

# Sercon Navigation

**Sercon-Navigation #7** is brought to you by the Tom Springer Brain Trust (3073 Conquista Ct., Las Vegas, NV 89121), a western US affiliate of the Falls Church Group Mind. I is produced for the 16th Distribution of Apa V, the Las Vegas apa, which has as this month's theme "Fandom." Today is February 4, 1995.

Member, fwa.

## The Younger Generation by, Tom Springer

Vegas Fandom has taken casualties. Commitments, vows, and rings were fired with abandon in a shootout during that gland swelling time of year when the scent lingers deep in your throat and your mind is clouded with pink shades of love, a time in Vegas Fandom that, I think, should be mentioned.

After reading Laney's Ah Sweet Idiocy and Forry Ackerman's take on "fans and women", what kind of reception would our marrying fen receive? Bill and Lauri, JoHn and Karla, Ben and Cathy, and Peggy and Tom are all entering into those most holy of vows (which are commonly disregarded after the first two months.) unbeknownst to them, probably on some level, incurring Forry Ackerman's wrath. Or disappointment, I'm not quite sure since I don't have a copy of Ah Sweet Idiocy lying around, but Laney has convinced me that Ackerman would have **some** things to say about these upcoming marriages.

This is undoubtably history in the making, four couples (four fans) announcing plans to spend the rest of their lives together, all within a year, here in Las Vegas. Has this sort of marrying spree happened before? Is this how fans find their mates, during a reckless period of time in which hearts are promised and hormones run unchecked? At today's Vegrant meeting should somebody be standing by the door when they arrive at Arnie and Joyce's to hand out little notes of disappointment in regards to their fannish priorities?

These thoughts are spurred by Laney's

characterizations of Forry Ackerman and times long past, stories and fan history that distances me from all that is fandom by the years and timebinding that many of these 40+ year old fans have shared. I'll never know Laney or any of the people he wrote about in Ah Sweet Idiocy (fortunately I met Burbee in time). I'll never be able to speak about them like Arnie and Joyce, or Burbee, Ted White, Harry Warner, Don Fitch, Jack Speer, or rich brown (I'm sure I'm erroneously mixing generations here), I'm just not on that level, and don't expect to be any time soon. I imagine I'll be talking about Arnie and Joyce and other fans of their generation just like they talk about the fans before them.

Mike McInerney wrote to Eric Lindsay in Gegenschein #71, "I'm 50 now and most of the fans who were active during the '60's when i was most active are 50+. It's only natural that people who have known each other for so long tend to gather together to have cons or parties. I'm sure young fans are welcome, but they might feel a little out of place since they won't have as many shared memories. Some fans worry about new blood - they mean new blood that respects and cares about the old days and the old ways. It's natural to want to preserve traditions and histories of our past doings - most religions do this sort of thing. It's also natural for new blood to want its own traditions." This is just the sort of thing I'm talking about.

I agree with Mike that "younger fans might feel a little out of place since they won't have as many shared memories..." at these parties and cons, or for that matter in fandom, but I don't think this hobby can become so specific as to become isolationist. Social skills, intelligence, humor, and conversational skills (being able to write is essential, you don't have to be very good (and don't expect people to think you are), but you should produce) are, I think, mitigating factors in

what one would call a successful fan. If fandom is a hobby in friendship (and a lot of factors point in that direction), than even new young fans can make their way through a 40+ year old party with some success without feeling too out of place or foolish.

And let's face it, when you have Arnie and Joyce Katz guiding you on your journey, making your introductions, and advising you on subjects unfamiliar, it's hard to feel too "out of place". Just as Las Vegas has been home to infamous names like Jerry Rosselli, Moe Dalitz, and Anthony Spilatro, it now sports the likes of Vegas Fandom's mentors; Arnie Katz and Joyce Worley Katz who have met the onerous task with consummate grace.

It is history in the making, and it has been duly noted. After Ben's wedding at Corflu '95, where Burbee will be giving away yet another beautiful young lady, I will keep my ears open to hear what everyone has to say. I'm sure I'll be able to get Arnie's take on the whole thing, and perhaps I can ask Burb what he thinks of it, and then I'll corner Andy Hooper and round out the poll. Then perhaps I'll have some answers to all of my questions and I won't have to write Forry Ackerman about all this.

## **Our Hobby**

I'm was just sitting there in my office writing about fandom (coincidentally the topic for the February distribution of our Apa V) and getting what I thought to be a pretty good line on it. I hadn't so much as nailed down what "it was all about", but had more like corralled a few of the things I had already gratefully confirmed. And like I said, getting a pretty good line on it, when I see a familiar gray blue car motor up the hill. Ben, and as I look through the windowed door, Cathy, emerge from the vehicle with rosy cheeked grins splashed across their faces. Immediately I regret not bringing my leaf filled Christmas tin, and stand by to greet my two traveling friends.

This thought of "no grass", sitting curled on my tongue makes a break for it as I lament my current situation. Ben happily assures me that it's not a problem and asks Cathy if she could "please get my box from the car?"

I mean, here I am, sweating this piece about fandom that's due tomorrow at the Vegrant meeting, when out of the blue Ben and Cathy walk into my office with a joint. Essentially, the word "delight" definitively describes my emotional/mental state at this time. So, we grab softdrinks all around and adjourn to the front steps of my sales trailer where we bask in the seventy-six degree weather and watch our smoke drift on the skin cooling breeze

So much for writer's block.

Now this is an aspect of fandom that I really enjoy. I like to smoke grass and so do most of the fans I've met and now know. Which makes it an all around excellent situation to be in when at any time good conversation could come walking through the door. I don't know whether it's a minority or a majority, I'm sure it can be argued either way, but there's definitely a population of grass smokers to found in fandom.

I think we all practice our hobby with discretion, I don't see a lot of writing including said herb, unless it's briefly mentioned or couched in some form of artistically crafted verbal camouflage. I've also seen several "legalize" illos which I enjoyed very much, but all and all, our illegal little hobby is mostly kept under wraps, and probably just as well. Still, I sure would like to see more about that stuff we smoke, it's certainly a part of fandom I very much enjoy.