

SYNAPSE

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DENDRITES

Halloween we visited the Katzes. They didn't have anything in the August mailing, because of burnout and lack of time. Arnie writes thousands of words a day about wrestling, FooFoo forgive, and he and Joyce have a contract for a book they're working on, about collecting, which they hope will be the beginning of a series of books.

Arnie thinks Forry Ackerman missed his chance to capitalize big time on his title as Mr Science Fiction, whereas Harlan Ellison, for one, has done well for himself. Arnie says Forry should have been going to cons at the time when all inquiries were referred to his agent, who asked large honorariums from little ones like Silvercon, which could not afford such fees.

On the way back, we stopped at Boulder dam and looked at some of the outside attractions with the help of a copy of Ken Forman's Self Guided Tour borrowed from Joyce. The layout of the fixed stars was interesting. I think the accompanying inscription that supposedly only two people can understand might be comprehensible if the text were on paper in black & white instead of buried in dark diorite.

Both going and coming, we were given cursory inspection by guards on the highway near the dam.

Duke McMullan has lent me a copy of the Koran. I stand by my characterization of it. 'Tis doubtful that any American negro was converted to Islam by reading this book. Probably Islam and Mormonism both win converts by qualities other than their scriptures.

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EPIMETHEUS

Mailing 256

GHU FAPALEMENT (Davis)

We usually include a mail address in our fanzines.

I had a springwound motor with my Tinkertoy set. I believe "Mechano" was spelled Meccano, the same way remote-controlled robots were in a Buddy Deering comic. Although Lionel electric trains made an enviable display in the mail-order catalogs, I believe that once obtained, they weren't played with enough to justify the cost, except by model-train fans who continued as such into adulthood. A lawyer friend had a set that he brought out at Christmas time to go around the tree. \ \ When directions such as west and east are adverbs or adjectives, they shouldn't be capitalized. Even as nouns, capitalize only when they name a region. Not "out West". \ \ Why call Max Keasler Walker? \ \ Altar boys reciting Latin they don't understand is something like Mohammedans in non-Arab-speaking countries learning to recite the Koran without knowing what it says. \ \ Your greatuncle's grasp of distances in the West must have been on a level with the songster's who wrote By the Time I Get to Phoenix. \ \ I beg you to explain the immense philosophical difference between middle school and junior high.

SYNAPSE

I said two Nick Fareys in the stefnal world is improbable. But there is another Philip Klass in an associated area, anti-UFO, whom our Philip Klass happens to dislike.

ON EAST BROADWAYS (Marion)

Robert Arthur has also written many sf stories.

"taboo subjects (teen sex, homosexuality, etc.)" Egad, man, television wallows in those subjects. \ \ I suppose "young ladies" may refer to themselves as whores but others shouldn't, for the same reason that homosexuals can call themselves queer but others can't, and negroes can refer to themselves as niggers but others can't. \ \ Ah Sweet Idiocy wasn't bitter. It was rather gleeful.

SNICKERSNEE (Silverberg)

I'm pleased to see you saying "Frisco". \ \ I question how much egoboo an author would have gotten from being an An Lab winner in Lowndes's magazine as a result of having his kinfolks send in first-place votes for his stories.

FOR FAPA (Lindsay)

How do resentful recipients use a spammer's web address for a DOS attack?

KING BISCUIT TIME (LICHTMAN)

Another interesting Rotsler cover, suggesting something aliener than the Borg.

Was Ray Bradbury reading his stories aloud at LASFS, or telling them? \ \ Fanzines received in the first part of 2001 seems too small a sample from which to conclude th:t the 20 percent decline in numbers is significant.

DEVILS WORKS (Metcalf)

This is on the Jul 01 issue:

Fortunately Leah Smith has provided a quotable explanation of Courtney's boat, in her lexicon. What was Jack Benny's bear's readership? \ \ Those are awful acronyms for Wells's stories, especially "TWOFW". Notwithstanding what i use as a filler on page 9, i think words th:t aren't capitalized when writing the title in full shouldn't be capitalized in initialese. \ \ Chuck (i suppose that's Hansen) threatening with sword and with pistol presents a new side of his character.

HORIZONS

Did Spaceways have different colored covers on copies of the same issue? \ \ I can't imagine why you in the 1930s loved to attend dance marathons. \ \ To me, the biggest job in preparing an income-tax return is gathering the data, not putting it on the forms. \ \ Grapefruit is probably so called because it grows in clusters, although the first citation in the OED Supplement, apparently by someone who never tasted one, said its flavor resembles grape. \ \ The British seem to follow about the same PC canons as we do, but they don't have such a large minority of blacks, so might continue Dr Who as a Caucasian. \ \ The year 1900 isn't especially notable for scientific advances. \ \ Probably mythologies unfamiliar to us, such as those of Amerinds or Russians, have strange material. So strange they wouldn't appeal to an Anglo-Saxon audience. \ \ Ray Schaffer's statement was about separation of church and state. Your quotations from the founding fathers refer only to belief in God or (in one case) the gospel. Everybody had to be at least a deist before Charles Darwin came along with the explanation for the apparent design in nature. That didn't mean they wanted the government to favor churches, or to pass any law about them.

offended because Mary is depicted as a lower-class Chicana instead of someone decked out in the finest linens?

