this down?)

After a few moments of more poking around, x-rays were taken and I was led back to Needle's office for my final lecture on my mouth.

Leaning back comfortably in his chair, Needle exclaimed, "Basically I'm very happy with your mouth. Yes indeed, it is a good mouth; probably one of the best I've seen in years."

"Shucks. I'll bet he says that to all his patients," I thought.

"I think I can predict a good future for your mouth," Needle continued, "and there's no reason why you shouldn't keep your teeth through all your adult life unless, of course, some have to be pulled."

"What about your fee?" I carefully asked, figuring that all this ritzy treatment in a fancy skyscraper wasn't exactly for free.

"Of course, we'll have to see the results of your x-rays before an exact figure can be stated, but based on my initial examination, I think that I can give you a fair estimate. We have three programs of treatment here. In "Personalized Dentistry" we use nothing but porcelain caps and crowns, while in "Suggested Dentistry" we use gold crowns and caps. And of course, there is what we call, ahem, "Maintenance Dentistry", using old fashioned silver fillings. Naturally, we don't like to use them unless absolutely necessary. In your case, I think that the Suggested Dentistry is best suited."

That was great, I thought. What with my mouth filled with silver, a touch or two of gold might just do me some good. Needle took out a pad, scribbled the prices down for the three treatments, and acted like a used car salesman appraising your trade-in. Quick as a flash he handed me the form and raced out of the room so I could contemplate the prices in peace. Not knowing what to expect, I slowly looked at the prices.

"Personalized Dentistry - \$1548." Shell shock hit me. He must be kidding.

"Suggested Dentistry - \$928." Well, there goes a new car.

"Maintenance Dentistry - \$234." No new stereo this year, I sighed.

Needle rushed back in and asked if I had chosen treatment A, B, or C. My face was pale. My mouth, supposedly in excellent condition, was speechless. Sensing my panic, Needle explained how the cost included not only the dental work and lecture on my mouth's prognosis, but also the privilege of another hour's talk with him on proper methods of brushing and taking care of teeth. A bargain indeed. After hemming and hawing about my final decision, I came up with the excuse that I would have to think about the matter and would let him know by my next appointment. We both knew, though, that I was a candidate for the cheapie job.

Needle signed as I left his office, not really looking forward to seeing my mouth again, even if it were the best he had ever seen.

-- Bruce Telzer



THE  
GOLDEN  
BAGEL  
OOOOOO  
ARIE KATZ

When I was a young fan of 17, I blithely said, when asked what sort of girl I one day hoped to wed, that I wasn't sure, except that I would never hook up with a femmefan. I grudgingly admitted that a fringefan would be marginally acceptable and that I could probably get along with a mere science fiction reader quite well, but an actifanne -- Never!

So here I am, writing a column for my lady's fanzine.

My original fears concerning femmefans proved groundless, but a host of new shocks and surprises has been confronting me daily since Joyce came into my life, dragging 87 boxes, cartons, trunks, and suitcases behind her.

The biggest surprise has been that fabulous fannish femmefans lie a lot. They seldom bother to prevaricate about such mundane trivia as Where They've Been or What The Boss Does During Dictation. In such manners, Joyce is a paragon of honesty.

But give her a typewriter and you have a teller of tall tales, a truth stretcher, a myth-maker who could put Joel Chandler Harris, Mother Goose, and the Irish John Berry to shame.

Just last issue, for example, Joyce led you readers to think that I am the type of person who wanders through bookstores dumping shelves of science fiction books on teen-aged neofans at whim.

Let me tell you right here and now that such is not the case. Those who know me well instantly realized that Joyce's story in POTLATCH was nothing but the most blatant slander. Some of you, however, have allowed Joyce to worm her way into your confidence and you must be immediately set straight on what actually happened.

I was standing there, peacefully contemplating a row of Ace Specials as is my wont, from time to time helping Joyce read some of the Big Words on the Dark Shadows covers, when I heard a kid say to another that a particular cover was by George Barr. His friend replied that he thought George was a Good Man or words to that effect. They went on to talk in a semi-knowledgable way about various fans-turned-pro artist.

"What's that word?" Joyce asked me, interrupting my observations.

"Werewolf," I said.

"You mean 'weirdwoof'?" she asked.

"Wolf," I said. "With an 'l'."



"That's what I said," she said, "woof."

