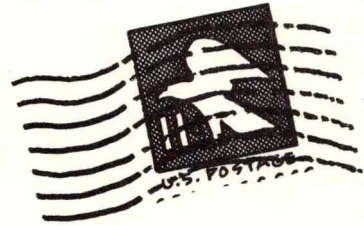


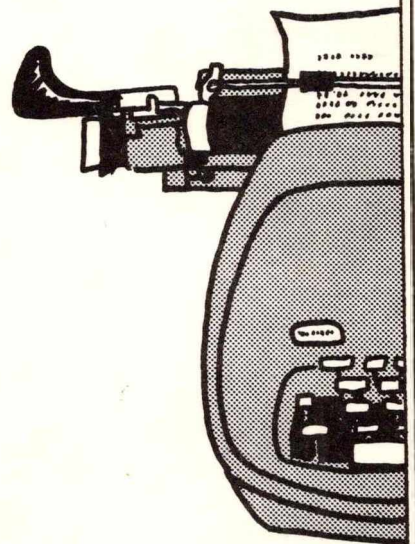
Banshee



Dear Mike,

I just got the
and thought I'd
of the issue.
but there were
On the whole,
know? Or some
Hahahahaha.

Well, *sigh*
funny but pod
sercon or sôv



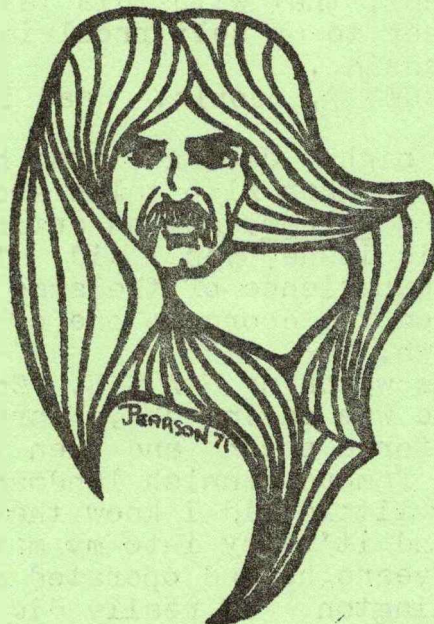
Jamkinney

BANSHEE ?

This is the March 1974 edition of a fanzine published irregularly by Michael Corra, 199 Great Neck Road, Waterford, CT 06385 203-443-0103. It may be obtained for trade, substantial loc, contribution of written matter or artwork, or 60¢ per issue (existing subs will be prorated onto the new rates) Any uncredited writing is the editors. An "X" in this box means that this is your last issue unless you take some form of action

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C'EST MOI

Mike Glycer, in his editorial in PREHENSILE 10 started by paraphrasing the famous expression (almost as famous as "I had one once, but the wheels fell off) "It is to laugh". I'm not going to bother doing that here. I don't have to paraphrase it. For laugh is just what I did as I put this issue together.

Laugh with delight at the humor present in the articles presented here for your pleasure. Laugh with malice ("That article/artwork will really knock so and so's eyes out) Laugh with joy at seeing certain return addresses appear in my mailbox. And, finally, laugh with exuberance and exultation, for I feel, that with this issue, I have managed to come just a little bit closer to my self proclaimed goal of publishing a Fabulous Fannish Fancy Genzine.

BANSHEE 7, people. Read it and enjoy. I did.

A few nights ago, I almost had one of those Mystical Kosmick Trufannish Experiences that Aljo talks about in his column (here that Aljo? Your piece is a column, not an article-- and I'll be publishing again in May) later this issue, yes I did. I didn't quite make it, but still it was a fannish experience of the same sort and of slightly higher order as when I discovered the doors to one of the iceboxes in my father's store was made in Hagerstown, MD

I was watching NEWS. Colonel Blake was talking to Pierce and McIntyre. He was saying "He, Henry Blake, from Bloomington, Illinois." I said nothing for a second and then I fairly shouted "Bloomington, Illinois! Why that's a famous fannish landmark!" And quickly I explained about Bob Tucker (and little did I know that within a week a gem of an article by him would find it's way into my mailbox) the winner of the Ego-boo poll, and of how for years he had operated out of PO Box 260

in Bloomington. It really did border on one of those Experiences, as I

said those words, and imagined something descending from the

sky, placing a gold-plated beanie on my head

and saying "Welcome to the initiates, by Ghu."

If I keep on having experiences like this,

and their magnitude keeps on increasing,

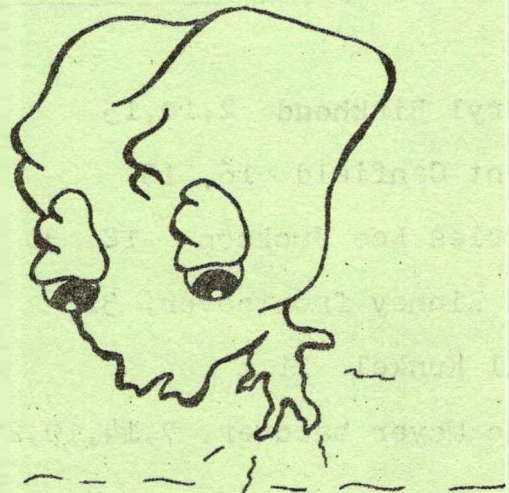
I'll quickly become a

convert to the Cosmic Circle.

I mean, it just goes to show you that fans really are Secret

Masters of the World, if we can plant things like that on network television, just so that the younger fans

can have those Mystic Experiences that



separate the Trufan from the Fakefan. But I guess I must be a Fakefan, for when I felt the top of my head, there was no beanie, only hair, and I knew that I had failed the test. Perhaps I just need another year or so of apprenticeship.

Boksone 11 was my first con, my first face to face meeting with fans. If I was going there now, I would do things differently; I would perhaps try and see a bit more of the program, see some movies and the filksinging instead of having a party. But I don't regret any of it.

By some quirk, the hotel gave me a suite for the price of a single room. This was to prove important in the way I spent the rest of the con.

Most of the people I met were either in RAPS or APA 45. I met Frank Balazs and Mike Blake shortly after entering the hucksters room, and then rather rudely abandoned them when someone mentioned that there old zines for sale on the other side of the room. It was a decent stack of zines, but the dealer was charging what I consider outlandish prices- each of the two copies of ODD that I bought cost me five bucks. I suppose anything you buy from a dealer is overpriced, but I really wanted them and I couldn't be sure that I would ever have the chance to get them again.

Before leaving the room, I met Andy Porter and arranged a trade for ALGOL. And I tried, successfully, I think, to turn Frank green with envy at the mention of all the good things I was going to have in this issue.

I placed a bid on a painting by George Barr. And withdrew it Sunday morning when I decided I might not stay long enuf for the auction (I did tho) I put down the mininum bid of \$25. It went for a hundred. The art show was extremely good. Andy said that he thought it was better than the Torcon one in all except the sculpture department. The highlights were the works of Barr, Eddie Jones, and a person whose name, I believe, was James Odbert.

About this time, I met Mike Carlson. And Mike and Mike and I decided to have a party. So it was off to the liquor store for two six packs of imported beer and a fifth of Irish whiskey. Nobody came except for Don and Sheila D'Amassa. And a person who looked like Cannon who said that for years he and his friends were the only ones ever to have a party in the afternoon, and it was nice to see somebody else doing it.

Perhaps the highlight of the convention was taking off all the labels on the bottles we bought, putting them into an envelope, signing them "From the members of APA45" and sending them to Mike Glicksohn. We tried to include a Ripple label, which ~~is a ripple label that he hates~~ he hates. When we went back to the liquor store we couldn't find it so we bought something called "Woodpecker Hard Cider" (at my instigation) (It wasn't bad at all) and substituted that instead.

After the costume party, our party started to go in earnest. It must have been one of the only parties around. We couldn't find many others, at any rate. I didn't know any of the people that came to ours except for the APA 45ers, tho I did recognize the names on other's tags, like that of Bob Toomey, who came to kiss Carlson's bottle. When he entered (his impending arrival having been announced by a friend) Frank Balazs greeted him by telling him how he, Toomey, had abased himself at Frank's feet at Torcon, for some reason.

I left the party for awhile and went to the Albany State Room. Not much was happening there, so after a couple of drinks (one of which was about 2/3 vodka for a total of five ounces or so which I drank in a single gulp for the hell of it) I left. Everybody from Albany State was either too drunk or tired to accompany me, tho.

Back at my party, things were livelier. Toomey was making advances at a fifteen year old girl, another couple kept on running into the bedroom

every half hour or so, which angered everybody, since the booze was in the bathroom, which was off the bedroom. People whose names I had heard before that were at my party were Alex Eisenstein, Sidney Coleman, and Scratch Bacharach, tho I didn't get into conversations with any of them.

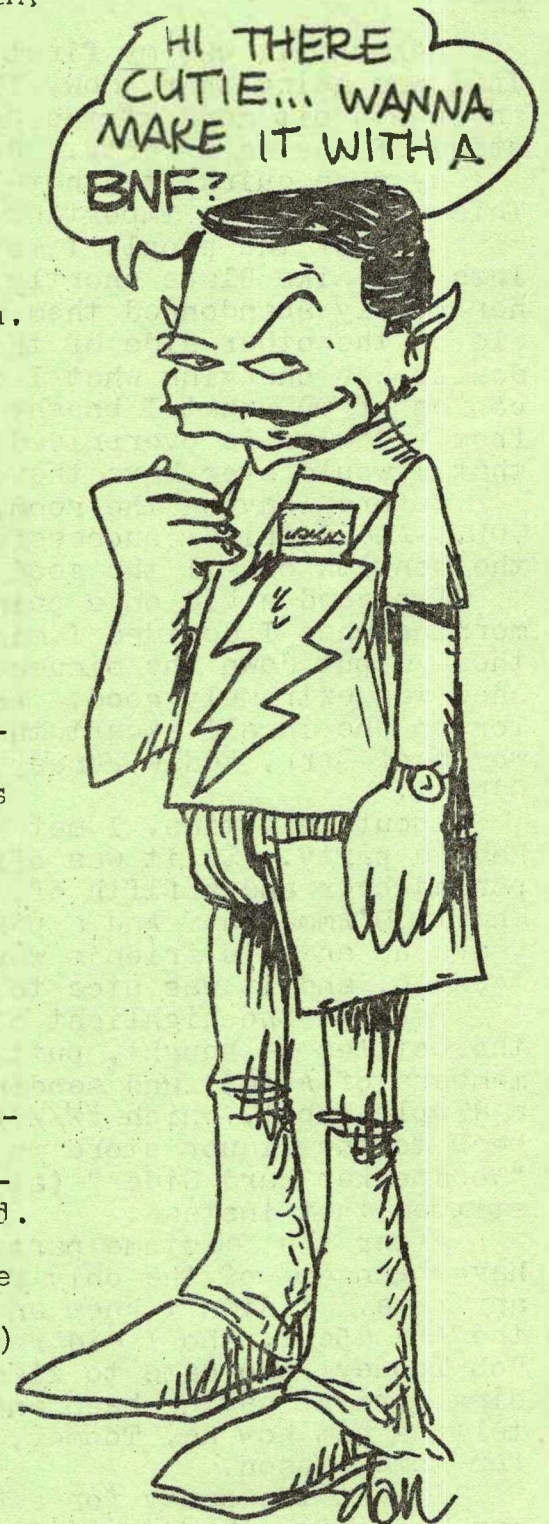
The next day was somewhat better. After going to bed at four in the morning, I woke at eight. Both Mike's were asleep in the living room. I went downstairs, bought some papers, came upstairs, read them, and went downstairs again. I was hungry, since I had only eaten a couple of pieces of pizza for dinner the night before. I heard that there was a buffet brunch. I love buffets. It didn't start until nine thirty. The next hour was agonizing- not through hunger pangs, but through boredom.