But there's more here than that blatant hypocrisy. Don't these people have anything better to do than demand that a small computer-generated image be removed from a museum?

Have all of the naked been clothed? All of the hungry fed? All of those in prison been visited and comforted? Have all of the nation's poor people been given lucrative stock options so that they are now bazillionaires?

Has war been eliminated? Have all the sick been tended to? Have the meek inherited the earth so that they are now running

L When i was in Sunday School, they didn't teach us about Lot and Sodom. It would have been embarrassing to explain the sin. In one of my last I Boob columns, i remarked on the movie Noahs Ark:

The human sins that disgusted God were weakly presented. Now that sex isn't wicked, even perverted sex, the main thing the movie could say against Sodom was its making war, and against Noah's later home, Gerar, sacrificing virgins. Hurting people physically seems to be the only politically-correct sin.

A PROPOS DE RIEN (Caughran)

"The purchase of books is mistaken for the appropriation of their contents." Schopenhauer had my number.

You don't make fire by rubbing two flint stones together. But i may have thought so when i was Ben Caughran's age. I suppose "cojourner" means conjurer. At Ben's age i knew the word, had seen it in the Book of Knowledge and Hairbreadth Harry, but didn't know the accent fell on the first syllable.

Gernsback coined scientifiction. Perhaps a reader supplied stf. I use "stef" to mean science-fiction and pure fantasy. \\ Are Java scripts what the popup ads come in? \\ Not Los Vegas; Vegas ends in -as. I've heard a Britisher (Alistair Cook?) pronounce it Lass Vegas. \\ After you had read a few, i doubt you'd think th:t everyone's life story would be interesting. \\ Did Keynes say give money to the poor?

FISH WRAP DIGEST (Cantor)

Why are there two apas in LA? \\ What's a sig? \\ I take it the smaller figure in the Rotsler cartoon is the one saying "So it's true - you really do know everything!" \\ "given as these workers are used to ..." That's carrying the substitution of "given" and "as" for 'because' pretty far. \\ The idea 'If you're psychic, why ain't you rich?' has been expressed in many places. \\ The Saturday when members of the National Association of Parliamentarians were occupying the House chamber, one asked the Deputy Parliamentarian of the House whether televising sessions caused congressmen to speak for the camera rather than to their colleagues, and he said yes. The chambers were close to empty a couple of days earlier when i went to the galleries and saw congressmen making speeches. Committee meetings are a different matter, when they are not just opportunities for citizens to vent their opinions; real decisions are made there.

ALPHABET SOUP (Stevens)

The Federal Convention contemplated indefinite expansion into the west. There was even a suggestion, rejected, of putting a provision in the Constitution th:t would assure the seaboard states of always having a majority in Congress. \\ You are right about Washington's high crime rate as due to its being all like a central-city problem area. But there are exceptions. Georgetown gentrified, of course, and there are nice neighborhoods for blocks on both sides of Connecticut avenue from Dupont circle to Chevy Chase.

I saw Rocketship X-M in a theater. Some people thought it was greater than Destination Moon because it reflected on the

insanity of war. \\ Does methadone give a high like that of heroin? \\ I can't say much for the International Date Line, but two nothing-there places i'd like to visit are in Memphis and New Orleans, where the 90th meridian crosses the 35th and 30th parallels. \\ My sorting frenzies never last long enough to get everything in order. \\ "All things not required were forbidden." I take this as a translation of De Camp's motto of the corporate state: Alle, was nicht Pflicht ist, ist verboten. \\ Can spiders whip roaches? While natural controls appeal, i think they result only in equilibrium unless other suitable food is available: if the predators were to wipe out all of the pest prey, the predators would starve and the pests would return. \\ Would GRR Martin's novel be longer than A la recherche du temps perdu? \\ J J OMalley quoted an advertised cereal as bringing you all the nourishment in the milk and sugar you put on it. I suppose cereals th:t advertise they give you all those vitamins have to do so, but think vitamins must be awfully small for a day's supply to ride on flimsy flakes.

FAPA PARTY AT MILLENNIUM PHILCON (Sapienza)

I didn't see this before i went to the con. But i ran into Fred Lerner, who said the time had been changed and he'd let me know the new time. I didn't see him again. I still like the idea. There were many FAPAns there whom i would have liked to see but didn't.

VOICE OF THE HABU (Wells)

One exception to correct grammar is "than whom there is no ...", so well established everyone uses it.

What Kitsap Peninsula town did you live in as a child? \\ "I avoid Southwest." You mean Southwest Airlines? I hear it's the only company in such good condition it didn't have to cut back after 11 September.

ANOTHER FORGOTTEN WEIRD TALES ILLUSTRATOR &c (Everts)

I wonder why words are repeated from one page to the following. Something in the mechanics of word-processing? Perhaps something to do with right-justifying the last line on a page? \\ Even if Olinick's wife and child were off avisiting when the census was taken, he should have reported their existence.