"No, Joyce, it's 'werewolf', not 'weird woof'," I explained.

"Oh," she said, "I thought they were called weird woofs because they were so weird and go woof! woof!"

Helping her up from under a barrage of Ace Specials that had mysteriously fallen on her head from a high shelf, I said, "No, believe me, it's 'wolf' like the animal and 'were' like, uh, well..."

"But they go 'woof!'" she protested. She looked up at me hopefully. "Woof! Woof! Woof!" she shouted.

I decided to try and calm her by indicating that we were in the proximity of two fans. "Those are two fellow lovers of science fiction," I whispered.

She walked up to them. "Woof?" she enquired. They edged closer to the war novels.

"Nice day for a little fanac," she offered. "Isn't it a nice day for fanac, Arnie Katz, editor of Focal Point the biweekly newszine 6 for a dollar?"

"Uh," I said.

"Sure would like to meet some fans right now. A little fannish company would certainly be nice, eh, Arnie Katz, assistant editor of AMAZING and FANTASTIC?" she said.

The two neofen moved toward the nurse novels.

"Boy do I want to pub an ish," Joyce shouted as I led her to the front of the store. "Wouldn't you like to stencil up a zine, Arnie Katz, friend of bnfs and famous lights of the science fiction world," she threw over her shoulder at the two young neofans, one of whom had begun to whimper slightly. They were edging around toward one of the secondary aisles which led toward the front of the store and the exit, which must have been a symbol of salvation for the two of them by then.

But Joyce was too quick for them. Taking advantage of the fact that I was leading her toward the front--I admit it was a mistake in tactics, but all that is merely hindsight--she blocked off their route to freedom by cutting them off at the dictionaries.

They stood under the shadow of the hardbound Websters Third International, fear luminous in their wide eyes as Joyce advanced toward them. That was when it started to rain dictionaries. As the two kids went down beneath a barrage of Larousse French English Dictionaries (hardbound) I grabbed Joyce's arm and, before she quite realized what had happened, we were on the street again.

"Hey, Arnie Katz, who got dropped out of fapa immediately after waiting six years to get in; we left those fans alone back there with all those books."

"So?"

"I wanted to look up 'weirdwoof'," she said.

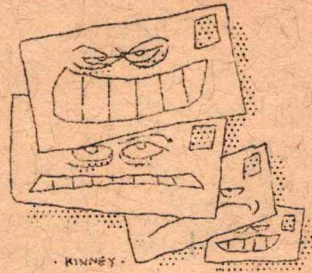
We had Nathans hot dogs and went home to put out a one shot.

-- Arnie Katz



# LETTERS

(Letters)



REDD BOGGS, P.O.Box 1111, Berkeley, Calif. 94701

I don't go around proclaiming the fact. Indeed, the present moment may very well be the first time I ever mentioned the matter in my entire life. But I claim to be the only fan -- till you came along -- ever to have published a fanzine called "Potlatch". Your new fanzine is hardly an encroachment on my preserve, however, for my fanzine was a one-shot (I hope yours isn't!) and anyway the full title of it was FAPA Potlatch. I have long since forgotten what appeared in that one and only issue, but Pavlat-Evans tell me that the fanzine appeared under the date of Winter 1951-2, and I think it was one of several oneshots I published for FAPA in those days carrying activity requirements for non-publishing members.

Nineteen years later, you come forth with a pleasant new fanzine called Potlatch which, I'm sure, owes nothing to my old oneshot, and indeed looks and sounds more like Focal Point than anything else. I guess that's only to be expected, considering the illustrative and production assistance that you received, but one might hope that you could impress a more distinctive personality upon the appearance of Potlatch, just as you did on your own contributions to the material.

I liked your description of life in the Big City, although I wonder at your notion that street vendors and "sidewalk merchants" resemble the scene in "some small European village" rather than in the big cities of Europe. As for the subways, I remember Sue Langdon's description of them from her last trip to New York a couple of years ago. They were crammed into a train that glided into a station where a huge throng was awaiting a train. "Oh no!" she thought, "all those people aren't going to get into this train, are they?" But they were, and did, much to her horror. This little vignette would hardly be worth describing, except that Sue is not somebody from the boondocks who had never seen subways and crowds before. She was born and bred in New York, and had simply forgotten how bad it really is in the few years she has been in California.