Nine thirty finally arrived. Breakfast was extremely good. I didn't eat as much as I usually do at a brunch, so I finished in time for the Great Herbangelist Divide-Up. There has to be a better name for it than that, but that's what it was called. My province was extended to include Rhode Island and the eastern half of Long Island as well as Connecticut.

While in the artshow I had a good chat with Andy Porter, who explained the technique of air-brushing, which one artist, Morris Scott Dolens had used in his work. He says the man does five of his astronomicals a day, which is unbelievable. Of course, they all look pretty much alike. I bought a print of Steve Fabians cover for ALGOL 20 from him- it's beautiful- and I asked him whether the price I had paid for the ODDs was fair or not. He said that since they were rare, and because it was a dealer, they probably weren't too inflated, or words to that effect.

I went to the Discon panel, which was attended by all of two people, including myself. It wasn't really a fannish con. I asked about fannish programming at Discon, which Boskone lacked. (one panel on collecting, which is stretching it, a short slide show on costume balls, and one on "What is a Fanzine" which was dull at the start and which I didn't see to its conclusion.) I learned that they are not going to have an "All Our Yesterday's" room, unfortunately, but that they would have some fanhistory panels. Jack Chalker mentioned that he had a lot of old zines that he would probably sell at cons, so I'll be looking for him at Discon.

The last memorable thing that happened was poking through the foot and a half high stack of zines in the hucksters room for which the dealer wanted the outrageous sum of \$250. Most of them were newszines, and most of them were under ten years old. At that rate, my col-



lection, as it stands now, will be worth five hundred in less than ten years which is ridiculous. Finally he pulled out a stack of zines almost as high and said, "This is the Cream" Some of it was. Some of it didn't look like it. I was only about two thirds of the way down when I found ODD 19 and 20, which I bought, giving me four consecutive issues. Anybody know if there were any after 20? I picked the ODDs over a couple of other things I wanted, such as a copy of SPECULATION and one of TRUMPET, largely because of all the art and because Mike Glicksohn said someplace that ODD 20 was about as nice a looking fanzine as he'd ever seen. I should, perhaps, have looked through the whole stack before deciding- perhaps I'd have found some HYPHENS.

It seemed to me that the convention was more of a local con than a regional one. Most of the people were from NESFA and there seemed to be a dearth of fanzine fans. I suppose this is because NESFA, unlike, say, LASFS, concentrates on producing things like bibliographies rather than fanzines. There weren't that many people (again, fanzine fans) from New York and even fewer from Philadelphia. So, while it was a good con, it didn't really seem to me to be a really fannish one. Of course, I have no basis for comparison. Most of the people I met were fringe fans and the program catered to non-fannish types, the kind who will come just to hear Asimov speak. Of course, I have read that fannishness has been banned in the Boston area, so this may have something to do with it.

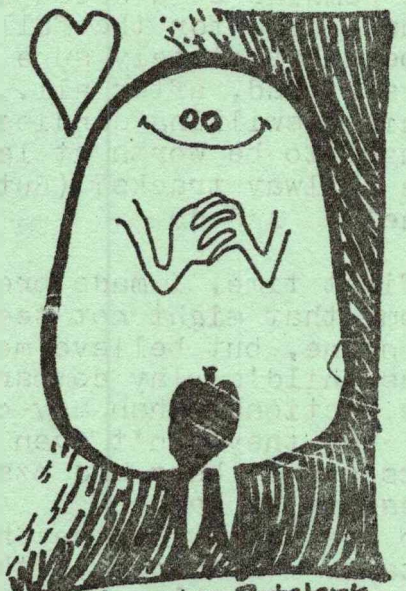
All in all, it was a good con. Hopefully, future ones that I attend will be better and I'll meet more people that I know through zines. But it was a worthwhile experience.

There's a lot more I could write about. I could tell you of my problems with the Post Office about the frontcover. I could tell you about my problems with my free source of electrostencils. Both, thankfully, have been solved. But instead I'm going to tell you about the letter I got today.

The football coach told me he had a letter for me. I went to his office and he told me it was in his mailbox. So I went to the main office and got the letter. It was from West Point. I opened it and read "Because of your outstanding football season last year, you have been recommended to us etc. etc."

West Point. Right. And just last night I was saying that if there was a draft, I would apply for CO status and if that was denied, Canada would have a new resident.

Thus ends this thrilling account of derring-do in the wilds of modern fandom. Be back in May to hear of the further exploits of the courageous faneditor as he publishes his issue. That issue will be his first annish, and he is already hard at work trying to make it something special. And while you're waiting, ponder this question: If the earth is round, why does lamb go well with mint helly?



See! maybe Rotsler's
got something
there! danstefan

KITCH IN

FAN WRITING

by MICHAEL GLICKSOHN



I've noticed of late (it's almost midnight) that there's been a large increase in the number of short, frequent, ditto, mostly editor-written personalzines appearing here. And in nearly every one there's a comment from some idiot, usually from Canada where the intense cold freezes their brains during the winter, to the effect that there's been a noticeable increase in the number of short, frequent, ditto, personalzines being published. But that's not all they have in common.

(They have a cold, a market, stock, or garden, and various other things.)

Because of the nature of the beast, these new, frequent, short, ditto zines seem to feature humorous one page articles on matters of little or no import, usually written by some neofan with a name like Aljo Prazier, or Donn Leingang, or Doug Svoboda or Leon Kansas or some equally improbable cognomen. And I've been thinking of jumping onto the banned wagon.

When I think about it, things of no import happen just as often to me as they do to those other fellows, and if they are getting rich and famous, why shouldn't I? Surely cleaning out the remains of a decomposing hamster that's been lying on the bottom of a snake cage for the full twelve days you've been away on holiday could be an absolutely sure fire topic for an article? It's at least as funny as a toad, after all. And the joys of sharing a subway car with three whisky-swilling dandies singing songs from Monty Python's Flying Circus ought to be worth at least as many words as riding an automobile along some railway tracks? (But those guys can write, sir...Hush, cease and desist, whelp! And do three hundred more lines!)

For example, just the other day for the very first time, I made bread. I made bread. I MADE BREAD...Now perhaps to some that might not seem a momentous occasion worthy of preserving in a fanzine, but believe me, for me the publication of a Hugo winning fanzine was child's play compared to this sort of endeavor. Cooking is more science fictional than any other normal human activity as far as I'm concerned. Why they don't even use English in those books! Always talking about tsps and tbsps and ozs. What sort of language is that to use in the presence of ladies?

But lately I've been venturing further into the Valley of the Shadow of Ovens, and have even learned a few fundamentals. On my own, without supervision, I can now open a can. Yes, it's true, probably you could too with a little training. I can turn on the oven... and next week I hope they show me how to turn it off. And when I mastered the boiling

of water, I figured I could tackle anything.

So it happened that Joe Haldeman had given me a recipe for rye bread. That's Joe Haldeman the writer fellow. To drop a name and make this a science fictional piece. (I taught him most of what he knows, by the way: how to drink beer for breakfast, how to beat Jack Gaughan at pool... evidently he learned how to write on his own...) I got quite enthused at the prospect, and even went on a special shopping trip. Bought four quarts of rye. Never did figure out how to turn it into flour...

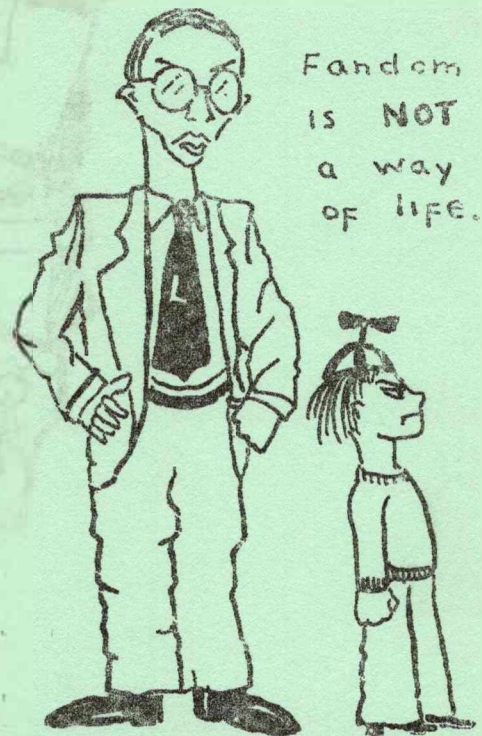
Undaunted by this temporary setback (you drink four quarts of rye and you'll be set back, too) I made a further expedition to ensure possession of all the necessary ingredients. Basically this meant picking up a bottle of Aunt Dinah's blackstrap molasses. Now I've often thought... Sometimes I've wondered...it fleetingly crossed my mind once...why the militant blacks never attacked Uncle Ben or Aunt Jemima or any of those other obvious racial stereotypes. I mean, Aunt Dinah's blackstrap molasses, with a colored woman in a bandana on the label. Sheesh! Had any Kentucky fried watermelon lately? Still, I did find myself snapping my fingers rhythmically as I bought it home.

The recipe called for two cups of potato water to be added to a packet of yeast and some molasses. Well, I tell you, squeezing the water out of those damn potatoes wasn't the easiest thing I ever did, but eventually I got two cups of it (I used egg cups, since they were fairly small and I only had a fifty pound bag of potatoes.) That was the yeast of my troubles. Next I opened the bottle of molasses. Ever have a bottle of molasses erupt in the middle of your kitchen? Even Aunt Dinah would have looked askance.

