

SWINGLINE 4

SWINGLINE #4 is brought to you by Joyce Katz, who, unlike most of the other members of APA, has not moved, and still lives at 59 Livingston St., Apt. 6B, Brooklyn, New York 11201. The pages you now have before you are intended for the fourth mailing of APA, which is due to be mailed on June 3, 1972. I think it's wonderful how most of you people think of terribly Clever Things to say in your colophons, and right now I'm very envious. And don't you think it's terribly Clever the way my colophon is coming out even on the right-hand side?

* * *

ALICE You hitchhiked through Arkansas during pea-planting season, and escaped to tell?
-- Fantastic..but unusual. You know, don't you, why you were such a strange sight, and why most people in Arkansas haven't seen many hitchhikers? I've known many a strong and brave person who'd go 500 miles out of their way to avoid hitching through Arkansas.. and especially during planting season (or chopping season, or harvest...harvest time is when the law works the hardest at harvesting hitchhikers.) My compliments to you..you've got more nerve than Dick Tracy.

It's really true what you say about the people down there being friendly. I got the bright idea, together with a couple of my friends, to go to the Gulf Coast of Louisiana one winter, and become a fisherwoman and live off the fruits of the sea. It was very idyllic and natural. (I think I learned a lot from my period of being so dependent on the attraction of fish to worms -- when you're hungry, you really try to look at a piece of bait the way the catfish would, trying to figure out what'll attract him. This is a bit of practical knowledge I have very little call for in the wilds of Brooklyn Heights...but if I ever encounter a mudcat on Montague Street, I do believe I'll know exactly how to catch his eye.)

We were camped out on the night that a hurricane hit, and all our blankets and gear and us were drenched...I've had miserable moments in my life, but that day and night were some of the worst I've experienced. The next day we found that everything we had was soggy and muddy..and, worse yet, no prospect of drying out for a while since it was still raining. Worst of all, the fish just plain weren't to be caught..some of the locals told us we couldn't count on catching anything for several days after a storm. Well, misery abounded. I mean, there we were with no gear that would do us any good, maybe we had 35¢ among us.. which we spent on 4 nickle cookies and a sack of bull duram roll-your-own..and no prospects of anything else except for maybe crayfish which were, thank heavens, still fairly bountiful.

Long about midmorning salvation came to us in the form of a Georgia cracker-man. He and his family had a house (one of those up-on-stilts wooden shacks that you've stared at as you whizz through the south in your airconditioned car, going to Mardi Gras, or on your way to Miami) and he asked us if we'd like to come stay with them till our prospects looked better, and maybe we'd all fish together and pool our resources and maybe things would be a bit better for all of us. Lord..they didn't have anything either..but were they ever good to share, and gravy and beaten biscuits were the finest meal we could imagine. They had coffee, too...mostly chicory, no sugar or milk..and it was a luxury to be warm and dry.

Our benefactor had an abandoned trailer in his yard that he had drug in from god-knows-where. It had been, at some year past, flooded and mud-filled; the water mark was up at the ceiling level; the debree had never been cleared away. But--it was dry, and it represented shelter occupied by nothing but spiders and a stray riverrat which promptly ran away. Well..it had a snake in it, too. But George and Ben killed the brute before I began my scrubbing, and it troubled me none at all. The generosity of these bayou folk was such that it seemed natural to accept their offer to make this place our home.

We stayed with them for a spell. We fished together...our friend from Georgia had a boat, so our catch was improved a little. Then we'd sell the bigger fish (12¢ a pound for fresh-water fish) and use the money for cornmeal and lard and tobacco. Our diet..and also that of our friends, for his family and we shared a common table..was fish. Fish, fish..and more fish, and cornbread and biscuits and gravy. When it warmed up enough for things to grow, there were wild greens boiled in bayou water, and wild onions. No--it wasn't good. But it sustained life..or a form of it.

I always meant to someday write up this period of my life. Unfortunately, though, it's a period that was censored out of my conversation for so long that, now I have the freedom to mention it, I'm more ashamed than I can say that I don't remember the name of the man who helped me.