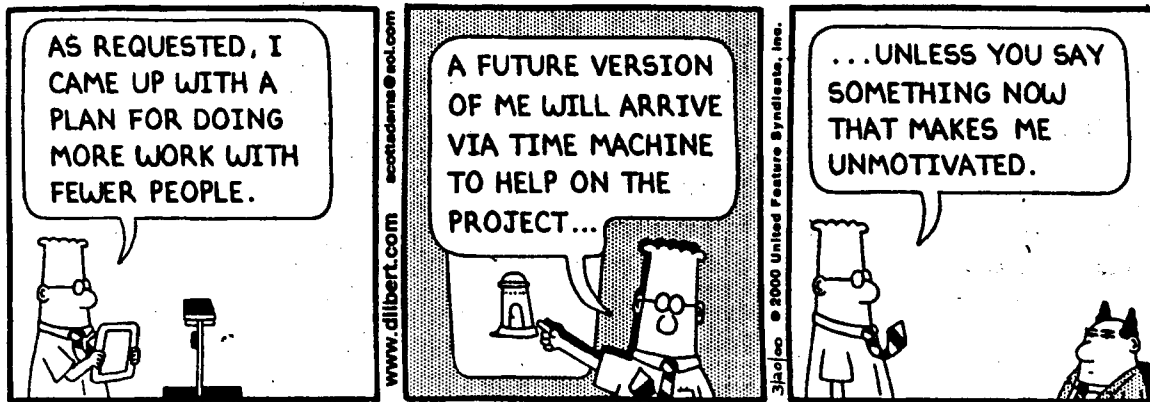
TERMINAL EYES (Marion)

From whom is the leadoff quotation?

I read the first and last paragraphs of the lead article.

So far as i know, hekto copies last as long as ditto copies. \\ Kenaf is a better alternative to woodpulp than hemp is. \\ The final episode of ST Voyager indicated th:t the ship took a quarter of a century to get home. So much for "a sense of their getting closer to home." \\ The pronoun "um" is a rebuke to the politically correct who labor with "he or she" or, ghod help us, "s/he", instead of using the epicene "he". \\ I was surprised at

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Xena's ending off in the Orient, on a minor note like classic Star Trek ending with "Turnabout Intruder". In the last seasons of Hercules and Xena, there was a tendency to get away from historical times, even into anhistorical settings, as when Caesar was shown defying the Fates and looking at movie film of one timeline. \\ Your idea of female beauty is at odds with mine. The cover on this issue is even more repulsive than the back cover. But i wouldn't stop reading someone's fanzines because of that. What Keith Walker did was something else. \\ I don't think most of the antiscience stories in the media and in print are intended as cautionary tales. The Haven was anti-tech to the end, instead of offering a constructive compromise with the excessively urbanized life. \\ Th:t astronomical movements don't occur in exact time units is no evidence th:t time is an artifice. \\ You could look up mutatis mutandis, and other words and phrases you're not sure of, in a dictionary. The Xavier Institute perhaps did no worse than the University of Washington. From its early days UW was stuck with the motto "Lux sit", which i am told means something like "There may as well be light." \\ I suspect th:t mothers think circumcision will stop masturbation. \\ Complaining about one's boss is so one-sided.

I don't know th:t "the money-grubbers" bought the presidency.

KAREN REPORT (Johnson)

I think i see some butterfly stamping in colored ink, individually on each copy?

I could probably do 66 paragraphs several times over on my life up to age 10. But i don't count that the happiest part of my life, though it was normally happy. \\ You employ the dative in an odd way th:t i've seen several times now, "My brother got me back for that one". Previously i had only heard the form 'got back at me'. \\ Representing a prolonged o sound with ooo is misleading. I prefer to lengthen such words with dashes: long----- and so-----. \\ What are textas? \\ "My mother made me nil by mouth" is an unAmerican expression. Also "they bailed me up in the backyard". "puter" for computer is new to me, but seems as natural as "copter". \\ Apparently by you Prep is something like kindergarten. Here, it means preparatory for college. You'll need to know these things if you move to Florida.

LOFGEORNOST (Lerner)

Could Roskilde be another form of Rothschild? \\ After the Roskildeans had blocked the harbor with scuttled ships, how could they use the harbor? \\ Hey, i catch you in another American spelling: "multi-colored houses". \\ Were lawsuits settled by a vote of the whole assembly? Were the precedents written down for future guidance? \\ It's hard to believe th:t in Iceland hot water underlies the land everywhere. Here, subterrene water is found in quantity only in aquifers.

Beowulf made speeches as long as Shakespeare's, which must have slowed down the action in that video.

FREE RADICAL (Green)

I believe th:t, at least a century back, books published in Great Britain didn't necessarily carry a date, probably because of a difference from our copyright law.

FELINE MEWSINGS (Tutihasi)

Before Brave New World, soma was an intoxicating beverage drunk in ancient Hindu rites.

SYNAPSE (bis)

"supposed to published" is worse than redundant pastense. \\ I don't know what "character development" means. Does it refer to showing additional qualities th:t a character presumably had all along? If it means changing his nature, only a dramatic change, as in A Christmas Carol and ERB's The Mucker, would seem to be of enough interest in a short story or perhaps a novel. Something th:t often happens in an open-ended series such as Malcolm in the Middle or a newspaper comic is th:t a subsidiary character turns out to be more interesting and displaces the title character. That happened in Barney Google producing Snuffy Smith, Winnie Winkle the Breadwinner producing Perry Winkle and Denny Dimwit, Wash Tubbs producing Captain Easy, Moon Mullins producing Kayo and Uncle Willie, Mickey Mouse producing Donald Duck, Terry & the Pirates producing Hotshot Charlie, Buzz Sawyer giving way to his gunner Roscoe Sweeney, and Funky Winkerbean producing Leslie Moore. \\ I think the Astounding nanotech story was The Mechanical Mice, Jan 41.