I hadn't known they bottled molasses under fifty atmospheres pressure, but that must be a part of the new packaging techniques. This thick, viscous, bubbly, black ooze came spurting out like something out of a Dick Geis novel. And it continued to do so for almost an hour... and that's a bit much, even for a Dick Geis novel. Right then and there I knew the evening was destined for greatness.

Carefully following instructions, I put the foul mixture in the warmest place in the kitchen. A bit uncomfortable, and I thought my ass was going to atrophy, but I'm a stickler for following directions. Eventually, after hours of mixing, kneading, squeezing, pushing, rolling, pressing, and pummeling, I got the cork out of a new quart of scotch and was able to proceed with the bread. It too was treated with all the subtlety and restraint that Bill Bowers brings to the running off of stencils, and after being left to mull over its own doughy thoughts for a couple of hours, it rose to the occasion and was ready for the oven.

I made two loaves, in keeping with the old adage that two loafs are better than one. (If you never heard of that old adage, don't blame me for the limited scope of your reading.) The



results would have been perfect in an old EC comic. One loaf turned out the very epitome of breadness: smooth, domed, sculptured, rounded, magnificent in all respects. The other was the Quasinodo of the bread world: twisted, deformed, cracked, gnarled, crevassed. Come to think of it, I baked the Glicksohn and Bowers of the bakery! (Both, however, were delicious...especially with vodka...)

And if that doesn't rate as one of the least interesting events any fan has chosen to write about this year, I don't know what would Stay tuned to this fanzine, though. I'm considering frying an egg!



QUALARD

by CY CHAUVIN

(a portion of this work originally appeared in James Goddard's OMPA-zine ARCANUM.)

THE DEADLINE

See Cy type. Cy types quickly, Cy types fast. Feel the gentle hum beneath his fingers, the soothing rythmic beat of the letter machine before him. See the heard of black letters come pounding out of the machine, their sharp dark hooves leaving tracks over the clean virgin paper.

As Cy sees the strange hoof makrs swarm up over the paper, Cy realizes how people 'write poorly.' They let the silent black beasts get out of control. They let them swarm over the paper mindlessly, without proper guidance; their herders are lax. And then they have that mad creature the Faned standing close beside them and shouting in their ear "Deadline, deadline!!" Who wouldn't panic and let the word beasts get out of control?

See Cy type. Cy types quickly. It is now 7th December. Cy's deadline was supposedly the end of November.

Damn the deadline.

WRITE WHAT YOU WANT

Some time ago, I recieved a letter from Lisa Conesa (a British fan, editor of ZIMRI) which began "I've been writing this letter to you in my mind for ages." What a great line! And the nice thing about it is that I do it all the time-- I 'wrote' this column in my head, while walking home from church the other day. Work is also a great time for doing the type of constructive (?) daydreaming; I sweep and mop floors in a laundromat at night, and the time and works slips by faster, and more enjoyably this way. (That's also why I prefer boring manual labor to boring intellectual labor-- the former is much less taxing for me.) Put occasionally I thought that this was a bit odd, but when Lisa-- and Ted White with his "Thots While Lawn Mowing" have convinced me that this isn't so, perhaps it even a standard practice among fans. Who knows, perhaps even Walt Willis did it!

AFTER ALL, IT'S ONLY FANDOM

Lisa hit a responsive chord in me, and so did Paul Walker in an article called "In Praise of Praise" (SIRRUISH 11) I don't know how many people have read it, but it is one of the best articles I have read, simply because it deals with a problem we all have. Paul says "The problem of praise is a serious one. I admit it frightens me, especially if it is lavish; yet I admit I need it to go one. I doubt that even if I recieved pay for my fan work that it would compensate me for a lack of praise... we are a Christian society (Jews included) which extolls humility and disparages pride and self esteem, and as such, we are all at a serious disadvantage when confronted with our own public success. As much as we like to succeed, to earn the respect and admiration of our peers, we cannot accept it without a certain guilt and embarrasment. Our society values the success, butdisparages the successful."

Paul then goes on to write about the various ways people have reacted to and praised his writing, listing lines like "you are perceptive" and

"you are one of the---" and "you are sure to be--" and then commenting on them. Rereading them now makes me smile and chuckle a little bit. Towards the end of his article Paul says "However much all kinds of praise are appreciated, it should be evident that most of it is worthless to the writer. It doesn't tell him what, or why, something was liked, or whether it was liked in the way he hoped it would be."

That's true, and it doesn't apply only to the writer, it applies to everyone. Knowing why someone thinks and acts and says the things he does is always the most interesting thing for me; that's why (in part) I find Paul's article so interesting. That's why, when a person writes a book (or fanzine) review, he should state more than a simple like or dislike. It's profoundly dissatisfying for the person whose brain child is being reviewed.

Let me quote one more paragraph from Paul's article: "Some professionals are known to cut fans short when the fans begin to compliment them. Others are tolerant, listening with a kind of nervous impatience as if at any moment they will bolt for the door. Other's accept praise with a bored resignation: "Thank you all very much *sigh*." Others accept it as if it were an act of charity, or kindness, on the part of fans: "That's very kind of you." Still others accept it as a personal challenge: "yes, yes, it wasn't too bad." I have yet to meet a fan or pro who had the etiquette down pat."

The best analysis of praise--or egoboo-- I've ever read. And Paul, if you happen to ever get ' the etiquette down pat' drop me a line, huh ?

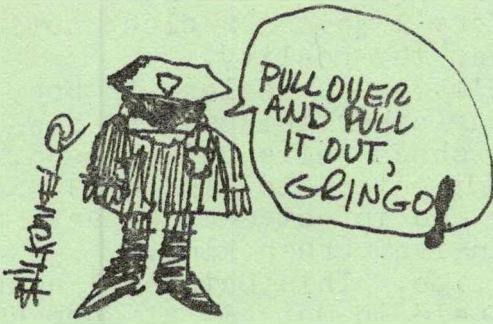
AND WHO GIVES A DAMN, ANYWAY?

This is really rather sercon fannish-- i.e. analyzing what makes fandom what it is--rather than the personal stuff that I usually think of as fannish writing.

So let me tell you about the first time I ever met fans, in the flesh.

It wasn't so long ago: last April. It was a sf club meeting held at Wayne State University on Wednesday night. I had heard of the Wayne Third Foundation group before through their fanzine, SELDON'S THIRD PLAN (get where the foundation bit comes in now?) and had even recieved a telephone call from one of their members, but never felt like going to





their meetings. In the first place, they were held in Downtown Detroit, which I wasn't at all familiar with, and second they were held at night, and you all know how dangerous Detroit is at night: Murder Capital of the USA, they say! So it wasn't until I started going to Wayne that I became interested in the possibility of going to meetings.

The thing that finally got me off my butt was a copy of STARBORNE (Put out by the Star Trek Association for Revival, which is connected with the group) which had the time and room where the meetings

were held, and the note that they needed people to help them collate fanzines. Wow! I thought, collate fanzines! I had read about all the exciting things that a group of fans did when they get together to collate fanzines (unfortunately, I found out that few of them seemed to be true.)

So one night after eating dinner, I drove down to Wayne for the meeting. As is usual in these types of situations, my stomach was a bowlful of jello (not of the Santa Claus type, but of the gut-twisting, nervous, why-did-I-put-myself-into-this-situation type) and I kept wondering why everybody likes to pick on us paranoids.

When I got into the room, I found that only two people were there, and I was told that most of the club officers were out to dinner. So I sat there and watched another fellow play a space-war game (or rather, practice at it) I couldn't think of anything to say (really, you have no idea of my lack of imagination in times like this; I think I must save it all for my fan writing) and so looked in the first issue of VERTEX which I had luckily brought along.

So I sat there. A couple other fellows came in, one of them Fred Reiss then "First Speaker" (get connection with SEIDON'S PLAN ?) of the club. He shook hands with me, and asked me who I was, and then said "Your name sounds familiar. Did you write some letters of commendation (sic) to SEIDON'S PLAN?" I told him yes.

That meeting was the one just prior to their elections, so when the other members arrived there was some discussion over that. What is most interesting to me now (as I sit back and remember this) is how I first viewed all the people in the club I now know so well. I mean, think how differently you thought of a good friend the first time you met him/her, when you didn't know them well at all. I know that I like a lot of people whom (on first impression) it seemed I couldn't possibly get along with, have become good friends. But it isn't easy for me to get to know people, and to feel confident and comfortable talking to them. Fandom is good because it gives you some topic to use to 'break the ice.'

I showed them my copy of VERTEX and everyone was amazed by it. I mean, a slick science fiction magazine? But I did very little talking, and just sat there, doing the alien observer bit. It wasn't until the very end of the meeting that I got to talking to one of the members about Michael Moorcock, NEW WORLDS, and sf mags in general. Actually, I tend to think that if that hadn't happened, I wouldn't have bothered to come to any future meetings. Which would have been a shame.

It wasn't until the second meeting that I became firmly 'hooked.' It was there that I met Laura Basta, who edited SEIDON'S PLAN and STARBORNE and who was a local fan I had actually heard about. I also voted in the elections (even though I wasn't actually a member yet, and didn't know

any of the people I was voting for!) and drove John Benson, my intrepid Torcon companion, home. Unlike most fans, I suppose, I had read and heard about what fanclubs are like in fanzines before I joined a club; but of course, no description of a club quite matches the reality,

Perhaps I should tell you about our club's Claude Degler, Anthony P. Armour. He seems to have a foot fetish (among other things) and now none of the girls in the club dare take off their shoes while he's around. (I don't know if male feet excite him, but I don't intend to find out) Someone said that while all fans are crazy, they are infected by a zany, pleasant, fun craziness; Tony's is more the offensive, brash kind.

The club has made me an Experienced fan, too. This October I helped (in a small way) with the Starcon which was held in Detroit at Cobo Hall. It was a lesson in How Things Go Haywire at Conventions: but seeing Harlan Ellison, Norman Spinrad, and David Gerrold speak on a panel in part made up for it. I'm also becoming aware of how and why fanzines are delayed, often for many months, since I've been helping another fan put out an issue of the clubzine SELDON'S PLAN. My ghod, is typing a chore- and what if you have to write just about the whole zine yourself? (Assuming you want to publish anything decent.) Helping the other members collate the 5,000 (or was it 7,000) press run of the Starcon Program Book also made me aware of another of the drudgeries of fanzine publishing. It's easy to see why there is a tendency now for fans to either publish small, low circulation personalzines, or else offset multi-thousand copy run semi-prozines. The area in between seems to involve the most drudgery and the least pleasure. I suppose someday I should publish a complete fanzine myself and really get involved with all the ecstatic and mind-rottening details. But they're too expensive for me...

Sf clubs are so much fun they should be banned. (Pleasure is the root of all corruption and moral degradation, you know.)