You know, I don't know what made me think of all this...your mentioning the generosity of the southern folk you met in Arkansas, I suppose. It's true that there are some really Incredible people in the world...things like the above have happened to me a couple of times, when strangers would put themselves out to fantastic extent, to save my skin. I used to skirt the edge of disaster pretty close... and that can get to be a whole Way Of Life.

Of a matter of fact, I'm a bath taker too, every time that there's time. (Usually I settle for a fast efficient shower.) Like you, I don't like bubble bath because it always feels uncomfortably gritty and harsh to me. But a few months ago I hit on the notion of dumping in some shampoo and it makes big beautiful bubbles that are very soft and gentle, so now I like to sit in the water and think about seafoam and pretend I'm an island. After reading your item, I hunted in some of the local stores for Dr. Bronner's All Peppermint Pure Castile Soap, but there wasn't any so I think Arnie's going to buy me a yellow rubber duck instead.

BILL I wonder if anyone who's never had one will understand your cartoons about the Kohinoor pen... Have you broken down and bought a bottle of pen-cleaning solution yet? If you're really having trouble with the pen (and if you're not now, the nature of the pens is that you will sooner or later) you might think about doing so. It does help a little.

I kinda like a joint now and then..there's something deliciously furtice about joints as opposed to a pipe. Also, if you've only a little grass, it somehow just seems to make sense to smoke it in a joint. But basically, I think my preference would be for a pipe, and my ideal would be a good carburator pipe, because I do think that carburators hype up the effectiveness of the grass. Besides, Bill, even though I can roll a pretty good joint, and once in a while it's fun to do so, basically I'm a lazy thing and would prefer not to fool with it. Also, I'm not all that fond of the taste of burning paper that I should want to smoke it all the time. Actually, now that you've mentioned it, I admit I have a real affection for Artificial Devices, and am always looking around for new and better and more

inventive contrivances -- they amuse me, and somehow add a feeling of Adventure. I realize that last may seem illogical and irrational, but that's how it is.

You said The Thing so effectively, about the illogic of the supposed Katz Conspiracy, that I have little to add, except to say Yes Yes. It certainly is funny, painful, infuriating, embarrassing, frustrating and a lot of other similar things, to have some fans attribute all the actions of NY fandom to Arnie. I can't really understand what originally caused the hostility, but I'm glad to say that it seems to be letting up in the last few months, and I think most people are beginning to realize that all of us are individual people capable of own crimes or virtues without someone else putting us up to them. To which I say Thank Ghu.

TED How charmingly competent you are at self-introductions! I was so taken by your description of yourself that I determined to write one of myself.

I'm 33 years old, and was born in Poplar Bluff, Mo. I was first married at 17, to Ray Fisher who, gaffiated tho he was, told me All About Fandom and permitted me to read his old fanzine collection, while he and Max Keasler filled me full of tales of Fannish Froth. I entreated and coaxed Ray to again return to fandom, as I had been seduced by Lee Hoffman through Quandry. And perhaps we might have, but instead our marriage failed and we separated in 1960 when I was 21.

The next two years were colorfully spent, in Poplar Bluff and Mexico and California and Louisiana (the fishing career I mentioned earlier this mlg.) After two years, somewhat bruised by my contacts with Life, Ray and I decided to give it one more try, and we repaired ourselves to St. Louis. From time to time the subject of fandom would be broached, and Ray finally agreed to try to Make Contact. Unfortunately his letters (written to old fannish friends) kept coming back marked Not At This Address. The one contact he did get through to was very Down On Fandom, and discouraged Ray from trying to get back in to what he (Ellsberry) thought was a Waste of Time.