The last two sheets got reversed in the outsourced collating.

FANALYSIS (Schaffer)

I hope the sketch doesn't look like you.

Your momentum sometimes carries you away. I doubt th:t OConnor said pasties and Gstrings are protected by the Constitution. She may have said states are free to require such coverings.

"manages to get some real loft out of his serve." One may want loft in his drive, but not in his serve.

All your news clippings come from the same source, judging by the typography. \\ Patenting the wheel probably resulted from an Australian decision to leave patentability to litigation if anyone's interested, instead of having the patent office tell an applicant his invention is not patentable. \\ Paul Harvey once said th:t if pig fat were smeared on a Moslem hijacker, he would not commit suicide while in that condition.

GREEN STUFF (Moore)

I think "as if" introduces a simile.

You could have saved yourself trouble by looking in a dictionary. We wore toboggan caps in the winter, and called them toboggans. \\ Alcestis isn't a strange name for a Greek, but it is odd for an apa.

I like the two-party system. The parties compete to give us what they think a majority of voters want. \\ As you readed the novel, you should have entered on a flyleaf the page numbers to which you wished to refer. \\ Does one find out he needs a second vasectomy after generating an unwanted pregnancy?

gHU FAPALEMENT (bis)

Interesting issue. \\ I've heard th:t the story about turkeys strangling in the rain is untrue.

FAPA VENUS (Stenfors)

You continue to produce novel and outrageously implausible stories. Such exercise in writing seems to have enabled you to come closer to English idiom. There are still many pencilmarks in my copy of this, but they are not such wholesale changes as i would have suggested on your first FAPA efforts.

Parallel universe in which DNA is a protein

I frequently come across something th:t would have been nice to paste next to an item in a Synapse th:t has already been published.

There's the clipping that accompanies Horizons this issue and the one at the right. I also have an Op-Ed piece by Matthew Miller th:t talks about the ills of dynasty in our politics, and one by Michael Kinsley about the difference between the Democrats' acceptance of the electoral college vote contrary to the wishes of a majority of the voters, and typical Republican Trent Lott's howl at the majority in the Senate changing hands because of Jeffords's switch from Republican to Independent; two topics on which i recently expounded.

But who can be interested in such things now, when attention is focused in remote Central Asia?

thing called the city's Police Oversight Commission, thus bringing to fruition the idea of a citizens' review board which caused him political woes when he ran for mayor the very first time.

Some local media types are fond of calling Jim Baca a curmudgeon. And according to the essayist Jon Winokur, who has written extensively on the lives and musings of such memorable curmudgeons as George Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, Winston Churchill and Dorothy Parker, the mayor may well be just that.

Says Winokur, curmudgeons can, as the dictionaries would have it, be "cantankerous." But the targets of their irony and ridicule, he notes, "are pretense, pomposity, conformity, incompetence."

Albuquerque has had mayors with lesser proclivities. CW

Syndicated columnist, Hal Rhodes, writes "Three Rights Make a Left" exclusively for CW.

HIGHLIGHTS

Marion: "a small room in which Jeff used to shuffle boxes around like a giant Rubik's cube." "this one being another one of those clones that are born full-grown with full-grown memories for our full groan". "Roy Tackett, who has now gafiated to a retirement home and SLANAPA (did I just commit a redundancy?)"

Silverberg: "stuff which I'm actively interested in not seeing." "('He's confused,' they said, 'he's only a pro, he doesn't understand fannish stuff any more')".

Warner: "I feel a totally unjustified sense of guilt if I go too long without reading science fiction ... I certainly hope that my choice of reading matte doesn't enter into the decision about my future when Judgment Day arrives."

Stevens: "One of the problems about being stationed in Antarctica for two years was that many of the guys came back with penguins as war brides."

Tutihasi: "This issue, I will be catching up with things I neglected while catching up with mailing comments."

Lerner: "The special effects inspired more curiosity about how they were achieved than suspension of disbelief". "In rural Iceland, as in rural Vermont, it is assumed that if you don't know your way you probably don't belong there."

Green: "I am supposed to be operating on a 'one out, one in' policy, owing to our existing collection approaching a black hole density".

Lived in peace

A column in a local newspaper estimates the original painting for a certain 1939 cover of a Western pulp as worth about \$800. The columnist says:

Today, original cover art is rare to find, because it was common for artists to paint one month's cover on top of another to save money. In addition, since it wasn't necessarily thought of as art, but "merely" illustration, much of it was tossed in the garbage. You can find out more about the history and collecting of cover illustration in Robert Lesser's "Pulp Art Original Cover Paintings for the Great American Pulp Magazine" (Random House Value Publishing, \$19.99).

Died in Greece

An article in the Exchange magazine last year speaks of symbols used on line. Some of them are new to me: IRL, in real life. TTSIA, the title says it all. IYC, if you're confused. RTM, read the manual. TTYL, talk to you later. LOL, laughing out loud. ROTFLOL, rolling on the floor laughing out loud. AFAIK, as far as i know. BG, big grin. HTH, hope this helps. WTG, way to go. FWTW, for what it's worth. TIA, thanks in advance. NRN, no reply necessary. AFAIC, as far as I'm concerned. BION, believe it or not. And these emoticons: :-D very happy face. :-& tonguetied. :-{ downer. :-0 oops. :-} what? :-\ undecided. :-* kiss.