I'D LIKE TO BE NORMAL EXCEPT IT'D BE AWFUL DULL

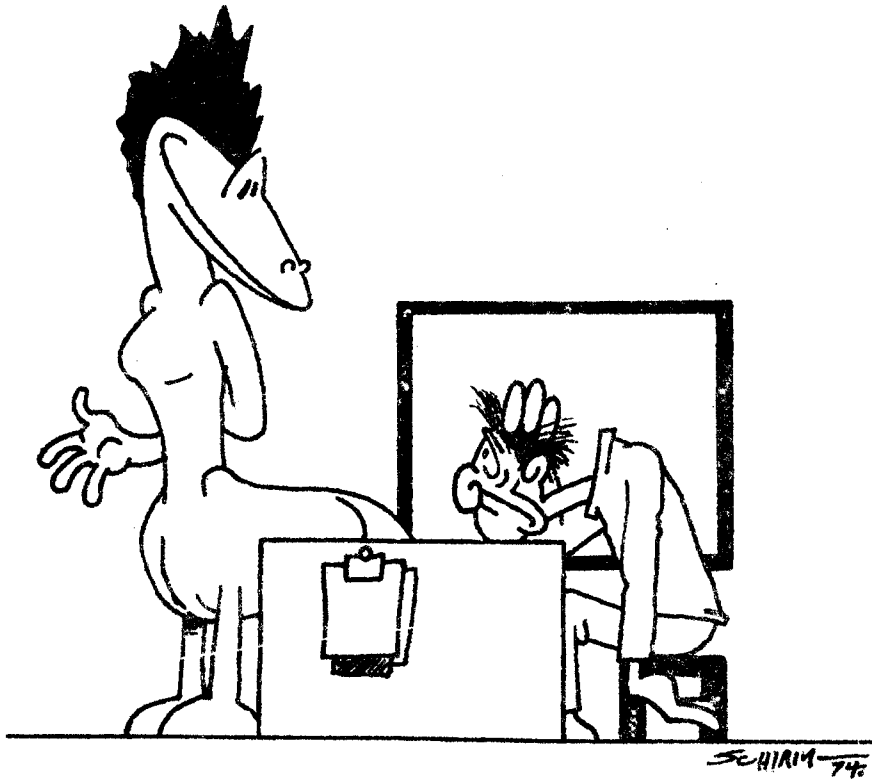
It's quoteable quote time! I'm always running across these great quotes, but never can find a place to use them. Once of the best I've run across in the past few weeks is by Paul Goodman: "No good has ever come from feeling guilty, neither intelligent policy, nor compassion. The guilty do not pay attention to the object but only to themselves and not even to their own interests, which might make sense, but only to their anxieties." (Quoted in EXPLORING NEW ETHICS FOR SURVIVAL by Garret Hardin. Everyone is invited to send in their own favorite quotes, and I'm sure that Mike will promptly ignore them.

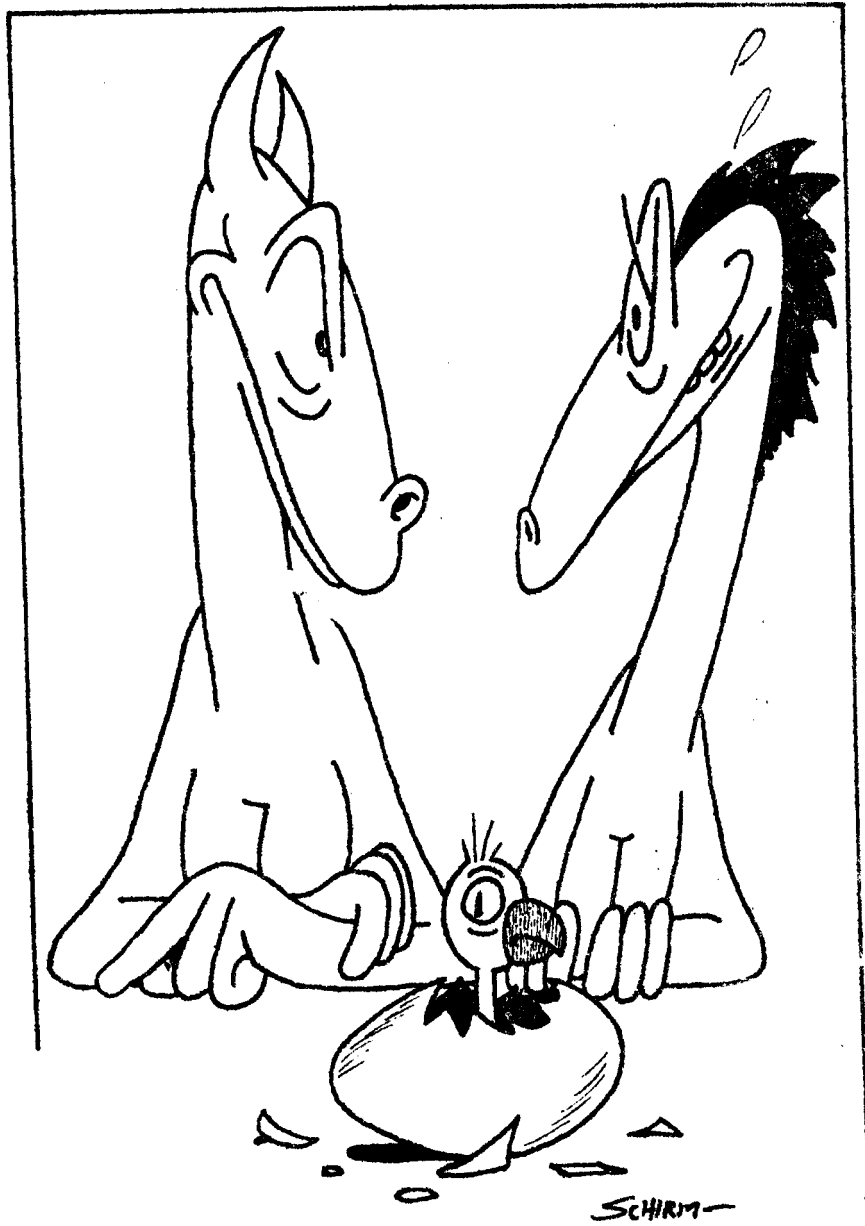
Another pursuit related to this which can be very amusing is distorting the famous quotes of others. For instance, this one by Isaac Asimov: "Violence is the last refuge of the incompetent (the competent use it first off)."

In case you wonder, I'm awfully incompetent.



THE FIRST
MARC
SCHIRMEISTER
FOLIO









TO ALL MY FRIENDS IN FANDOM

I thought you might like to hear about the proceedings of my gafia. The beginning of it was a very sudden thing. There I was, a Promising Young Fan-- and there I wasn't. It was just like that.

"And anyway," said I to myself at the time, "like Gorra is undoubtedly a Ghood Person. It seems to me that a Contribution would be In Order." That was the beginning of it. The words sounded fine, the sort of thing I might be able to work into the Contribution itself at some point. I was Inspired. You know how it is.

Without hesitation, I sat down before my smiling, eager typer. Confidently, I slipped an unblemished piece of typing paper into the machine. Ready to fan away, to pour my paper soul out onto the virgin expanses which lay at my very fingertips, I typed my name. I typed it perfectly, one letter at a time, until it was all out, almost shining from the page. Aljo Svoboda. (Now friends, this is just another one of those Mystical Kosmick Trufannish Experiences you're always hearing about. Arnie Katz, Terry Carr, Ted White, Ed Cagle... they have them all the time, all of them. Nothing abnormal, nothing to worry about.) It was obviously the right name; no other could have fit so perfectly with the Contribution I envisioned so clearly (I realize now that this had all happened before, many times, to other fans: smiling, eager typer, unblemished paper, virgin expanses, one letter at a time... all of it. Arnie Katz, or somebody well-known like that, told me all about it.) The title, then... and the title of course, came out just as perfectly, and fit just as absolutely into the Cosmic Scheme. It was where it had to be, and the rest of the words of it would follow smoothly from it, out onto the page. I could feel them inside of me. Really.

So there I was, about to Fan my Ack for the day. (And here, friends, is where the Mystical Kosmick Trufannish Experience ends, and the rest of it begins) "Now then," said I to myself, "how do we start the thing? I am, after all, writing for an Audience..." I looked at the title of it again (what the title was at the time makes no difference... it sounded right is what mattered.) "Well, now," said I, "the words are there. Let's begin, then. Start it off with something genial and witty, something faanish..."

Of course, the words didn't come. Nothing happened. I stared at the beautifully blank sheet of typing paper, blank except for my name, and a perfectly positioned, perfectly right title, waiting for the Contribution to happen. And it didn't. "A momentary block, is all it is," I muttered to myself as I stared. "perfectly natural part of the Creative process, without a doubt." I sat, and stared.

After twenty minutes of that, I broke. My eyes glazed several times over, fingers frozen at the keyboard, The Realization hit. "i'm gafia," said I to myself. "It's all over." (Twenty minutes of writers block? That's not too many, you say, somewhat puzzled over the whole thing. The

ifference, of course, was that this was gafia-inspired, and gafia-inspired writer's blocks are Permanent)

I knew it to be so; there was nothing I could do. I was lost from that point on. (There seems to be a definite element of Over-reaction here, you say, quite perplexed over the entire affair. Twenty minutes of writer's block and he's gafia? Surely without a doubt, there is more to this than twenty minutes of writer's block; everyone, after all, finds himself drained of Inspiration occasionally, at least Now and Then. Well, you see, people, it was like this: The Realization hit me as I sat there, glazed eyes, frozen fingers, and so on, was a very definite thing. "I'm gafia," said I to myself, and it was so. It was a realization, and obviously there was nothing I could do about it. Obviously.)

Well, numb shock always gives way eventually to a certain attitude of complacency, and finally to a decision to play the game as it is, just to see what happens. It always happens that way. So after a week or so, I began to feel a little better about the whole thing. "At least," said I "I know where I am At, so to speak. As a Neo, I thought, but I



was never sure. As a Promising Young Fan, I wasn't sure at all. As an Apa Giant, I was entirely becrogged by circumstance. As a Contributor, I had no idea, even, of how I could get out of it. Now, however, no doubt remains in my mind. This is where I get off." And I was entirely satisfied with remaining there for the rest of my posthumous career.

Yeh, it was just like that. (Well, of course, I had previously read Calvin Demmon's Own Guide to Fame and Good Things Like That in How Fandom, and I knew that Gafia was all there was to that, but as a Promising Young Fan, I guess I just refused to see the light, is all. Blind to the Real Truth, I continued to delude myself with the argument that there must be more to True Fan Dumb than this! So there I was, and there I would have stayed, had it not been for the glorious Realization.) As I thought deep thoughts, pondering the general fannish condition, I found myself actually becoming grateful for my gafia. I began to see it as a release from Ridiculous Obligation and Small inds. "Just like Don Pitch said," said I to myself, "I have outgrown the fandom thing. I am ready, now, to tackle the Outside World.

