

THE 25

This is THE # 25, brought to you by Alphonse with typos and spelling errors by Richard Harter under the management of the Orange and Blue Pussy Cat who lives at 5 Chauncy St. #2, Cambridge MA 02138. Mimeography by the Pythagorean Pelz Press.

Wednesday, May 10, 1972.

The date is there to help get things straightened out since the Post Awful has thrown another glitch into things. What seems to have happened is that I sent off a stencil for L-363 which did not arrive in time. Bruce sent off a copy of 363 which did not arrive until today. Monday I typed up a stencil without having seen 363. If I have things straight The#23 will appear in L-364, The #24 will appear in L-365 and this will appear in L-366. If i have all of this straight I can mail this out next monday or tuesday with a weeks grace, so presumably I will wait a bit and comment on both L-363 and L-364. It gets confusing at times.

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COMMENTS ON L-363.

TOC - Only 76 pages? I wonder if this marks the end of the second cycle.

Tom Digby - Actually I don't know too much about the antecedents of the Orange and Blue Pussy Cat. He wandered in one cold and windy evening while I was cutting an L stencil. He has a rather raffish and disreputable air, though, and I doubt that he went to any University.

De Jueves - Shame on you. *** Actually I think sugar would be much more appropriate for a butter bridge. Apropos of nothing I have started a pot of week soup (although considering the quantity I suspect it is more like month soup.) I started it off with a pound of blade steak which I cut up for stewing, some potatoes, some mushrooms, a can of beef broth, a can of scotch broth, a couple of boullion cubes, some pearled barley, some lentils, part of a bottle of red wine, a couple of bay leaves, salt and butter, and probably something else which I've forgotten. Any suggestions as to what goes in next? I picked up some carrots, green peppers, more potatoes, some stewing meat, and a bunch of celery (and, of course, more mushrooms besides some water chestnuts.) I realize that it will be a while before I see your reply but, nonetheless, suggestions are always appreciated. Oh yes, onions, of course.

Matthew Tepper - Extra Sharp Cheddar or Mild Colby would be fine.

John Hertz - It was always my impression that Mensa was a haven for bright people who didn't make it. I.e., intelligent people who lead lives that are interesting and fulfilling don't need something like Mensa.

Please add one to all disty numbers given above - Alphonse pulled another fast one on me. - R.H.

Monday, May 15, 1972.

The Post Awful continues to do it's thing - no L today which probably means that it won't arrive until Wednesday (it seems to be policy with them that if something doesn't arrive on time to delay it at least two days.)
Meanwhile back to commenting on L-364.

Staniel at Wherelse: I'm not sure that first drafting is worth the effort even in genzines, let alone Apazines. Particularly in apazines - after all do you first draft your personal correspondence? As long as you have some reasonable notion of how to spell and how to construct a literate sentence a few typos and spelling errors scattered here and there aren't particularly distracting. // But I was a Marine Corps Sargeant and I don't feel that I have the right to put in anything I please.

Dan Goodman: Fred's letter was interesting and seems to be a reasonable description of East Coast fandom. Some additional comments re Boston "fandom." One can actually draw a distinction between Boston fandom and NESFA (the New England Science Fiction Association) even though everybody who is in Boston fandom is also in NESFA. If NESFA is thought of as a fan club which is part of fandom in general then it must be considered highly anomalous. Consider the following data: NESFA was founded in 1967. Since then it has sponsored and run an annual convention, published an annual supplement every year and a five year supplement to the MITSFS index, published another book besides, acquired a G-466 and an electrostenciller, constructed art show hangings adequate for handling a worldcon art show, etc., etc. In short it has done a great deal - and has done it as a club. This is very atypical for SF clubs which tend to do very little in the line of solid achievement and that to the accompaniment of much rancour.

However, as I remarked, NESFA is not really a fan club. Many of the members have ties to fandom. These, however, are of no great importance to NESFA and the links of NESFA as a club to fandom are comparatively weak - particularly if the strength of NESFA is taken into account. The club has a very strong corporate personality - much stronger than that of any of its members. The club structure is so organized that it is relatively independent of any particular member. It is also organized so that the members are automatically oriented towards doing things for NESFA.

I could go on at length. In fact I am planning to - I am planning to do an article or series of articles which will be run through Apa:Nesfa on the sociology of NESFA. However, no more **right** at the moment.

TUESDAY, May 16, 1972 - L365 arrived, only one day late. I will continue commenting on L-364 and then pick up on 365.

Richard Hart: If there's anything I hate it's someone who says futhermucker when he means father mocker... Most stationery stores sell stuff to clean typewriter keys. The type of stuff I am most familiar with is a doughy rubber that you press over the keys to pick up the ink.

Mike Glycer My colphon thanks you - I think. I think you missed the point I was trying to make. Besides the which your comments in reply are more than somewhat misleading. My general point was that fanzine artwork and art show artwork are noncomparable. First of all fanzine art work is not commercial in any sense. I know of no fanzine editor who pays for artwork - there may be some but I don't know of any. Certainly Energumen and Granfalloon don't.