And buried in a hunk of tallow.

MAROONED IN 2001

The Millennium Philcon was held in the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Its past as the Reading Railroad station was responsible for the Grand Hall, a very large and very high room on the second floor, through which we went from the Marriott to the convention area called the Bridge Annex. Some programming was off in a far corner of the Convention Center's ground floor, across streets if you were on the ground, but the nine principal programming rooms were adjacent to or across the hall from each other. The registration, voodoo-board, etcetera area separated these from an enormous exhibit hall, more space than we used for the art show, dealers, and fanhistory displays. On a mezzanine were the Overlook bar and the Green Room. Program participants were supposed to assemble in the Green Room just before their turn, but few did. The consuites, vegetarian and normal, were buried in the Marriott, as were the room parties and the Grand Ballroom where major ceremonies were conducted. Children's programming, called Camp Franklin, and gaming were in places i did not see.

The pocket program was well done. After maps of the buildings, for every day there was a four-page grid by hours and rooms of the programming in the principal rooms, with short names of program items, followed by pages on which were all program items with descriptions and names of the participants. There was a key i never tried to use of dingbats indicating whether an item was about fandom, sf writing, etc. At the back of the book was a participant index, which appeared to be accurate, showing when and where every program participant was scheduled.

And our individual event schedules were repeated on stickers on the backs of our badges.

The big MilPhil book had information on many of the participants, and much more, but who has time to read that during a con?

Guest of honor Greg Bear was scheduled for 17 appearances. The few th:t i dropped in on would probably have been more valuable if i had read Darwins Radio. Greg explained how he thinks evolution works, apparently punctuated equilibrium plus something inherent in the structure of DNA. His goh speech was disappointing. It was too long, especially because of the time he took paying tribute to Poul Anderson, his fatherinlaw. His theme, when he got to it, seemed to be th:t this is the future we predicted and helped to bring about, and we should get more credit for it.

I'll report mostly on program items in which i was involved.

I moderated Previously in Philadelphia, which referred to the worldcons of 1947 and 1953. At this time no one could remember what happened in 1953, but Progress Report #3 had told quite a bit about the 1947 con, and we talked about that.

Peggy Rae Sapienza was originally scheduled to moderate Famous Fannish Lawsuits & Scandals, but she was busy helping with registration, and the concom substituted me; but Erle Korshak, another lawyer, took the duty upon himself, which was all right with me. I think Roger Sims joined the panel. Ted White being

there, Roger felt somewhat inhibited when the matter of embezzlements came up. He told enough about the Breenigan to indicate that there was fire under the smoke. Milton Stevens was an active participant from the audience.

Leeds vs Philadelphia was on the limited question of which had better claim to being the first sf convention. Leeds was planned and announced as one, whereas it was only while the US fen were in Philadelphia that they decided to call it a convention. However, that led directly to succeeding conventions and the worldcons; i don't know what progeny Leeds can claim. Once the facts were laid out (including the earlier date of the one in Philadelphia), who had the better claim was merely a matter of defining "convention".

The sheet given at MilPhil listing my events says i was also to moderate Dammit, I Want My Flying Car: What SF Didn't Predict. I told the audience i supposed i was chosen because i'd had the longest time to be awaiting these things, but i didn't much mind not having a flying car. There was no herding the discussion toward the topic. Instead of predicted inventions that failed to materialize, it was mostly about the changes that have occurred in our lifetimes. For example, Philip Klass told of open discrimination against him as a Jew when he applied for a job.

Things to Come: Fandom in the Future. Mostly they talked about recent changes in fandom. At the end i said there'll probably always be a core fandom (a phrase Lichtman used).

In one of the several panels on alternative history, someone made a point i first heard at this year's Bcon: We go into the past because no one now feels he can predict the future even a short time ahead.

In the panel discussion on Posthuman Rights, the part i heard took it for granted that artificial intelligences etcetera must have the rights of humans.

Almost the last item in Sunday's grid was On Killing. Timon Esaias cited evidence that in battle only a quarter of the soldiers fire their guns, and only about 5 percent aim at the enemy. (The fractions go up when a gun requires more than one person to man it.) Indeed, i have read that one of the unfired guns picked up at Gettysburg contained seven loads rammed down the barrel. Esaias ascribed his facts not to confusion in the heat of battle but to human aversion to killing other humans. Whatever the cause, such a phenomenon would explain the low casualty rate in a day of fighting, such as that at Glorieta Pass, New Mexico, in 1862. Authorities agree that 25 percent hit will turn back any charge.

I don't know how many attended the Retro Hugos because the lights were in my eyes. When the retro for fanzines came up, i told with stencil and ditto master how we published fmz in 1950.

This humble part in the retro Hugos gave me admission to a catered reception before the real Hugos and to the Post-Hugo reception sponsored by ConJose. We were encouraged to dress up for the retros and the Hugos. John Hertz was there and also at the past-con-chairs party in white tie and everything.