One bright Saturday in what must have been 1965, Ray and I were in a St. Louis bookstore when I noted a fellow pawing wildly through a box of old sf prozines. "Maybe he knows where fandom is" I said to Ray. "Perhaps he does; you can speak to him about it if you like" said Ray. That was Jim Hall, who replied that he wasn't a fan, but his son Dave was, and took our name & address to have Dave write us. Dave subsequently contacted us, then introduced us to Hank. And this is the True Way I Found Fandom. For the first year, or so I didn't know what I had found, and mostly relived fifth fandom, with little awareness of the ways fandom had changed. But in 1966, you, Ted, came to St. Louis to be GoH of Ozarkon I, and you were the first non-local fan I ever met, and the things you talked about made me understand fandom much better than I had before. Later that same year Ray and I revived ODD...and the rest I think everyone knows.

In 1970, when I was 31, Ray and I finally regretfully decided it was time to admit our mistake, and we were divorced. I left Missouri for New York, where with a lot of help, I finally Got Well. Then Arnie and I were married in 1971 and have lived more happily than I had ever expected life could be.

Throw in a few births and deaths, and inflations and depressions of fortunes and finance, and you'll get the picture of How It's Been. More meat will surely be provided to these skeletons as apa progresses.

Are there really all-night convention orgies?

I could tell the deviled egg recipe was being delivered by a man...no woman would ever say "cut in half the long way."

I think I'm going to start taking your advice, and blend all the grass together; it's true that just stems and seeds make a terrible smoke, and it's only logical that it would be better to lower the overall quality. Trouble is, I always give in to the yen to sift and have at least a little really top grade cleaned stuff. I had to laugh at your description of that bad Nebraska grass..I've smoked some of that stuff. You're right..you have to be a real head to even bother with shit like that. A couple or three ounces back (..an interesting way to measure the passage of time..) we had some of the worst grass I've ever smoked..The grass wasn't bad, but it'd been cut with something very nauseating. It smelled like tea (regular Lipton's type tea) but since I've never smoked tea before, I'm not certain. At any rate, by the time I smoked enough to even get a mild buzz, I'd be sick. I still haven't figured out how to separate grass from what it's cut with, when someone has mutilated it like that...Is there a way? (I'd rather buy a short ounce of straight grass, than a heavy ounce that's half something else.)

Did you know the Newport Jazz Festival is being held in NYC this year...July 1-9. That's a name that conjures to me...I used to dream of getting to go. Now that it's in my own backyard, I wonder if I'll even wander down. Are you and Robin coming in for it? Have you ever attended one?--I have a very idealistic Woodstockish image of what they must be like; I'm fairly certain that my illusions would be shattered by the reality; I've heard they've fallen upon bad days in recent years.

Oh..speaking of the Forsyte Saga (as someone almost always is in Brooklyn, here lately): Charlene discovered in the library a book of short stories called "On Forsyte Change"; wonderful stuff; some of the stories are really prime Galsworthy. If you haven't read it, you'd probably enjoy it. And, I guess you've noticed, Ballantine is bringing out all nine books in paperback.

All right. Instead of crucifying you as the primary source of modern fannishness, we'll sic the mobs of sercon fans onto Joe Kennedy.

I had forgotten rhoot bheer. Mercifully.

CHRIS I'm anxious to read Lane's answer to your question "is fandom just another hobby to you?" Actually, I think when I first got started in fandom, it was just another hobby, albeit a much more attractive one than some of the others I've enjoyed. Probably that remained true for the first couple of years..definitely till NYCon, and maybe even till BayCon..and, enjoy fandom as I did, I could still concieve of the chance that I might eventually wander on to some other hobby, just as I had wandered in and out of so many. But, the more personally acquainted I got with more people, the less potential there was that I'd drift away. Now, of course, it's completely inconceivable that I'd ever be Not A Fan. Fandom certainly doesn't represent Arnie's and my Whole Life--far from it. But, aside from family ties, it does represent our total Social Life, in that all our friends are fans.

Besides, paper communications have become such a staple part of the bag of communication devices that I like to have at hand, that I wouldn't really want to give them up. I'd hate to be limited only to paper communications. But I think that fans have available to them entire levels of expression that are lacking to non-fans, and having learned to enjoy them, I wouldn't want to give them up.