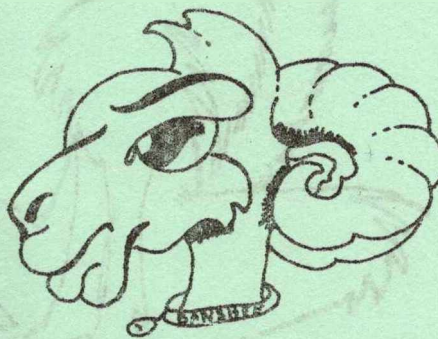
Ah, you know it all. My gafia was a very sudden thing; I like to think of it as a Mysterious Disappearance; but it h's all happened be-

fore. Out there in my Audience, my cosmicmind(what's left of it, anyway) dimly percieves two hundred or so Youthful Gafiates reading this, waiting to be counted, all of them saying to themselves, "Maybe I'll write an article about it someday, about my gafia and all the rest of it." But they won't...

All the rest of it, for me, went something like this: within three months, I found myself dropping like flies (or maybe that's fly, singular, except then I could only drop once, and, well, you know...) from all my Favorite Apas: MINNEAPA, for instance, where there are Real People, and SABS, which was such a friendly place, and The Cult, where the fans of tomorrow are germinating, in the form of the world's first Computerized Fan (this is the real truth, I tell you)... and all the rest of them. I managed it very carefully. You might, as a matter of fact, consider this my most prolific period of crinoac, as far as active gafia-tion was concerned. Occasionally, I would slip a sheet of paper into the old typer, type my name and a title, and see what else came out. Nothing ever happened, of course, because my gafia was for real. Oh, maybe once in a while a sentence or two would dribble out onto the page, nothing ever really inspired, but words; the dribble always stopped, though, and everything was all right. Once I managed to get an entire page of words out of an article I had entitled "Apa Daze" which was to deal with all the exciting adventures I had while I was World's Champion Apa Joiner (I hold the record, I really do) like the time somebody took my Treenmark away from me, and I didn't know what to do...I stopped the thing just in time, I think, by deciding I didn't want to type on the other side rightnow, and tossing it into the moldering stack of RealSoonNow materials I had saved for the delicious guilt feelings they aroused.

So it went, friends, up to Today, which is Right Now. At the moment, I'm a bit worried about the words I'm typing. This seems to have gone a bit too far, and I'm not sure the thing can be stopped in time. As a matter of fact, the situation looks Very Bad; I mean, if I should complete it, it would be All Over for me, wouldn't it?

Good morning, fandon!



YESTERDAY'S

M
D
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by POP TUCKER

Yesterday, this day's madness did prepare,
Tomorrow's silence, triumph, or despair.

- Omar Khayyam



During the first week of January 1974, a brash young fanzine called FIAWOL was chonked into my mailbox and innocently carried home. Petter I had burned it on the postoffice floor. I read only as far as page two before hurling the abomination across the room with anguished cries of "Not Again! Not Again!" Arnie and Joyce Katz (two culprits who should be hanged, drawn and quartered on the courthouse square the same night the moon eclipses Venus) have resurrected a very ancient madness and loosed it upon fandom: a postcard poll to determine the top ten fanzines. And with that, we are hurled backward three or four decades.

I don't know when this madness first began, I don't know who conducted the first popularity poll in his fanzine and then published the results, but I would guess the date at about 1933 or 1934 when there weren't more than a half dozen fanzines and one of those five or six editors invented the sneaky ploy to one-up his competitors. The weakness of the polls, as demonstrated from the beginning, is that the fanzine which conducts the contest usually finishes very high in the ratings-- frequently number one. Of course, some readers really consider that particular fanzine to be the best, but the greater bulk of the voters vote it high because the most recent issue was unusually good, or because their consciences (their what?) tell them to give the editor egoboo. A competing poll taken in a different fanzine at the same time will likely show radically different results. It's easy to predict FIAWOL will be among the top ten, and this is no backhanded swipe at the fanzine (even though Joyce and Arnie are mad.)

Jack Speer was the villain who first loosed this madness.

He launched his own polling scheme called the Oklahoma Institute of Private Opinion (IPO) in about 1937 or 1938, reaching his readers by inserting postcards in several issues of THE SCIENCE FICTION FAN and then, a few issues later, tabulating the replies and publishing them in the same journal. He asked for the basic information dear to the hearts of all true fans at that time: what/who were the most popular authors, stories, magazines? I have a hazy memory of receiving postcards by direct mail and returning them to Speer for subsequent publication, but the memory is so bad I don't care to assert the technique was actually used. (THE SCIENCE FICTION FAN was published by Olon J. Higgins at Denver from July 1936 to February 1941) The IPO remained in business at least until May 1940, when Olon Higgins published a one-shot he called "Oklahoma Institute of Private Opinion, twelfth returns and final recapitulation." It consisted of nearly ten pages of data so presumably more than merely favorite author, story and magazine was presented. Perhaps by this time Speer was also seeking the most popular fan and fanzine, as well as asking impertinent questions about flogging one's wife and trading one's children for back issues of ASSEMBLING STORIES. The subtitle is the only clue I have to indicate that twelve polls were taken over a period of two or three years.

Some fanzines also began taking polls to determine one thing and another. While the IPO was still in existence, a British fanzine entitled NOVAE TERRAE developed the habit of including a questionnaire in each issue, asking opinions about the content of that issue, along with other general questions about the reader and his habits. (NOVAE TERRAE was published by Maurice I. Hanson from March 1936 to January 1939) I don't know if the practice continued up until the end of the magazine. The war chopped short several fine British fanzines.

THE ZOMBIE conducted its first poll in an issue dated September 30, 1939, probably inspired by Speer and Hanson and wanting to share in all the glory. Or insanity.

As was (and still is, eh Arnie?) the custom, self addressed postcards were inserted in each copy of that issue and three questions were asked to determine popular standings:

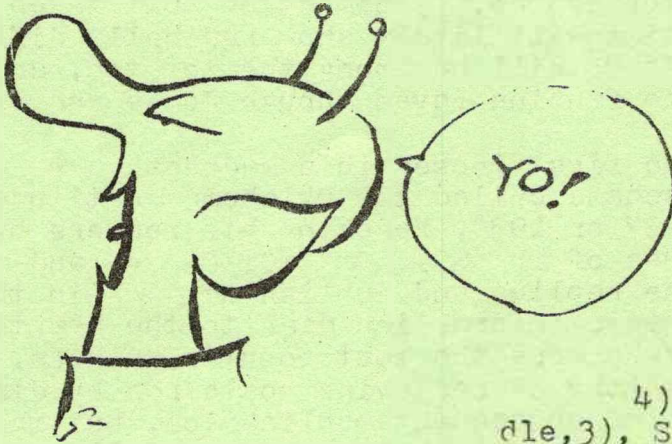
(1) If you were restricted to corresponding with but one fan, who would that fan be?

(2) If you were restricted to but one fanzine, which would it be?

(3) If you were restricted to but one prozine, which would it be?

The results were published in the following issue two weeks later, October 14, 1939. Ninety postcards had been mailed out, but only 47 were returned. Of those 47 votes, these were the favorites of that day: Torrv Ackerman (11 votes), Bob Tucker (10), Donald Hohlheim (4) Dick Wilson (3), James Taurasi (3) Dale Hart (2), Jack Speer (2), and the following recieved one vote each: Mike Rosenblum, Mark Reinsberg, Harry Warner, Frank Litz, Fred Fischer, John Campbell, Arthur C. Clarke, Edward J. Carnell, Sam Moskowitz, Paul Freehafer, and two blanks. The reader doesn't need to be a genius to realize that popularity poll is somewhat askew,

and today I am astonished at some of the names who recieved but one vote each. Of course, in 1939 Clarke and Carnell were mere fans with their fame and fortunes still ahead of them, but the moral is an obvious one.



The popular fanzines: SPACEWAYS (Harry Warner, 11 votes), FANTASY NEWS (Taurasi, 9), THE ZOMBIE (Tucker, 5), AD ASTRA (Reinsberg, 4), SCIENCE FICTION FAN (Wiggins,

4), FANTASCIENCE DIGEST (Robert Madle, 3), SATELLITE (Jonathan Furke and David McIlwain, 2), NOVA (Tucker, 2) VOICE OF THE IMAGINATION (Torrv Ackerman and Morrojo, 2) with each of the following receiving one vote: FANTASY DIGEST (Ted Dikty), NEW FANTASY (Moskowitz) COSMIC TALES (Taurasi)

SCIENTI-TALES (John Giunta), and D'JOURNAL (Tucker). This poll is also somewhat askew in hindsight. Harry Warner was as interesting a letter writer then as he is today, so how can one account for his poor standing in the first category and yet winning in the second? SPACEWAYS was a fine magazine and he should have taken first place in both categories.

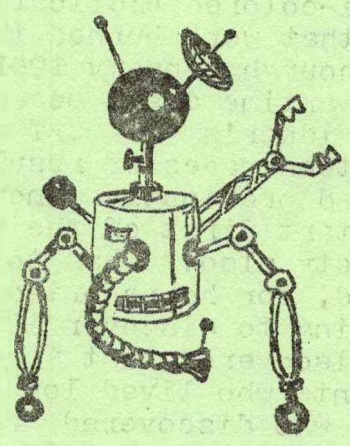
I am not the only one who has long maintained that fanzines are splendid training grounds for fan writers seeking professional recognition, and of all the personalities listed in sections one and two above, the only fans who have not appeared in the professional world (books, magazines, agenting, editing, publishing, writing, illustrating) are Litz, Freehafer, Wiggins, and Morrojo. And please note my caveat: even those four may have been published somewhere, sometime, without my knowledge or present memory.

Question 3, the most popular prozine: ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION garnered 25 votes, surprising no one, UNIFORM, 7, WEIRD TALES, 6, STARTLING STORIES, 3, AMAZING STORIES, 2, FANTASTIC ADVENTURES, 2, THRILLING WONDER STORIES 1, and STRANGE STORIES, 1. I hope I cast my own vote for UN-

KNOWN (later titled UNKNOWN WORLDS) because I now hold it far and away the best of the lot.