You and everyone else will suppose it's just another manifestation of my well-known paranoia when I suggest, calmly enough that -- though your tale about Colleen Brown's desire to run down to the exchange "to apply her new-found trading skills" after winning at the Stock Market Game is of course exaggeration -- such games as the Stock Market Game are certainly intended to condition players in that very direction. If only one sucker is made out of 100,000 players, that's a very good return indeed. Apparently a normal reaction is one like Colleen's. But I wonder if a few players don't have the opposite idea. Finding out how the stock market is manipulated to fleece the lambs -- presuming that the game gives an accurate picture of this -- ought to make a certain number of people decide to go down and raze the stock exchange with their bare hands.

::Why is it that Californians take such especial delight in condemning New York, and vice versa? There seems to be some deadly form of competition between the residents of those two states... Personally, after having lived about the same length of time in both states, I'm of the opinion that they are each beset with such problems as to make their habitability extremely questionable when approached by midwestern standards.



I doubt that the reasons you mention had anything to do with the development of the stock market games; I would expect they were developed by games-men, the same as any other game might be invented. However, I will agree with you that it seems very likely that a certain percentage of the people who play the stock market games do go on to try their hand in the stock exchange....and, like you, I suspect in many of these cases, the lambs are quickly fleeced. -- Still, the game is very entertaining and I enjoy it, without giving any great thoughts to the morality of the inventor/s -- if it actually was their conscious intent to entrap me into investing in the real-life exchange, then they failed; after playing the game, I would be even less likely to become an investor than I would have been before.

I doubt that Potlatch will ever look too very different from Focal Point. After all, the zines are typed on the same typer, duped on the same mimeo, using the same paper, lettering-guides, etc. However, it is to be hoped that no one on the mlg. list is incapable of telling the difference in the zines...

DAVID HULVEY, Rt. 1, Box 198, Harrisonburg, Va. 22801

I felt very relaxed after injecting your zine. It amuses me that fannish humor uses similiar hyperbole today (re Arnie Katz's Egoboo Express) as in the days of Walt Willis' Wilde Heir. Of course, two fan funnies followed by Blue Jaunt's graveness, which was quite perceptive, is like a group of school kids racing out the door to begin Christmas vacation; only to be smashed by a reckless driver in front of the teachers' horrified sight. Even if you need to balance fannishness with sercon, do it less abruptly. Anyway, thanks for the honesty to discuss certain practices Joe Phan could use to cop a Hugo. I'm scared, though, someone will take your advice serious enough to attempt just what you warn of...but this may be a plus, not a minus. If some small town operator should try to steal the award by such underhanded means, then perhaps fandom would awake to the danger of the situation and enact rules against such abuses of fair play. Yet, it would become self-defeating should fifty John Phans get the same devious idea, pub their zines, and thus flood the market to the point no one could get much advantage from the practices. However, SFR will probably become the SF sercon tradition, year after year take the award and come to dominate the scene intolerably. I hope, if Geis grabs the Hugo again, that a regulation be proposed to stop his fourth win; enough is enough, even apple pie begins to sour after a third helping. C'mon, some other excellent zines deserve recognition; Energumen, Trumpet, Anomaly, Speculation and I'm sure you can name other worthy zines, not to mention those many apa and personalzines where some very good work is being done. It's not right for one zine to monopolize this market of Hugo-getting talent. Fandom must tell Geis....

::A rule to stop multiple wins? -- I dunno about that...I'm not so sure that would be a good idea. Better that 50 Joe Phans do the same things, so as to cancel each other out -- and I notice, this year, there are already several zines started on campaigns remarkably similar to the one I suggested last issue -- or that (best of all) fans develop enough good taste so as to be turned off by these practices to withhold their votes from the fan editors who follow them. After all, regardless of the vote-getting tricks that are used, no faned is going to win a Hugo if other fans don't vote for him... I don't think I could support any moves to pass rules on this subject: you can't legislate good taste.

RAILEE BOTHMAN, 1300 W. Adams, Kirkwood, Missouri

It's funny how people look at the same thing and see something entirely different. To me, New York is a gigantic museum. Whenever we go, I walk until my feet are solid blister, looking in windows and shops and filling notebooks with ideas. Then between my feet hurting and my brain whirling, I can't sleep so I sit up most of the night reading from stacks of SF I've treated myself to.