Boston's choosing me as a goh was probably the reason Pelz gave me an invitation to a meeting of past worldcon chairs. It

was indicated to be a closed party, and i wondered whether the illuminati of fandom were going to initiate me into the secrets of smoffery. The party turned out to be almost without structure, and fen who were hitting dead-dog parties came at will.

From Philadelphia i went to DC for a convention of the National Association of Parliamentarians.

The parlipro convention ended 10 September, and i was supposed to fly home the next day. Something happened th:t prevented that; i was marooned in the Baltimore-Washington area for several days.

I spent part of those days in the Library of Congress. The first thing i called for was a book named Marooned in 1492. Ackerman says he has it; and Cazadessus has it, but to sell, not lend. The Library of Congress had data on it: Marooned in 1492, or, Under fortune's flag, by William Wallace Cook, copyright 1905 by Street & Smith, 309 p.

The LC had the novel itself on microfiche. The score of fiches brought to me were headed Early Science Fiction Novels. Marooned in 1492 wasn't there; just stories th:t seemed to be of the lost-race Graustark type. Then i learned there were additional fiches in that category, and asked for a batch bearing the story i was interested in.

The microphotographer at Greenwood Press had inserted an apology th:t the only copy available was in bad condition. Indeed it was; the pages separately displayed had ragged edges. But the whole story Marooned in 1492 was there, and i skimmed it.

Despite the copyright date, the novel seemed to base in the late 19th century. The principal characters were two young men who conversed in breezy language, slangy and allusive; a slightly dotty German professor who proposed to take some key artisans back in time with him; and his enemy. The novel dealt briefly and cavalierly with the problem of changing history. Only the characters mentioned traveled to the past. They did it by ingesting the seeds of a rare plant, sooner than they planned, and i think came back the same way. They quickly met Columbus at a critical juncture, and i didn't follow the action, which apparently all occurred before he set sail.

gentlemanliness

In the western states, about half of the business and government employees in positions of contact with the general public have thick foreign accents: airport personnel, checkin persons, waiters,. In addition to Mexicans, there are various Orientals and Hindus (American Indians speak pretty precise English). Decades ago Hindus bought up a large part of the independent motels in the West, reportedly because owning real estate made it easier for them to bring their relatives over.

People who contact us by phone, selling, or answering 800 calls, often have foreign accents because they live and work in the Caribbean area.

invaluableness

DEFINING MOMENTS

Dick and Leah Smith put on Ditto combined with FanHistoriCon last month at Jumers Chateau, a faux-oldfashioned hotel in Bloomington.

The hospitality room and the fanzine room were immediately back of the registration table on the balcony. There were several round tables, at one of which fen sat and played cards seemingly all the time. The elevators were adequate, and there was also a stairwell to the first floor, where was the auditorium in which programming occurred.

My seniors Tucker, Ackerman, and Widner are alive and well. Bob's eyesight is good now. He went through a photo album of b&ws he gave Siclari, some of which might display a group of a dozen or so dawn fen, and from the little spots of faces or forms Bob told who they were while Joe wrote the names on post-its. Forry has lost some excess weight. He had several weeks of a busy schedule ahead of him, giving his talks in various parts of this country and abroad. Art still drives, but Bob doesn't.

Two or three hours were devoted to seven decades of fandom. I said i wasn't present at either of the defining moments of the 1930s: the first fanzine, around 1930, and the first convention, in 1936. Later i realized there was another defining moment, the launch of FAPA in 1937.

In the next decade, the defining moment as i saw it was the LASFS Blowup. Then it involved personalities; now it appears as the most dramatic moment (two moments actually; the Knave secession led by Yerke and later the postdated resignations of "the insurgent element in Los Angeles fandom") of the ongoing contest between sercon and insurgent.

Side excursion here to note th:t this is something with roots as far back as Amazing Stories. (Starting Amazing was also a defining moment, determining th:t for a crucial generation there would be more scientifiction in special magazines than in the main stream.)

Gernsback may not have believed his readers would all become scientists, but after science came into its own at Los Alamos, we found th:t many or most of the participants in scientific leaps, from rockets to computers, had been cryptofans in their youth.

Along with this earnestness there was always a vein of burlesque, seen early in Hicks Inventions With a Kick and the stories of Epaminondas T. Snooks. I'd say that vein entered fandom with Hoy Ping Pong, but there was also faan fiction in Fantasy magazine.

The first decision in fandom was not between sercon and insurgent, but between the idea th:t we should be centered in science & the science-fiction magazines, and the idea th:t we should be about anything th:t struck our fancy. The Michelist notion th:t science-fiction should be about politics, and the Degleresque notion (it had other advocates) th:t we should be a society apart and superior, were other suggested themes.

The orientation toward science seems to have received its coup de grace in the death of the ISA.

The orientation toward the prozines seemed to have triumphed when the Quadrumvirate quit and the Triumvirate, with the support of the prozines, took control of the projected World's Fair or World sf convention. Although the triumvirs fell, Ziff-Davis dominated the second world sf convention, which was in its home city of Chicago and received donations of Z-D artwork etcetera for the auction and other patronage, and a writeup in Time magazine which backfired.

Ultimately fandom developed to be independent of the prozines, though professional authors are our aristocrats, and the stefnistic moans about the graying of fandom imply th:t we need more exposure in the prozines to bring in new blood. One reason successful authors are the big draw at conventions is th:t they will talk about general-interest issues embodied in their stories: the mind-body problem, atomigeddon, evolution, et cetera, the same scope as fanzines'.