Art Widner Jr, was the next villain onto the scene and he soon won a reputation as a poll-taker, earning the nickname "The Toll Cat" and eventually publishing a fanzine by that name. His not-so-modest beginning is noted in LEZOBIE for December 30, 1939: "Art Widner Jr. Box 122 Bryantville, Mass, launches a poll to end all polls. (He) want every fan to send him a postcard at once, listing in order of popularity with you, the ten best fantasy authors living or dead. Science, weird, fantasy, future, all count. Will other fanmags please copy this notice?" Other fanmags did and his appeal for votes appeared in several publications. Art overcame two obstacles in his poll-taking: he didn't have to provide the postcards and he avoided the trap of having only one fanzine furnish them, thus avoiding the built-in trap that might occur later when he asked for favorite fans and fanzines. LeZ for January 13, 1940 published the first results of his researches:

- John W. Campbell (76 points)
- A. Merrit (67)
- Stanley G. Weinbaum(57)
- H.G. Wells (52)
- T.T. Smith (49)
- H.P. Lovecraft (43)
- Olaf Stapledon (43)
- Jack Williamson(36)
- L.S. deCamp (34)
- David H. Keller (31)



Flushed with the wine of victory (he received more than 47 cards) widner continued the polls for a lengthy time and quickly enlarged his sphere of activity to include magazine cover and interior illustrators, and (you guessed it) fans. I don't recall how many other fanzines cooperated with him in publishing the results of his reseraches, but LeZ carried them every few issues and eventually became the most regular carrier because it lasted all though the war years while other fanzines were dropping by the wayside because their editors were being drafted. (LEZO BIE was published from December 1939 to December 1960, but don't let that apparent thirty year life span fool you: the final four issues of the fanzine were spaced from three to ten years apart.) The following results of the enlarged poll appeared in the June 1940 issue:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| SG Weinbaum (335) | Harry Ackerman (50) | covers: Paul (31) |
| John Campbell (235) | Harry Warner (53) | Winlay (26) |
| TT Smith (203) | B Tucker (40) | Rogers (24) |
| A Merrit (220) | RD Swisher (26) | Trown (23) |
| HP Lovecraft (196) | Art Widner (23) | Wesso (11) |
| LS DeCamp (195) | WR Hamling (22) | interiors: Winlay (45) |
| HG Wells (170) | Sam Moskowitz (16) | Paul (22) |
| Jack Williamson (160) | Bob Madle (13) | Wesso (14) |
| DH Keller (131) | Louis Chauvenet (12) | Schneeman(1) |
| John Taine (111) | Russ Hodgkins (12) | Berman (12) |
| ER Burroughs (104) | Jack Wiske (12) | |

Widner closed his favorite author's poll by September 1940, after having decided the top thirty names, names which ranged from John Campbell (204 points) alone to Raymond E. Gallun (56 points). In between were the likes of Fando Binder (220) C.L. Moore (193) E. Ron Hubbard (151) and Thorne Smith (59).

In the same September issue he published the first results of his fanzine poll, and this time more accurate results were visible because readers were buying and mailing their own cards rather than having them distributed by some editor. The initial tally went like this: SPACWAYS (Warner, 155 points) STARDUST (Bill Manning, 101) IT ZO RIF (Tucker, 95) STIDE (Damon Knight, 92) CO FT (Tom Wright, 72) VOICE OF THE FANTASY (Ackerman and Corio, 71) PLUTO (The Decker, Indiana science fiction club, 69) FANTASY PETS (Taurasi, 66) SUNSTOPS (Cerry de la Ree, 65) and SLEEPLESS AND LIGHT (Are you ready? Russ Hodskins, Henry Luttner, Fred Shover, James Mooney, and Arthur J. Barnes, 47 points). I thought PLUTO to be the most impressive fanzine of the lot because the Decker Dillies, about five or six fans in a very small town, bought a mimeo and went all out to impress their brethren. Their fanzine eventually was published in five colors, the first multi-colored publication I'd seen in a long and foolish career of fanning. All that work burned them out: PLUTO lasted only six issues from March 1940 through January 1941, and the club split apart never to regroup when the wartime draft began picking them off one by one.

Widner's POLL CAT was published in September 1941 and included about eighteen pages of results, some of which were new and startling to fandom. He had previously announced: "Promag poll and fan psychological research to start first of the year. Pogo is assisting and perhaps the Frontier Society also." Sad to say, I don't have a copy of the results. I wish I did, for he reported on fans in a way that had not been done before, a probing to discover if they really were slans; looking for unusual averages he discovered that fans had larger hat sizes, were taller, and owned grandparents who lived longer than non-fan types. (And I think it was Earl Kemp who discovered many years later that fans tend to be the first born in a family.) Based on my forty year fan career, and without benefit of postcards, I can report that fans are notoriously indolent and lazy ("I'm going to publish the next issue Real Soon Now!") tend to booze it up a lot, consort with loose women, and are fond of conducting postcard polls.

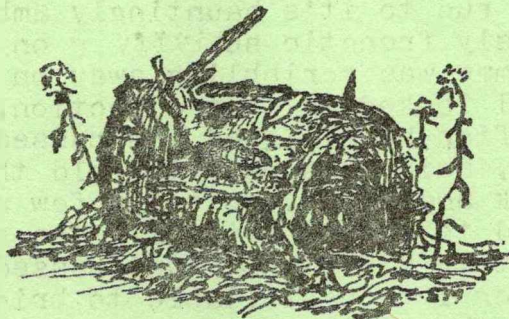
I'm not prepared to say how many more fan polls were conducted in 1942 beyond the issue for May-June 1942, because I stopped reading the backfile at that point and surrendered to a numbed brain (I may read the remaining 10 issues next year.) In that issue I inserted the ubiquitous postcard and asked each reader to jot down two items: their age, and occupation. The results (64 cards) didn't convince me that fans were slans:

14	student	22	Army
15	cobbler	22	photographer and operator of tourist camp
15	student	23	Navy
15	student	23	unemployed
15	student	23	Army
15	needle papers	23	observer/meteorology
16	mechanist	24	Army
16	student	24	Army
16	student	24	lab technician
17	construction worker	24	editor's assistant
17	student		

17 unemployed	24 Coca cola salesman
17 student/unemployed	25 varitypist
18 student	25 aircraft factory
18 student	26 banking clerk
18 gas station jockey	26 editorial director
18 free lance author	27 shoes salesmna
? Navy	27 printing foreman
19 mail clerk	28 coal loader (coal mine)
19 welder	28 osteopathic physician
19 messenger	28 housewife
20 messenger	28 factory worker
20 advertising clerk	30 factory worker
? clerk/typist	32 service order planner
20 store clerk	32 Coca cola promoter
21 clothing factory	32 cashier/bookkeeper
21 assembler, factory	33 taxi driver
21 author	38 accountant
21 newspaper deskman	38 draftsman
21 carpener	42 translator
21 none (now married)	46 unemployed
22 Navy	48 statistical clerk
22 government clerk	

In answering the poll one fan confided that he was an "O filler" but the reply wasn't tabulated because I doubted that he ever had an O in his life. According to my comments published with the poll results, the cards came back to me covered with doodles concerning: family secrets, recipes for home brew, employment troubles, complaints about the last issue, preference as to the color of feminine wigs, salary complaints, future ambitions, requests for back issues, words of endearment, poison pen notes, gambling information, and fanzine advertising. All in all, a typical reply to a fan poll. I did take at least one more poll, but I refuse to go into it here; it was taken in preparation for a speech to be given at the 1948 Toronto convention and I must have passed out five hundred or a thousand copies of the questionnaire and asked at least fifty questions. The results are simply too staggering to detail here.

This, then, is the old madness Arnie and Joyce have ressurected. Jack Speer began it, Maurice K. Hanson and Art Widner amplified it, but I merely went along for the ride. I sometimes think Omar Khayyam had fandom in mind when he penned his verses.



IT CAN HAPPEN HERE

by ARNIE KATZ

You never can tell, you really can't. Why, it could strike anywhere, anywhere at all. Things can be sailing along serenely when--zap! you're plunged headlong into the abyss of raging insanity.

It can even happen, as I discovered to my horror recently, at a gathering of the Insurgents. I was sitting there quietly when it all began, listening to Bill Kunkel's account of the time he and a boyhood chum bought their first bottle of Wild Turkey.

They had been touted on to this by a kindly old liquor store owner who recognized these two chaps as kindred souls, and, quite possibly, future steady customers. Bill and his friend took the bottle to a hill near the railroad tracks and proceeded to split it as even as alternate gulps permitted.

It was very peaceful on the hill by the tracks, Bill explained, and had a bottle of Wild Turkey smoothed out life's rough edges like cosmic sandpaper. Suddenly the calm of the day was shattered. They heard strange sounds, and, from out of the bushes, there emerged a giant wild turkey.

It has been my observation that most people have very little contact with turkeys. The closest most of us come to a truly intimate relationship with this prince of avians is looking down at our dinner plates on Thanksgiving. Though I've never met a turkey either, I have it on the best authority that turkey's aren't among nature's gentlest creatures. As a matter of fact, turkeys reputedly stalk around in a state of perpetual choler trying to pick fistfights with whatever happens to get in their way.

As Bill told it to me, this particular turkey was doing his best to live up to the heritage of its race. As the bird charged them gobbling wildly, Bill and his pal looked at each other. The bird, a hulking grey creature with white on the tips of its feathers and blood in its eye, was closing rapidly. They looked at the now empty bottle of Wild Turkey and looked at each other again. The enraged turkey chased them down the hill and far away. Later, when they had begun to believe they had conjured the bird out of thin air, they heard a news report that a turkey had escaped from a farm about the time they had been imbibing its namesake.

I listened to this talk of juvenile adventure with rapt attention, so it wasn't until it had run to its hauntingly ambiguous conclusion that I became aware of curiously frenetic activity on the other side of the livingroom. Jerry Kaufman was scribbling away on a piece of twilltone mimeo paper. The next time I looked in that direction, Andy Porter was bent over the same paper. After he finished, he passed it to Bill, who smirked a couple of times, and, doing his best to hold the pen with fingers nearly anesthetized from drink and smoke, jotted a few notes of his own on the sheet. It was returned to Jerry, evidently the straw boss of the whole operation, who found it to his liking and passed it along to Dave Emerson. As he cackled in a manner I thought liable to bring Bill unpleasant remembrances of that day on the hill near the tracks, he also wrote something.

When he was satisfied with his efforts, Dave conveyed the paper to Jerry for another inspection. Jerry checked the progress of his scheme, and then, with a flourish, deposited the thing in my lap. It was only then

that I understood the true enormity of what had happened while I was idly chatting with Moshe Feder. These misguided people, floundering under the influence of god knows what stimuli, had gone and committed a round robin science fiction story right there in my living room!

When I actually read this mini-epic, I got the most horrible surprise of all. They expected me to finish it up for them. That's when it happened. One moment the suave and urbane trufan, the next instant I was adding my section to the farrago.