BOB VARDEMAN, Box 11352, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87112

That just goes to show how closely I've been reading the fmz lately. I missed Geis' gaucherie entirely. Which I should be glad of, I suppose. I figure that the basic difference between fan and pro Hugos should be one of frequency of repetition. I'd award a pro one Hugo right after another if his work was the best in the field. At the fan level, tho, I'm for spreading around the egoboo since the award doesn't mean exactly the same thing. To the pro, this is bread and butter (and with a Hugo, jam as well) while to a fan it means nothing more than loads of egoboo.

I wouldn't object to a fan being nominated every year, but I think he should be "Disqualified" for, say, 5 years from winning again. I've admired Harry Warner thruout my short fannish career (and who hasn't, whether their tenure be long or short?) but his action last yr of turning down the nomination pointed the way and showed what a truly great fan he is.

Geis certainly deserved his first Hugo; the second yr I had to put Speculation ahead of SFR. This yr Energumen is probably the most outstanding. But either Spec or E. matched against SFR would probably lose. You pointed out why. Circulation. Big name pros... and, fer ghod's sake, advertising. Advertising on a major scale in prozines. Putting a one pager in a con PR is one thing; advertising in the pages of IF is another.

... The product (SFR) began to disinterest me when the gore started dripping from the pages after the various people began stabbing their victims to death with their poisoned pens. Rumors have reached me that SFR is no longer a vitriolic battle ground but I've not gotten back to checking first hand.

I'd say that is another point to add to your list of "sure-fire" ways to win a Hugo. If enough people are being nasty enough to each other, this will win votes...

::What you say seems to be true...I wish I had thought to make some mention of the "let's you and him fight" method of editing, when I wrote my article, for it certainly does make for instant-popularity of a zine.

F.M. BUSBY, 2852 14th Ave West, Seattle, Washington 98119

I loved Blue Jaunt, right after you got off Dick Geis' back and went into the general case, because you say some very true (if cynical) things there. But I wish you hadn't had to springboard it off SFR: Dick Geis isn't the first or only person to put in a pitch for his zine, Hugo-wise. Many do that, more or less obviously; it's no sin. (Well, which is worse? Asking straight-out for votes, or being cutesie-poo about it-- giving all the hints without saying it right out loud?) -- And, along with you, I'm pointing no fingers at any winners. Or even at losers. A lot of zines throw hints and some others do not, and I haven't kept track, really. There is of course no way to beat Big Circulation in competition with so-called "quality", which is a very subjective characteristic. How many Hugoes has SFTimes??

Anyway, I did dig your analysis of the scene. As you say, ex-ConCom people don't really give a hoot how it goes later (and the same is true of the silly things loaded onto ConComs by business meetings, or where it goes next, and when..once you have done your trick for the mob, "They can hold the next one in hell for all I care" dotdotted Howard Devore, 1959, and I heartily concur.) The thing you learn from putting on a Con is that it is worth doing ONCE. Period.

::I might argue with you as to whether it's even worth doing it once.... You're correct, of course--Dick Geis isn't the first, and it seems doubtful he'll be the last. Nevertheless, it is a little distasteful to watch it when it's done so blatantly.



DIANE MARESCA, 1821 Andover Court, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73120

Funny, but you seem to like the Big City, despite your rather introverted nature. I'm like you. I hate crowds and noise and air pollution. Even this city is getting too big for me. But I suppose there is a certain challenge involved...who will buckle under first, you or Them. I suppose there is a sort of suspense and adventure about living among so many diversified types of people. You know, like..."who will come around the next corner" and that sort of thing. I suppose one of the reasons I have continued to work in a University setting is because the atmosphere is similar to that of a big city.. so many different types of people, coming and going...and yet, I don't have to cope with the ultra-nearness that accompanies living in a place such as New York, or even St. Louis for that matter. In 15 minutes I'm on the outskirts of the city, away from noise and congestion...

::I'm gradually learning the city-dwellers' habit of never meeting anothers' eyes.. which helps to preserve a feeling of privacy at least on the mental plane. Mental privacy may not sound like any big deal...but, during the rush hours on the subway, it's the best one can hope for.

LARRY HERNDON, 1830 Highland, Carrollton, Texas 75006

..some interesting points in the article re winning a Hugo, and there's one other that I can suggest that might help just a little: if the faned seeking the Hugo would attend a lot of regional cons, spreading the word that he'd like to win a Hugo, it might garner him a vote or two more...tho now that I think of it, it might not be worth the extra trouble unless said faned planned to attend these regionals anyway.