Now back to the decades of fandom. The MilPhil program book says:

When It Changed: Discon '74 and After

Discon was the first Worldcon that had a separate "fan" lounge, possibly marking the pivotal moment that fanzine fans found themselves superseded by convention-running fans. Discuss/analyze this statement -- and cheer or bemoan this climacteric change in fandom.

Similar questions were addressed by ditto's panels of the several decades after 1950. (Some participants suggested th:t key developments were the baby boom entering college, Star Trek, moon landing, ktp.) They considered related questions such as what was the first big convention. I don't remember when they said multitrack programming began, but they probably identified the year. Light will be shed on these questions if Leah gets the audiorecording transcribed. That will be a miracle, for often several people were talking at once.

Division into subfandoms was manifested by special-interest conventions, many regionals, and commercial cons. Parallel with this was the proliferation of apas, some of which were not general-interest apas.

Further down the road, the development of fanzine fandom included using computers to compose fmz and print out the master copies, and substituting xerography for older means of reproduction, accompanied by outsourcing collation and stapling. After that came the internet, and a new debate, between those who prefer paper and those who chat on line.

Well, other things happened at ditto-FanHistoriCon.

Tucker seemed to believe th:t platinum staples were part of the spwsstfm's platform. I think the spwsstfm proposed sticking the magazines together with chewing gum, but the Platinum Plan was proposed by the IAOPUMUMFSTFPUSA Unltd. He revealed, news to me, th:t a woman scorned perpetrated the first Tucker Death Hoax.

Richard Lynch, who interviewed Ackerman, seemed not to know that after he got back to Los Angeles he came out strongly against the Exclusion Act.

Such lost figures as Singleton, Boggs, Laney, Degler, Burbee, and Ashley were discussed and debated. Only a little information came out that wasn't already somewhere in the archives of fandom.

The auction went to weary lateness and still didn't dispose of all the stock on hand. Apparently Bob Tucker is giving away his collections, and donated much to the auction. Some of the items were for the benefit of the next ditto, in Toronto, and some for DUFF; the auctioneers left off telling which was for which.

I didn't take anything for fanzine show & tell, but others did. I have at home many overruns of pages for past Synapses etcetera. Should these be assembled into spare copies? Frequently they are of poorer quality than the sheets that were stapled and circulated, and there will be fewer overrun copies of some pages. I gave Sam Moskowitz such overruns from Up to Now, and he assembled them into copies that he distributed. Bob Tucker had one, identifiable as not an original by the fact that it was stapled whereas the genuine article was put together with brass paper fasteners (to which the text at one point referred). Now that xerography is easy, perhaps I should discard the overruns.

4sJ had with him a hardbound book containing The Time Traveller (which he considers the first real fanzine), Science Fiction Digest (which became Fantasy magazine), and a script that was broadcast sub nom The Time Travellers.

There is to be a postconzine, which may or may not include a reprint of my Phanerofanish Eon, something to be considered in parallel with the above disquisition on fanhistory. At the con, the equipment available for typing ditto masters was a portable typewriter and a laptop computer, on neither of which do I feel comfortable, especially with those incorrigible ditto masters.

After the con I wrote to Jack Williamson:

At a FanHistoriCon last weekend, people said that you were in New York for the 1939 worldcon but refused to attend because the six Futurians were excluded. Did you attend that convention?

On request of Joe Siclari, I have gone through my photographs from the early days. Enclosed is a xerox of one. Is that you between Pohl and Wollheim?



He answered:

Thanks for the photo. That is Fred, me, and Wollheim, probably at the 1939 WorldCom.

Yes, I was there. I spent the morning, however, in an Automat across the street with the Futurians, who had been locked out of the con. All except Asimov, who was admitted as a pro. That's how I got to know Fred Pohl, who became a collaborator and a live-long friend.

Jack may be mistaken about the reason Asimov was admitted. Isaac's first published stories, i believe, were Marooned off Vesta, Mar 39 Amz, The Weapon Too Dreadful to Use, May 39 Amz, and Trends, Jul 39 ASF, so he wasn't a very noted pro (and late in the century, Harry Warner wondered whether Asimov was ever a Futurian). There was not a blanket exclusion of FSNY members. Six were individually barred unless they would pledge not to "do anything to harm the progress of the convention": Wollheim, Michel, Pohl, Lowndes, Kornbluth, and Gillespie.

"I'm sorry, Boss; it isn't I that makes these conditions--"

Bankruptcy & Other Debtor-Creditor Laws includes these passages:

... Assume, for example, that James Kirk, K, files a Chapter 7 petition. Mr. Spock is appointed trustee. K owes Federation Bank, F, \$100,000. F has a properly perfected security interest in K's ship. The ship has a value of \$80,000. Because the amount of F's secured claim is greater than the value of the ship, the ship is of inconsequential value to the estate. Thus, Spock can abandon the ship. To Kirk, the debtor. ... If Spock abandons the ship to K, K can then release the ship to F.

... For example, Mr. Spock can sell K's ship free and clear if the sale yields more than F's \$100,000 secured claim, ... The proceeds of any such sale will first be used to cover the costs of the sale; the first \$100,000 of net proceeds will be used to pay F.