While you and I, for example, know each other pretty well, and have a good level of communication in person, I feel that entering into paper communications with you adds another level to our friendship. (And, now that you've Gone Away, I'm especially glad that paper communications can be meaningful.)

Of a matter of fact, I've been enchanted by RATS! layout also, and have even toyed with the idea of having a special RATS! issue of POTLATCH, in which I studiously copies RATS! style. (Just think of the way the all-NY-fanzines-look-alike people would respond...it would almost be worth it just to hear their reaction.)

BRUCE I can certainly understand and identify with the feelings you describe in regard to Father Knows Best; indeed, bobby socks and senior proms and highschool football games are just exactly the way it was... Or, if it wasn't that way, everyone thought it should be. I was always very disturbed by Father Knows Best, and felt very inferior to the Andersons; they were so much more wholesome..somehow more American..than my family.

Arnie and I were talking the other evening, and I realized something I'd never thought of before. Of all the books I've read, undoubtedly the single book that most gave me an inferiority complex and Warped My Life was my first, with Dick and Jane and Spot and Mother and Father. Until I read that book, I had never realized that my homelife wasn't Normal, Clean, and All American, but my life was so obviously inferior to theirs. And I've never really gotten over it. They were so perfect.... Arnie tells me that almost everyone feels inferior to that particular family grouping...I wonder if that's true, and if a great many children are given inferiority complexes by their first reader.

FRANK You're right. In the abstract sense, Dick Geis was right in trying to make a living off SFR. However, in the real sense, what actually happened was that when the circulation of SFR got too high, producing the zine quit being fun as a hobby should be, and started being sheer drudgery. In a very real sense, he killed off his hobby, by making it no longer a pleasure and relaxation to him.

But what you say is true...it certainly is a wonderful thing to be able to make a living at something you really enjoy. The only thing we've got to watch out for is to see that we get maximum enjoyment, without becoming a whore. No matter what our favorite pursuit should happen to be.

Now I have the picture on Jesus Freaks, thanks to your explanation. There've always been the type..though maybe not in such numbers. My brother Earl was that kind for the first few years after he Found Christ. I still remember him sitting next to my bed, when all I wanted was to get some sleep, telling me that God Wouldn't Suffer A Witch To Live (because I'd been reading a book on palmistry), and describing the hell I'd certainly be sent to. (Have you ever noticed how most fundamentalists seem to think that the first half of Dante's Inferno is part of the Bible?) My brother later mellowed to the point of intolerance..but he was a fright when he first started studying for the ministry.

NEAL I'm truly sorry to learn of the death of your mother.

Gee, from everything you've said about skin flicks, I get the idea you think they're much worse than the blood and mayhem of films like "Multiple Maniacs". I'd far rather see a porn flick than "Mark of the Devil". (MotD, judging from the ads in the subways, seems to be a torture movie. The chief distinguishing characteristic of its promotion is an offer of a free vomit bag for every attendee. "No one admitted without..")

Seems it's guaranteed to turn your stomach!) I'd much rather see sex movies than that stuff. Sex is, after all, harmless. Doesn't upset the stomach, either.

TERRY The guy you know who threw up after eating a package of papers must have the world's weakest stomach. Not a day passes when I don't eat more paper than that. Much to Arnie's displeasure.

You mentioned the Locus Poll in the same breath as my name. It's immodest of me to ask, but did I place? (We don't get Locus.) If I did place, it's my first time ever, and I'd like to know about it.

Funny thing about liking TAB. With most drinks, liking one just expands your horizons and the number of things you enjoy. But my experience with TAB has been that, when I first started drinking it, I absolutely hated it. But I very gradually developed a taste for it. However, at the same time, other (normal, non-dietic) soda was beginning to taste bad to me. Now I've got to where I really prefer TAB to any other soda..and all other soda tastes way too heavy and syrupy for me. It really hurts that my taste for Cokes has been so altered..Coca-Cola is indeed my favorite soda. But, now that I've been drinking TAB, Cokes are just too sweet.