::That particular ploy has, reputedly, been used to advantage by persons desiring a pro Hugo. I don't really believe that it's been effectively used by faned hopefuls, until - perhaps - this year. It will be interesting to see, this year, if the attendance of cons will help to even up the odds between Locus and SFR, for example.

RICHARD LABONTE, 53 Rosedale Ave., Ottawa 1, Ontario, Canada

The view you describe from where you sit came to mind so strongly when I read it that I was sure I was experiencing some real life deja-vu. Grey and rainy day, peaceful poetry in the scene, moderate amount of traffic, patterns of the ships' wanderings...it seemed I had seen it all before. I had to sift some memories for quite a while before I realized that the scene you were describing was lifted right out of a movie I saw late at night months ago. The flick was "Sabrina" with Humphrey Bogart and Audrey Hepburn, and in one scene, the background is exactly what you described.

I don't mind that Geis is asking for a third Hugo. It would be charitable of him to step aside, but if enough people are offended he'll lose out. I was glad to see your article, though; I've been interested in what past committee members have had to say about Hugo voting patterns. You seem to indicate that you don't think much of the fan awards and their validity, and by implication you haven't got a very high opinion of the pro awards.

But the Hugos seem to me to serve a purpose in that they're a focus of sorts for fan interest, and they sell books because they are awards which can be advertised. I don't ask for relevance in much that I see, and I don't see much need for relevance in the Hugos. They're just an institution, and it's bad to venerate institutions; if you do they become respectable and dead.

::I suppose the reason it all hit me so hard is that I really wanted to believe in



the Hugos.... However, you're mistaken if you think my cynicism toward the Hugo is the same in every category. I still have high regard for the fan-writer and fan-artist awards; they seem not to have fallen into the low state of the fanzine Hugo..at least not yet. And, I have quite high regard for the pro nominees....the pro categories seem to be less affected, in the nominating stage, than any of the fan categories. Although I'm very cynical on the subject of the awards, please don't make me seem even more cynical than what I am...

WILL STRAW, 303 Niagra Blvd., Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada

Referring to the past three or four years, as you did, as 8th fandom, disturbs me. I'll admit readily that there are certain definite characteristics of the past few years that warrant distinction for this period, but to generalize the years from 1953, say, to 1967 as 7th Fandom is enough to make the most casual of Fan Historians blanch. By my calculations, however inaccurate they may be, 1967 to whenever this Sercon Period ends and is replaced by the Focal Point-led Faanish Fandom, should be referred to as Eleventh Fandom. Seventh Fandom would have ended around 1957-59, when people like Bob Leman, Bruce Pelz, Ted Johnstone, rich brown and others began to be known, and Eighth Fandom would have included them, as well as Les Gerber, Bob Lichtman, Mike Deckinger, Bill Donaho, and the other multiapans and hyperactifans that came along. That period would have lasted until 1961 or '62. Ninth Fandom would be from 1962 or so, to 1964. There was a minor genzine revival with fen like Fred Patten and Don Fitch coming into fandom, and zines like \*Skoan\*, Frap, Introspection and SCARR creating a trend towards humor-writing. Around '64 people like Len Bailes, Arnie Katz, Lon Atkins, John Kusske, Tom Dupree, Createh Thorne, Al Scott, and Rich Mann formed the body of young fen and were the basis of a clique of hyperactifans and multi-apans, during what has been called the Golden Age of the Amateur Press Association. The fall of the apa in late 1966 and the rise of the genzine, starting in 1967, would seem to me the start of Eleventh Fandom, the current era. I may be generalizing, but I think classifying faanish eras boils down to a question of whether the amateur press association or the genzine is in prominence at the time. The apa is undergoing a revival co-inciding with the rebirth of faanish fandom, and a combination of the two will likely bring about Twelfth Fandom.

Bob Shaw or John (Irish) Berry or some other fan well-skilled in fan-advising should devise some ploys for revealing the fact that you are a fan to someone suspected of being fannish, without making an Ass of yourself, in the event that said person turns out to be a Dirty Mundane. You and Arnie brought back memories - years ago I suspected a kid at school of being a fellow Mad Magazine fanatic, and would come up with lines like "What in the name of Alfred E. Newman?" whenever something in the least out-of-the-ordinary occurred while we were together. I never did evoke any response from him, and gave up the idea when a comics fan met me through a similar ploy, and cured me of the \$2 that had been bothering me, as well as several Collector's Items from my Collection.