... Accordingly, if Kirk's ship is exempt property, K keeps the \$80,000 ship and F keeps its lien on the ship. Because F retains its lien notwithstanding the discharge, K may be willing to pay F from postpetition earnings or borrowings in order to retain the ship. ...

It's the nature of things."

And speaking of Williamson, who remembers AKKA?



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WHAT SHOULD WE CALL IT?

Television networks called their coverage by such titles as Attack on America and America's New War.

The attacks are still often referred to as terrorist attacks. That label has not been appropriate for a long time. Phobos and Deimos are different words. Terror is an emotion such as an unarmed man on foot might feel with cavalry bearing down upon him. The distinctive feature of attacks in the last decade and more has been not terror but random killing.

Some oblique references to the attacks that started this are to "recent events". No one has found an apt description like "day of infamy". Some call them the attacks on New York and Washington (actually, the Pentagon is in Virginia). There is a tendency to call them the tragedy, the disaster, or just the events, of September 11th. Arnie calls them simply "the 7-11". One magazine calls them the WTC attacks; Paul Harvey is trying Terrible Tuesday. No name has surfaced for the whole quasi-war in which we are now engaged.

To avoid losing the shaky support we have from some Middle Eastern governments, the media avoid characterizing our enemies as Moslem or Arab. But a columnist says, "The real problem lies in fundamentalist Islam's concept of brotherhood, or ummah, before nationhood." I don't find ummah in my dictionaries, but it seems to be what Spengler attributes to the Magian spirit (for which Arabian is an imperfect synonym):

A nation of the Magian type is the community of co-believers, the group of all who know the right way to salvation and are inwardly linked to one another by the ijma of this belief [ijma is from Arabic iima', agreement]. Men belonged to a Classical nation by virtue of the possession of citizenship, but to a Magian nation by virtue of a sacramental act -- circumcision for the Jews, specific forms of baptism for the Mandaeans or the Christians. An unbeliever was for a Magian folk what an alien was for the Classical -- no intercourse with him, no connubium -- and this national separation went so far that in Palestine a Jewish-Aramaic and a Christian-Aramaic dialect formed themselves side by side. ... the Magian nation comprises neither more nor less than is covered by the idea of one or another of the Magian churches. ... the Arabian knows neither fatherland nor mother tongue. ...

The bulk of the opposing force is Moslem, and it takes in a large part of the Arab population of the world. In every Near and Middle Eastern Muslim country cooperating with us, a majority of the population favors Bin Laden.

The Arab nations have not responded to Mohammed Omar's and Osama bin Laden's calls to rise against the West. But followers of the prophet Mohammed who do not exactly endorse the indiscriminate killing of infidels at least tolerate Osama bin Laden as one of their own. A sympathetic populace is the water in which guerrillas can swim like fish. If some of the faithful help us capture Bin Laden it will be considered a betrayal of Islam. And it could easily happen that popular revolutions overthrow the regimes that have given us that shaky support.

The hatred toward the West, and America especially, stems from the different religion and culture in which the Arabs and other Muslims have been raised. Whether or not the Koran promises paradise to martyrs in holy war, the Mohammedan religion is at the bottom of their hostility toward us: Realizing that we are different and stronger, they think up reasons to get angry such as "American troops on the sacred soil of Arabia". The attacks are based on simple hate and actuated by a design to cause the US to decide its support of Israel is not worth the cost, to the end that the Arab states surrounding it may drive the Jews into the sea.

In the long run, the thing that must undermine Islam is what softened fundamentalist Christianity: The acids of modernity, now taken to the true believers by college students, radio and television, movies, and the printing press.

When those people are exposed long enough to Western pop culture, when they internalize Earth's place in the universe and learn that man evolved from lower life forms, when they realize that the Bible is a chaos of mortal writings (not that Muhammad ever read a Bible) and the Koran is a collection of lunacy; then they may join the modern world.

At ditto, Scott Dennis had a somewhat different take. He argued that Islam sees itself as weaker than we are and that it is fighting a losing battle. Capitalism, democracy, and freedom are the coming thing. That was demonstrated when Gorbachev and Yeltsin conducted free elections as their constitutions had said all along elections should be conducted, and abided by the results. Scott predicts that by 2020 China will be Hongkongized. That we are on the winning side was evidenced when president Zedillo allowed his Institutional Revolutionary Party to lose to Vicente Fox. And when Indira Gandhi did likewise, and when Gore accepted the Supreme Court's handing the presidency to Bush.

Until liberal democracy prevails throughout what are now Islamic countries, the conflict between them and us will continue, often breaking out in hostage-taking, sabotage, Schadenfreude, and Schrecklichkeit. From the Moslem viewpoint it is holy war, as holy as the Crusades were to medieval Christianity. Though not all Moslems approve the attacks, Jihad is the word.

And what should we call our response? The fourth estate has been using such phrases as the war against terrorism. Ghod forbid that we call it a crusade; Christianity is far below the fervor it had when it marched on the Holy Land or burned heretics and witches. But surely there is something better than 'counter September 11th'.

"Let's conquer China!"

A certain guru walked this earth to the point that his feet became extremely thick and hard. Because he didn't eat much, he had bad breath. Always thin and frail, he became known as the "Super calloused fragile mystic plagued with halitosis."

Hang the Homoiousian heretics!