Here then, in all its original glory (not one word changed!) is...

MICROPHONE

Jerry Kaufman: Pouring the Southern Comfort, Bill looked through the frosted window. A turkey this tall with giant tail feathers walked out of the woods, up to the window, and gobbled. What a fanzine article this will make, mused Bill, as the liquor overflowed the glass and dribbled to the parquet floor.

Andy Porter: Rather than spilling out the window, it drained neatly down Mike Domina's cavernous mouth. Domina, who had been completely buried in the floor except for his mouth, an eye, and part of his head, was left over from the last advance of the 8th fandom glacier.

Bill Kunkel: "David, you know you always get your facts wrong," Bill chortled with surprising heartiness considering the early hour as he poured the 1856 bottle of Madiera on his "Sugar Pops". He shivered, adjusted his morning robe casually, and pointed directly at Laney.

"You saw the turkey and you know it!" he suddenly accused, his right forefinger lancing across the breakfast table. "He even wanted to eat the eggs because he said that anything that comes out of a turkey's asshole must be good to eat!"

Dave Emerson: The neos were strangely quiet, merely sitting and looking at each other in hesitant confusion. "What's he talking about?" said one to another.

"Who, the old guy?" replied the other. "Don't worry, the Vietnam David is the New York Mac." He smiled smugly, confident that this was all the explanation necessary.

"Is.... is that..... faanish?"

"Well, no, I guess not really. I mean, I got it out of RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY.

"Pay no attention to him, son," said Joyce to the one who was named Arthur and was still confused. "He's too skinny to be a real fan. Hardly eats anything at all. Here, have another piece of pie."

Arnie Katz: Meanwhile, half a world away, Moshe Feder stood defiant, naked and soggy before his God. Moshe was one of the Chosen, though



when one observed him, one immediately wondered, "chosen for what?" Nevertheless, Moshe stood there mired in rain and slush before God

"Moshe Feder," said the Divinity, "you have been a faithful servant unto me lo these many years."

"Thanks, God," said Moshe, shuffling his feet modestly and creating small waves in the process. "Coming from one of the truly great immortals such as yourself, that's certainly a great compliment."

"Is there anything I can do for my faithful worshipper?" He asked.

"Well, yes, now that you mention it. I've known you for a long time, but I've never seen you. A disembodied voice, a burning bush, sure, but never the real you."

God, in his infinite wisdom, understood. "I will do as you ask."

Moshe Feder fairly jumped for joy. He looked heavenward expectantly, waiting for his glimpse of the Creator.

There was a blinding flash, a boom and in the sky there stood, or rather floated-- a giant grey turkey with white on the tips of its feathers.

"Enough is Maturity," said God, the turkey.

And that's "Microphone" just as it was written. "Enough is the article," said the author.



YOU

Roger D. Sween Box 351 Platteville WI 53818

I would not take Anderson to task for trying to get additional mileage out of worlds and characters he has invented. It is likely that "The Problem of Pain" was written before ~~PEOPLE OF THE WIND~~ and that the latter grew out of it.

The reason's McGuire gives for the failure of the story as a problem piece are, nonetheless, sound, but I have more sympathy than he for Berg. McGuire stakes his case on 'Berg's substantial spiritual immaturity," and states as the obvious factor of such immaturity that Berg prayed aloud. The story does not say he prayed aloud; rather, in the February 1973 ~~F&SF~~ we read "When he said his prayers, night and morning in our one room shelterdome, trustingly as a child, I didn't rag him nor he reproach me." We don't know if they were silent or aloud. No matter; whatever the office, neither designates immaturity, but is merely a matter of personal religious practice.

Similarly when McGuire faults Berg for wondering if the dead Arrach would want peace, it is not his spiritual nature that is being portrayed by this reflection, but his personal concerns for the Ythrian: he has come to esteem as a comrade. Berg at this point has become conscious of the Ythrian beliefs and feelings which will later trouble him,

More problematic is Berg's condescension to accept his fellow's suicide in place of further suffering and his arrangement of his wife's quiet death. McGuire argues that it would be orthodox of Berg as a Christian to expect them to suffer rather than to wish their speedy deaths. But here Berg wishes only surcease for those he loves. Neither does he seek to arrange Enherrian's death, only enquire after the ethics of a possible suicide, nor for Olga does he administer euthenasia, only painkilling drugs

Berg is not spiritually immature; rather he suffers from profound grief for having loved friend and wife deeply and losing them. He cannot reconcile their loss with his belief in a loving God, a God whose love is the highest form of divinity. Of course, his reasoning is particularistic but it comes from his personal loss. Berg represents in theological terms the dread of doubt, doubt which can come to plague any believer.

The solution to Berg's problem and to the story is as McGuire explains it. It would have been better for Berg and more theologically correct for the story if Berg had known all the arguments avoiding theodicy. The story, however, is no vehicle for their rehearsal, and Berg is just as likely to live in error as have so many others through the two millenia of the Christian era.

A few general remarks of McGuire's I would also dispute. He faults this story and another because ideas emerge at the end when they ought to begin stories. I see no logical or traditional reason why this is so in literature. All that is required of ideas in fiction is that they rise out of the story which is the case here; their placement is functional, not arbitrary. What is required of stories is that a conflict be embraced



and that is also done in "The Problem of Pain." I would wish with McGuire for a clearer resolution, but the story does not fail for any other reason than the way in which the conflict is handled.

The question of Christ being given for human redemption alone is a crucial one to the subject of religion in sf. With McGuire I would dispute the exclusivity of human redemption. An ancient dogma of the Church is that through Christ, the whole creation, which is in a fallen state, is redeemed. That Christ became man has meaning either in that 1) man is the only spiritual being in the universe, or 2) if man is not the only spiritual being, a) he must minister to the rest of the universe or b) Christ may have come to other worlds as well. The latter may pose problems for monotheism but perhaps no more than the trinity has.

((Roger sent Pat a copy of his loc, and Pat promptly came back with a reply of his own.))

Patrick L. McGuire 184 Grad College Princeton NJ 08540

Roger certainly has as much right to his opinions about "Problem" as I have to mine, (and indeed I would now agree with many of his comments) so I'll restrict myself to just a few points.

1) As I hoped I had made clear, I do not fault Anderson for Berg's bad theology per se, but for a) the implausibility which this lends to Berg's alleged years-long search for answers, and b) the damage this does to the story if it is viewed, as I think is proper for reasons stated in the essay, as a theological-problem story. As I said, Freda's theology in *THE BROKEN SWORD* is just as bad if not worse, but it fits quite properly into the context of the story.

2) The very end of Walter Sullivan's *WE ARE NOT ALONE* consists of a discussion of the religious implications of possible extraterrestrial life, summarizing the position of various Catholic and Protestant (and other) thinkers, and the book also contains a useful bibliography. One of the best discussions on the topic is by F.L. Mascall, who I think is an Anglican, "Is the Incarnation Unique?" *THEOLOGY* (Berkshire, England LVI: 398 (August 1953) pp 288-291.

On the point which Roger brings up, about Christ's redemption of the whole creation, Mascall states (pp 289) "Admittedly it has commonly been held that the ultimate effects of redemption extend beyond the human race to the material creation as a whole; but this is because man has been generally looked upon as the only corporeal rational beings in the universe, to whom in the beginning the rest of creation was subjected as God's vice-regent, and to whom it is once again subjected in assumption of manhood by the Son of God. It would be difficult to hold that the assumption by the Son of God of the nature of one rational corporeal species involved the restoration of other rational corporeal species (if any such exist) which were not hierarchially graded beneath the first but were co-ordinate with it." Later on (pp293) he neatly summarizes the entire problem: "There may or may not be somewhere in the universe rational beings other than man. If there are, they may or may not have fallen. If they have fallen, their redemption may or may not require that the Son of God should become incarnate in their nature. God may or may not have some other way of restoring them to fellowship with himself; he may perhaps have an even more wonderful way, of which we cannot form the remotest conception."

Numerous articles posit the possibility of sophonts in various states of redemption, unfallen grace, or unredeemed fallenness. Most of these suffer from a certain lack of imagination and from timidity. One which does not, since it was written by a fan, is Sandra Miesel's "Man and the Lord of Space and Time," THE CRITERION (Indianapolis) 15 December 1972.

Cy Chauvin 17829 Peters Roseville MI 48066

So Loren MacGregor doubts my existence. I'm thinking of getting a special T-shirt made, with my name in big black letters on back and front, and wearing it to conventions just so agnostics such as Loren who doubt my existence. (After all, name tags are really hard to decipher at a distance. I thought of suggesting to the Discon committee that everyone wear giant ribbons with their names on them, like at bathing beauty contests-but then everyone would think fans are even weirder than they already do!) That way, even if they didn't get a chance to say hi or talk to me they'd know that I Was There. Of course, I suppose that some doubters would say that that didn't prove my existence at all; it only proved that someone was wearing a Cy Chauvin T-shirt at a con, not that I was actually inside it...

I'm thinking about Dave Locke's suggestion about replacement of "Best Fanwriter" with "Best Fan Article." I can't say that I'm anymore leaning one way or the other than when I first brought it up in STRIPE. One thing that I think would be interesting, however, is for someone to 'try out' the idea by conducting a poll of "Best Fan Article" and seeing just what the results turned out to be. I really think the toll would be a good idea, and hereby nominate you, Mike, to run one! (Good way for me to get out of a lot of work, eh?)