::I'm afraid I don't feel qualified to discuss your theory of numbered fandoms, or to argue with you concerning them. I had, however, always thought that a faanish era had to do more with the Trend, than with the group of people active at that time. I believe Arnie is planning to comment on this in his next col.

HARRY WARNER, 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Your cover looks a trifle subversive. Head fandom will immediately seize upon your title as the conveyor of a message. The decoration above the title looks more like a poppy than hemp to me. The chimney pots on the Brooklyn buildings are belching pollution in much greater quantities than desirable these days. The soft drink can is clearly an escapee from a garbage can, on its way to clutter up the landscape for a



long while. I believe that I can spot several scientific errors in the shooting star, since I can't find any Asimov book which describes shooting stars as five-pointed or creating jet trails. But I still like the cover.

Election laws make no sense. Maryland, for instance, provides absentee ballot provisions for anyone who will be away from his home at election time, and it doesn't matter if he's been away for a year or so because of such circumstances as overseas assignment in the armed forces. You'd think that such prolonged absence would as effectively prevent a person from making logical decisions on a ballot as your brief absence from Missouri. It will probably never occur, because of state's rights and such traditions, but I'd like to see national election laws come into being, national registration of voters, and universal use of voting machines that could be linked into one national computer center for instantaneous calculation of results as soon as polls closed and a switch was thrown. That would permit people who move around the nation to vote for president and vice president even if they hadn't been resident in their new area long enough to vote for state or county or city offices, and it would reduce monkeyshines at polling places from thousands of possible locations to just one big complex to be watched for trickery.

I can't remember having read this Willis reprint before. It is a fine one, and it demonstrates how much fandom has changed in a mere sixteen years. When written, some fans obviously were still excitable over homosexual members of fandom. I don't think anyone has taken the trouble to worry about the fairies for a half-dozen years, after more impressive problems like hotel elevators and Dr. Wertham's monograph have arisen.

I'd always suspected that FAPA members made special efforts to publish good things for the February mailing, when the egoboo poll ballots are distributed, but it hadn't occurred to me about the same practice in connection with Hugo voting. The listing of potential nominees that I've been advocating before nominating ballots go out for Hugoes might help to counter the influence of the most recent good fanzines. It's always hard for me to remember which fanzines are eligible and which aren't, in the case of the good ones that sometimes go a year or more between issues. It wouldn't be hard for a small committee to draw up a list of all the fanzines that meet the qualifications for Hugo nomination and are sufficiently high in quality for sane consideration for nomination. If anything good got left off such a list, accidentally or purposefully, its omission would create such a scandal that it would automatically get lots of publicity in time to regain the advantage it had lost through such omission. The same kind of eligibles listing could be provided in several other Hugo categories. Movies and television presentations, for instance, and fan artists. There's so much interest in novels as Hugo candidates that fanzines make most fans aware which are too old or too new to meet the rules. There are probably too many fan writers and short stories and too much dispute over their merits for a coherent listing of potential nominees. Such a listing wouldn't eliminate non-listed stuff from nomination; it would simply be a reminder to voters about what appeared and who was active during the period defined by the Hugo rules. Something similar is done for the baseball hall of fame voting procedures. The rules require a player to have been inactive for at least five years before he becomes eligible for votes. So each year a committee goes over a list of all players whose activity ended five years earlier and who meet the other qualifications such as number of years in the major leagues, then separates those who were marginal players with no claim at all to greatness, and puts the others on the ballot. It has stopped a lot of wasted votes for favorite sons and downright ignorant voting.

I haven't written a loc on the last two issues of Speculation. Arnie's article makes me realize how vulnerable this makes me. All Our Yesterdays may suffer another delay, while I attend to writing Pete Weston with the least possible delay.

::But who would watch the watchers, Harry? The amount of favoritism possible in



the compilation of such a list could serve to make the list meaningless, particularly since the committee would be in position of deciding what was even worthy of consideration. -- Yet, despite the flaws in such a scheme, a semi-formalized listing of eligibles would be a handy thing. Probably the easiest way to obtain it would be for various faneds to conscientiously attempt to give suggestions in each category...and for them to be really conscientious about it, instead of just plugging their own zine.