Speaking of Big Bands, if you ever get a chance to hear any of the Time-Life recordings of The Age of Swing, do it. These are re-recordings, which normally sounds like a bad thing, but they're really great. They are actually re-creations of the old performances (which were, you recall, performed before the art of recording was perfected, so all the old records lack a lot in fidelity) and there's no way I can praise them too highly. (Swing certainly isn't my Big Love, but it's interesting to know about; helps me to understand some of the contemporary trends in music.)

Speaking of Bessie Smith and other fine femme vocalists, does anyone here know where I can get some recordings of Nellie Letcher (spelling not too certain...) I used to have a fair number of 78's by her; the two I remember best were "Fine Brown Frame" and "Come On Over To My House - There Ain't Nobody Home But Me". The 78's are gone, and I'd enjoy replacing them if there's anything to replace them with. Do you know?

I'd certainly like to see everyone in Columbia when I come to Missouri..but it just may not be possible. It's beginning to look like Arnie might not be able to go with me (..he might not get his vacation this year..). In that case, time in Missouri is going to be very limited, since I won't want to stay gone from NY too long. Also, of course, since Columbia is considerably off the beaten path between St. Louis and Poplar Bluff, and since Arnie and I don't drive, it would really be difficult for us to get there. Any chance Columbia fandom might be in St. Louis that week?

Arnie & I, and Bill & Charlene saw The Last Picture Show last week. Bill didn't seem to care for it much, and Charlene couldn't quite make up her mind. But personally, I loved it..thought it was beautifully acted. It's seldom I've seen performances that made down-home-type people seem so real.

ARNIE Your eulogy to baseball was really fine stuff, sir, and in fact made me feel so warm toward the sport that I really wished I liked it. I'm afraid the most that I can stir up in response to the subject, though, is nostalgic remembrances of Harry Carey's voice perpetually filling the background as I lay in the grass contemplating the beauty of the summer sky. How I loved that sound...summers can never be the same again

now that he's left the Cardinals. Didn't you tell me he was announcing for a San Francisco team now? -- I've never been to a big-time baseball game; perhaps you and I should go out and watch the Mets someday, just so I could see what it's like. (When I was a little girl, I remember my family taking me out to the American Legion ballpark once; and, friends in Poplar Bluff used to sponsor a Little League team, so I've seen one or two of their games.) It's be kinda fun to sit in the bleachers and eat hotdogs and drink ginger ale from paper cups...let's do it this year.

Yes, Seth, by all means encourage Cathy to write for Apa, if she's got even a little interest in fandom. Of a matter of fact, the first prose words I ever wrote in fandom were in an apa very similar to this one, and I've always attributed any skill I have in writing (which is a pretty questionable concept, actually) to my practice in that apa. (Until that first apa, I wrote only poetry and letters.)

I agree with you, Arnie, that it's difficult to imagine us ever making our home In The Wilds (..though a chocolate house in Hershey Pennsylvania would certainly be delightful..) I think it's probably a streak of extreme practicality that makes us both realize that NY, or some other large city very like it, is where we're going to be, and that we might as well enjoy it. That's not to say that I wouldn't enjoy getting Out In Nature once in a while..not to live in it; just to look at it. But, I agree with you that, except for visits into the wild, it seems likely that we'll continue our metropolitan lifestyle.

CHARLENE I'm really astounded that on-screen violence doesn't bother you; I would say that was an indication that you have a pretty firm separation in your mind between reality and imagination. I don't know how well you cope with reality, but you seem to have a really healthy approach to unreality.

What did you do with the chickens?

I think the juxtaposition between your last sentence, and the cartoon Bill chose to stencil on your last page to fill up the blank, is absolutely marvelous. Everyone who didn't notice should rush right back to mlg. #3 and see what I'm talking about.

NEAL I think it's fantastic that you came up with the same suggestion (ie, majority of yes votes rather than abstentions) all by yourself. It took three of us in Brooklyn to think of it...and you did it by your lonesome. I also think it's interesting that you and Charlene both nominated Dan Steffan; he is nice, isn't he. I hope he makes it in.