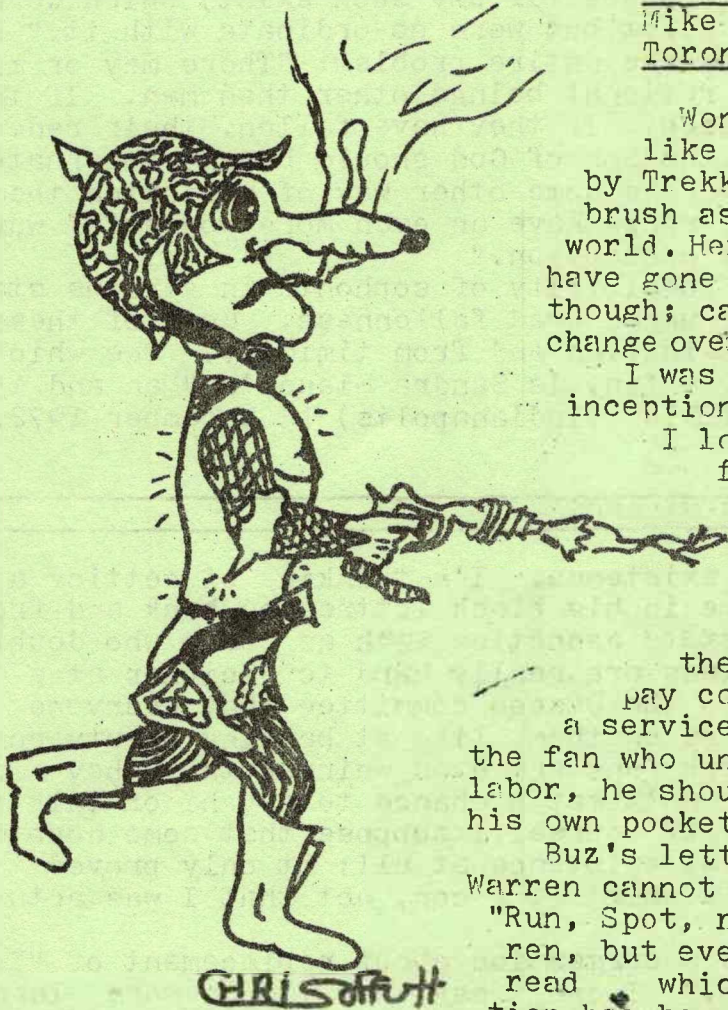
((I don't know about a T-shirt with your name on it, but here we have our names on the back of our football jerseys. Seniors can buy both home and away jerseys after the completion of the season, and I will most probably do so next year. And if I remember I will wear one of them to a con. I'll be number 27.

Okay, I will conduct a poll for "Best Fan Article" of 1973. The results will be published next issue. However, I will not send out postcards for you to send back to me. No, to vote you have to buy your own postcards. After all, we've been warned about such things. To start the poll off, I will list my choices for top five articles.

1. "My 2¢ Worth" Susan Glicksohn, ENERGUMEN 15.
2. "BreastFetishists of Sol III" Susan Glicksohn, STARLING 26
3. "LASFS in Pictures " Milt Stevens, THE PASSING PARADE 4.
4. "Retelguese" Andy Porter, ALGOL 20
5. "The Making of a Fanzine" Bill Bowers, OUTWORLDS 17.

Everybody send in your top fives choices. Points will be awarded on a 5-4-3-2-1 basis, with the most points winning))

Mike Glicksohn 141 High Park Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M6P 2S3 CANADA



Wonder why Wad wages war? Sounds like he's had a couple of cons spoiled by Trekkies, or been tarred with the same brush as them by someone in the mundane world. Here's good sarcasm, but he could have gone so much further. I'll refrain, though; can't see starting another angry exchange over Trekkies.

I was interested in Ken's article on the inception and promulgation of his survey.

I look forward to the results. His figures are a little lighter than I might have guessed. I'd have thought about 300 replies in total would have been the result of his campaign, since he fairly well saturated fandom with the questionnaire. I'd be willing to pay costs on the final publication, since a service of this sort shouldn't bankrupt the fan who undertakes it. Ken's doing all the labor, he shouldn't have to finance it out of his own pocket as well.

Buz's letter confirms my impression that Warren cannot read a book more complicated than "Run, Spot, run." I don't want to pick on Warren, but every book review of his that I've read, which I already knew the book in question has been filled with outrageous factual errors. I can forgive him his subjective misinterpretations, but when a reviewer fouls up as badly as he does, and the letter from Buz shows how enormously uninformed he is, then it's up to faneds to stop using his material. Warren takes offense when I suggest that part of his problem is his youth. Okay, then he must simply be an incredibly bad reader, in which case he should stop reviewing books. He does a great disservice to the authors of the books he reviews and to the people who read his work. If I'd accepted his review of CAGE A MAN as accurate I'd never have bought the book. He made it sound more moronic than most Saturday morning cartoons. Learn to read, Warren, or give up writing "reviews" of books that have never been written.

Hey, Cy says there was a "weird character walking around with a boa constrictor" at TORCON. Too bad I never saw him, since I had my snake there and we'd have had lots to talk about...

I'll agree with some of Dave Locke's criticisms of the current Fan Hugos but essentially I don't think what he proposes is an improvement. He suggests several advantages that his plan would possibly result in, but he still overlooks the essential impossibility of introducing it. I still think the drawbacks far outweigh the (possible) advantages. In another area, his comparison of Fan Writer versus Fanzine is completely specious. To be sure, a lack of familiarity with the product is a connecting link between the two, but his plan would increase that lack, not alleviate it.

For example, take Hilt Stevens' conreport that Dave rightly praises highly. I'm not sure what THE PASSING PARADE's print was for that issue but let's guess it at 300 and likely that's too high. Compare that, say with the major output of my wife Susan. The eight or so major pieces she wrote last year (for GRANFALLOON, OUTWORLDS, STARLINC, NERG etc.) appeared in possibly 2500 to 3000 copies of various fanzines. (GRANNY pubs 500+ for example, TANDEM had 300, the NERG pieces saw 550 copies, etc, etc.) Does Dave seriously expect that reducing the nomination to a single piece of work is going to eliminate what he himself admits is one of the major problems with the current system? A hell of a lot of people had a chance to see some of Susan's output and realize that she knows how to put words together with unusual skill. Dave's plan would reduce that possibility by about an order of magnitude.

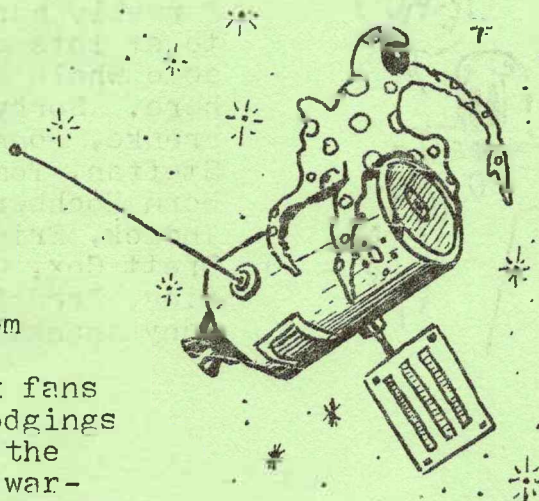
Now, I'm not arguing with the desireability of much of what Dave says. I just think that for once his usually clear head is a little fuddled. His plan not only doesn't do what he (and I) would like to see done, but it's also almost impossible to put into operation.

((With each loc that comes in on the subject, my opinion changes. When Mike first wrote, I agreed with him. When Dave replied, I agreed with him. Now I'm back to my original stance. I have to agree with about everything Mike says, and I think he certainly uses an apt example to back up his points.

Harry Warner Jr. 423 Summit Avenue Hagerstown MD 21740

I didn't mind the conversion to a bigger, more formal fanzine the way I'd feared I would. You kept much of the old STARSHIP TRIPE personality despite changing name and size and it isn't such a big issue that I couldn't find time to read it all in one sitting. As you proclaimed, the covers are exceptionally well reproduced. Inside I liked Sheryl's page eight illustration. She seems to be developing a distinctive style of her own to go along with the increased command of technique she has displayed in recent months.

I'm afraid Richard Wacholm engaged in overkill when he wrote "The View From Ground Beef. Misbehavior by some Star Trek fans shouldn't cause all Star Trek fans to be consigned to the most interior lodgings in Hell, and I'm not sure that this is the proper place to use Charles Manson and wartime atrocities as subject matter, for the sake of humor.



The letter section is good. Dave Locke didn't mention a few of the other disadvantages of the change to a Hugo for best fan article: How do you decide what's eligible, when fanzines often appear long after the issues' date or get sent out gradually as the editor finds money for postage or don't arrive in the US until four months after they're published in Australia? How do you prevent a prolific and excellent fanwriter from having his nominations scattered among twenty good items and thereby miss the ballot while a fan who wrote just one item of equal brilliance gets nominated. How would fandom react if a fan ordered three hundred copies of an issue containing his best writing and he mailed it to all the people he thought might nominate the piece; would this be considered buying votes? How could a fan read all the nominated items on the ballot and make a rational choice if three of them appeared in fanzines which he didn't receive, whose issues have been out of print for nearly a year?

Jerry Kaufman 622 W. 114th Street New York NY 10025

Richard Wadholm's solution to the problem of Trekkies seems to be a little extreme. Certainly they can be, well, annoying. But they did make several contributions to fandom, like Alicia Austin and the revival of CRY. But this defense to Richard's open letter makes me feel like a moderate German trying to reach an audience of Nazis, said feeling being caused by the concentration camp suggestion. Yich. I can't just say that a few Jews are good (although I must start small to reach the audience.) Morally, I must defend all Jews for the sake of all. OK all Trekkies have their rights, whatever those rights are. No matter how obnoxious you think they are. To suggest gassing them, like animals, especially in jest, is really rather sick, and I just can't react to it in any other way.

((The response was about three to one against Wad's article. Obviously, I was in favor of it, because I printed it. Like Mike Glicksohn, I thought it was funny. Norm Hochberg more or less hit my attitude towards the piece on the nose when he said, in his loc, "Wad is in terrible taste. And I like him." Ah well, can't win them all *sigh*))



((Fewer letters this time than last, unfortunately tho there were many more contributions. Next time I really hope to be able to print more of your letters; lots of good comments went unprinted, and some whole areas of the zine received no attention here. Sorry. Anyways, IAHF James Hall, Jackie Franke, Donn Brazier, Dave Sell, Mike Smith, Dan Steffan, Tom Roberts, Jodie Offut, Jay Kinney, Norm Hochberg, Al Sirois, Kevin Williams, Ben Indick, Eric Mayer, Sheryl Birkhead Chris Sherman, Brett Cox, George Fergus, Brad Balfour, Bill Breiding, Brad Parks, Rose Hogue, and Warren Johnson. Many thanks to all who logged.

THE LAST FETID BREATH

I had a lot of fun with this issue. It would have been hard not to, considering the wealth of both visual and textual material I recieved. And I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did.

Next issue will be my first anniversary issue, and will appear sometime in May. It'll mark one year of both publishing and fanac for me, since the first real fanac I did was publish STARSHIP TRIPE#1-before that I'd only recieved about half a dozen zines, and I hadn't responded to any of them, except with more sub money to LOCUS and OUTWORLDS. I can't say just what will be in that annish yet, tho I have a small (very small!) backlog of material- don't let that stop you! Contribute now!. There will, however, be some surprises.

And after the May issue, BANSHEE is going to be published quarterly. It will appear in February, May, August, and November. There will, however, be an increase in page count, so you'll probably be getting just as much BANSHEE as you would if I published five times a year, as I would probably do if I didn't decide in favor of the quarterly basis. This will give me more time for apas, and I'll probably be able to publish a better BANSHEE too- tho I will of course, miss the extra thirty or more locs that a fifth yearly issue would have brought in

See you in May.

But before you go, don't forget to turn the page.

Mike