ROBERT BLOCH, 2111 Sunset Crest Dr., Los Angeles, Calif. 90046

Potlatch received, read, and enjoyed..most especially for your reaction to N.Y.C. I last visited it in May and found it a bit much--as they say in London, which I vastly prefer as a metropolis. Also pleased to see Willis reprinted: as is the case with every experienced robber, he holds up very well.

Your comments on how a fanzine can win a Hugo are a bit disconcerting because of the obvious logic employed. There are also flaws in the voting setup in other categories, but how does one correct the situation? My personal preference would be to see awards given for the body of one's work over the years, plus awards to most promising newcomers.

::In at least one category, ie, fan writer, there seems to be a tendency for the voters to take into consideration the body of work produced by that fan writer, instead of just the produce of the past year. This, I believe, is the reason that to date the fan writer Hugos have gone to such extremely deserving winners. But, I doubt if that philosophy could be extended into very many other categories without the awards losing even the small amount of meaning that they now have.

TERRY CARR, 35 Pierrepont St., Brooklyn, New York 11201

Jay's Peter Max cover is a kick. I remember a few months ago when the National Lampoon did a cover that was a parody of Peter Max, and the cartouche at the bottom was signed "Peter Money", which I thought a bit harsh till only a month or so later along came the first issue of The Peter Max Magazine, which sells for something ridiculous like \$1.00 and is dedicated to the proposition that Peter Max shall bring grooviness to the masses in exchange for nothing more important than mere money. I dunno; I like Max's art, but he seems intent on turning into a more talented version of Andy Warhol.

The Willis piece, Wilde Heir, is indeed a beautiful thing, one of my favorites by him. I wonder if you've ever read the piece by Lee Jacobs to which Walt refers a couple of times. ("...even Lee Jacobs did not write like Burbee until he went to California.") It was in a one-shot published at Burbee's in the early fifties, and I remember at the time I thought it was marvelous. I haven't reread it since but I'll try to look it up and maybe include it as a future Entropy Reprint, if it's as good as I remember it.

Your article on how to win a Hugo is scary, because it's so obviously true. I'd figured out most of this stuff myself a few years ago, and I expect some others did too, but seeing it laid out in cold print like this, so practical, so foolproof, does shake me up a bit. You've added some wrinkles I hadn't thought of; too, especially your inside information from having been on a con committee counting the ballots. Whew. Well, I can say a couple of things arguing against your conclusions. First, I doubt that past con committee members neglect to vote in the fan awards because of cynicism about them; seems much more likely that (a) they're worn out and gafia, or (b) their interest was more in the convention side of fandom anyway, and fanzines are of comparatively little interest to them.

And, of course, there does remain the fact that no matter how well timed and well



distributed a fanzine is, it's not going to win anything if it doesn't offer something that the voters enjoy reading. By and large this means it has to be at least a decent fanzine in terms of quality; I can't think of a single outright crudzine that's won a fanzine Hugo since the very first awards when SF TIMES was winning (and a case could even be made for that bastion of semi-literacy). Of course, saying that no crudzines have won Hugos is faint recommendation indeed, but it's the best I can do offhand.

::Well, there could be some argument about whether or not a crudzine has ever won.. but it would come down to a matter of personal taste, in the end. I've had a pretty low opinion of one or two of the winners, myself.... Nevertheless, it is true that these methods can be used by a deserving candidate, just as easily as by an undeserving one.

MIKE GLICKSOHN, 267 Saint George St., Apt, 807, Toronto 180, Ont., Canada

How can you rationalize an intense dislike of "lots of people and noise and commotion" with being a fan and attending conventions? Surely even in the day of the small private party at cons, these two are mutually exclusive? While I too favor the quieter, more personal type of fan party when attending conventions, I also enjoy the large wide-open type of party hosted by the con committee since it is generally at these gatherings that one makes new fannish friends and finally meets many of one's correspondents. One can then cement these new friendships at the private parties later on.