The best salvation for the worldcon would probably be to have a giant comicon in L.A. -- I'm glad there's one in Boston at that time, but I don't think it will help much.

Speaking of the worldcon, how many apans are planning to go? I don't think Arnie and I can make it this year...if there are going to be many of us sitting idle on that weekend, maybe we should cook something up.

Funny you should mention the anti-Arab prejudism. Arnie's not really evidenced any, but from one place and another, I've picked up a lot of the stock phrases. Since I've never met an Arab to know it, I've almost started to believe that "they never bathe"; "they don't work"; "they mistreat their wives". That last is one that I'd really come close to accepting. A couple of blocks from where we live is the middle-eastern district, with a lot of curio shops. Have you ever noticed that Arabian curio shops always have on

display a great many whips in their windows? Great braided leather things that frighten me just to see them. Since the local Brooklyn Arabs have no camels, I find myself almost ready to think the worst...

DAVE I tell you the truth, you had some good things in your last mailing. Oh... you had some bad stuff, too, about which I suppose I could go into long bitchy raves, but I don't want to be on that kind of footing with you, and would much rather you understand that I recognize the fact when you try to do nice stuff...I don't really want to be your enemy; just your friend. But, fact is, I'm not going to be able to give your apazine the kind of care and attention I'd like to, this time, because something Really Awful just happened to me about 15 minutes ago, and it's Friday night, and if I don't finish up this mlg. tonight, there's not going to be another chance. The terrible thing that just happened was that I just broke a tooth clear off except for the roots, and it's what you call an eye tooth, and it really doesn't feel too well while I'm writing this...and worse yet, it hurts my ego tremendously to have this hole in my mouth where my tooth used to be...and I'm extremely dispondent about it.

OK. I not only accept what you were trying to explain about your religious head, and Old Testament morality, and Dan Osterman, and that...I actually understand it. I just hope that you, having been through a taste of intolerance, can realize how wrong it is to be intolerant. Where Jim Sanders is concerned...well, I think it's unfortunate that you had to run head-on against someone with Jim's particular lifestyle at a time when you weren't really equipped to handle it; that kind of thing has shook up older and more experienced people than you, believe me. But I think it's important that you should realize that different people have different lifestyles, and just because it's not for you, you shouldn't be too quick to condemn. It's ok that, for example, Debbie has an active interest in porn -- if you only stop to think about it, there are thousands and millions of good people who share that interest. Maybe it's not for you, and maybe you don't want your wife reading it....that's fine. But, it's really, really ok for people to be different from you. Just like it's really ok for you to be different from me. I think that what all of us would most like to see from you would be a long moments hesitation before you put anything down just because it's not for you. So far, you're not giving that moments thought before blurting out your reaction, and it leaves you with your foot in your mouth pretty often. What generally happens is that you come out with something that seems a little radical, on one side or another, and if it happens to push someone's button, like you pushed mine with abortions, then they'll call you to task about that particular subject.. as I did with abortion, and several others did on that and several other subjects. But what would really be nice would be if we could quit talking about Specific Subjects, like abortion, or racism, or religious tolerance, or any of that jive, and talk on the level of equals. Which we are, you know, Dave. I mean, none of us want to go through a point-by-point education in which we teach you how (we think) you should feel -- we'd rather you feel as you want to, and us feel as we want to, and all be tolerant of each others views and lifestyles, even if we can't share them on every point. -- Incidentally, Dave: that means being tolerant of the religious convictions of others in this apa, too...don't you think?

Don't get me wrong: I'm willing to talk about Interesting Subjects. It's just that I don't want to play teacher. And I know you don't want me to, either. Rather than that, I'd prefer just to go on being your friend. Albeit your broken-toothed friend.

ROSS I love you, Ross. But if I do a long comment to you like normal, I'll end up having to do two full pages more. And my tooth is bothering me too much to do that, so I hope you'll forgive me. Apa Scruff was indeed full of fine stuff this month.