As to the question of Hugos, I can't help but be a little annoyed by the prevalent attitude of some fans that there are no good fanzines being published today. We are often told that the "good old days" of Slant and Hyphen and Warhoon are no more and that the current fanzines are abominable. While I agree that there probably aren't any fanzines of the nature of Slant etc being produced today, it strikes me as narrow-minded and reactionary to say that because there has been a change in the basic nature of fanzine material, this means that fanzines are all worthless today. Without going into the question of the relative merits of fanzines that have won or been nominated for Hugos lately, I'd just like to suggest that perhaps the recent Hugo lists merely reflect the basic change in the nature and attitudes of fans. And whether or not you and I approve of this switch, I think it's foolish to talk of "better" or "worse" when discussing fans or fanzines. Why not talk of "different" and then discuss matters of personal taste? It sounds a little more tolerant that way. And although I admit I'm prejudiced, I think there are several excellent fanzines around today. Maybe not excellent in the same way the great old fanzines were, but nevertheless excellent by my standards. Surely there's room for us all in this multi-faceted microcosm of ours?

Your comments on the gall of people who remind their readers that they are eligible for a Hugo struck home since I had done just that in the last issue of ENERGUMEN. However, I had a reason for it and that was to counteract the persistent rumour that it, and fanzines such as OUTWORLDS, weren't eligible until 72. I'd rather not get a Hugo nomination because I'm not good enough than because no one knows I'm eligible!

::I never really feel that a fan gathering is quite the same as a regular mundane crowd; since a large percentage of the people making up the crowd at a con party are friends of mine, it's not like being in the midst of a group of strangers, and doesn't produce the same traumas.

I've never heard anyone say that there are no good fanzines being published now, and would certainly argue that point with anyone advancing such a notion. Nevertheless, I would also argue the point with you, when you say that today's crop of fanzines are comparable to the fanzines of the "good old days", in terms of quality. The top



ten fanzines (as per the FANAC poll) of 1958 were, in order: 1 - FANAC, 2 - HYPHEN, 3 - INNUENDO, 4 - RETRIBUTION, 5 - OOPSLA, 6 - GRUE, 7 - APORRHETA, 8 - CRY OF THE NAMELESS, 9 - INSIDE, 10 - TWIG. By my reckoning, there are at least six, perhaps seven, titles in that list that are deserving of consideration on the list of "best all time fanzines". Do you truthfully believe that there are six or seven zines published this year that deserve to be nominated as "best ever"? Do you honestly think that the top ten fanzines this year could even begin to challenge the 1958 list in terms of quality? -- I don't think so...and I think it's foolish to say "different" and to be afraid to say such words as "better" or "worse". And, I think that refusal to see how today's fanzines could be made better could very easily cause the field to stagnate. I'd rather be honest enough to admit that Potlatch is worse than Quandry, and keep trying to improve...rather than just yelling "different" and staying in the same rut.

DICK BERGERON, 11 East 68th Street, New York, New York 10021

"Blue Jaunt" robbed me of an article I've planned on writing for many years. It was to be an expose on how Wrhn won its Hugo and many of the points you made are things I actually did in getting the Hugo--such as making sure as many convention members as possible received at least one issue of Wrhn just before the final ballots went out. I was unsuccessful in getting an address list of the members but Janie Lamb of the N3F very kindly loaned me a copy of the N3F roster for that year and this more than made up for the lack. Also I advertised in the advance publicity bulletins (or at least the one before the voting) shamelessly revealing some of the big names that had appeared in Wrhn like Blish, Lowndes, Heinlein (he had sent me a postcard), etc. And I also made sure most of the pros got a copy on the supposition that they would not have seen the more fannish contenders (was Void one of them?) and, being human, would be likely to vote for the best example they had seen. Most critics commenting on the Hugos are kind enough to cite Wrhn and Zero along with Fanac as among the zines that deserved their awards but things being what they are it's possible Wrhn wouldn't have won if I hadn't taken a few precautions to make sure it did.

DICK GEIS, P.O.Box 3116, Santa Monica, Calif. 90403

Thank you for the blueprint; SFR's third Hugo now assured, will follow to the letter.

I agree; let those who value the Hugo fight for it. Alter-Ego wants cool, self-effacing approach while I like blatant, humorous appeal for 3rd Hugo.

::Tell me, Dick, which one of you was it that designed the ad in the recently-released Noreascon Progress Report? Was that ad cool and self-effacing, or was it blatant and humorous? Personally, I am less worried about whether you're being cool or blatant, than I am at the fact that you seem to think fandom will actually believe there are two of you, and that fandom will be willing to blame all the gaucheries on the other one. It won't work you know; you are responsible for your own actions...

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