There have been a number of instances where faneds have run artwork which they purchased at artshows - mostly sketch table stuff. This, however, is a somewhat different kettle of fish. It is quite true that a number of professional artists send artwork to fanzines. However there isn't any money, directly or indirectly, in it for them. They do it because they like fandom, because they can be persuaded to, because it is a place to publish work that they like that wouldn't otherwise be published, because they have initial sketches that would otherwise be unused, or for any of a zillion other personal reasons. Presumably you have a point in saying that fanzine artwork serves as advertising and for creating a market for art show artwork, but not much of one. Alicia Austin, George Barr, and Tim Kirk all spring to mind as artists who contributed heavily to fanzines for a while and then switched to artshows after their reputations were established. However this was not part of a deliberate game plan - it is a perfectly natural consequence of the way things work out. A beginning artist will do a lot of free artwork - he (she) isn't able or ready to sell commercially yet. As soon as an artist becomes professional or semi-professional he quickly discovers that you can't make money as an artist by doing it for free. Poof goes the prolific fanzine artist. I will also mention that there is not a hell of a lot of money in art show artwork from the artists point of view - it takes too much work for a return that is too small and too uncertain. To illustrate: Alicia Austin sold around a thousand dollars worth of artwork at Noreascon. However the same amount of effort and quality of work would have netted her substantially more (perhaps five to ten times more) in commercial assignments. Art show artwork is commercial in the sense that artists are making money out of it - it is non commercial in the sense that you can't make a living at it.

Not only do a number of fan artists ask for their artwork back when it has been used, they should be getting it back with out having to ask for it. It is common courtesy to do so.

However my major objection to lumping in art show artwork with fanzine artwork is not the semi professionalism of art show artwork. It is simply that this is unfair competition. Fanzine artwork is done in black and white, usually rather rapidly, in media such as rapidograph and felt tip, and is presented to it's eventual audience after having undergone the often uncertain reproduction techniques of fanzine editors. Art show artwork, on the other hand, represents much more effort, much more flexibility in choice of media, can be and usually is done in color, and is exhibited in the original. By the very nature of things artwork in art shows is going to look a hell of a lot better than artwork that appears in fanzines, even if it is by the same artist. As things are set up now an artist who appears principally in fanzines is going to be at an automatic and almost insuperable disadvantage in competing against an artist who appears principally in art shows. Given that art shows are now a major outlet for fan art expression and given that fanzine artwork and art show artwork are not very comparable it is my feeling that we should stop mixing apples and oranges and start giving out two awards.

My colphon thanks you.

Glenn Mitchell: You're right. The real reason my postman won't talk to me is that he's a deaf mute.

Bruce: I have to admit that the line between fan and pro is a vague one. I see no reason why fans can't compete for pro awards and vice versa. After all most of the people who are pros are also fans. The fan writer category presents no problem simply because there is a sharp clear cut dividing line between fan writing and pro writing. At present, however, we really do have three distinct art categories with two of them being lumped together.

Somebody here was asking me if there were any complete runs of Apa-L in existence, and whether there was any possibility that MITSFS could ever get a complete run. I told them that there were probably three - that you, Fred Patten, and Tom Digby probably all had complete runs. I also estimated that a composite fourth and possibly a composite fifth run could be gotten together if one could persuade enough people to pool their collections. How far wrong was I?

Elliot Weinstein: One is not likely to see too much constructive criticism in an Apa (unless, as happened recently, it becomes a general topic of discussion) for a number of reasons. First of all most people don't contribute to an Apa for the purpose of improving their or other's zines - they contribute to communicate or for the fun of it or something. Secondly the pressure of time makes serious thought and effort rather difficult. Thirdly most people don't read for or look for general quality of contribution.

I think there is sort of tacit understanding among contributors to a joint activity that every one will attempt to maintain minimum standards of content, layout, and readability and that everyone will attempt to some degree to keep the communication lines open. There is also an implicit assumption that everybody is more or less willing and able to do this. Creebing about quality is usually a generalized signal of "Hey watch it, things are slipping."

The recent crudzine flap, interestingly enough, was an instance of something else which is a recurring problem both in Mundania and in the fan world. That is the absorption into a culture of a lot of newcomers all at once, a problem which is always aggravated when the newcomers have a lot of common ties. It is a problem which has been handled with mixed results ever since the beginning of the human race.

Absorbing one or a very few individuals into a culture is seldom a problem - the individual adapts to the group. When the number of newcomers rises above a critical level this adaptation procedure breaks down - a dramatic instance of this is the settling of America by Europeans. In the recent flap you had a partial case. There appeared on the scene in short order a considerable number of newcomers, sharing common bonds, and relatively unfamiliar with the standards and traditions of L. The results were the usual - disgruntled noises from the old timers and hurt feelings and alienation on the part of the newcomers. (I suspect that one of the fuels for the flap was the fact that a large number of the newcomers tended to talk mostly among themselves - evoking a "Not only do they put in a lot of crud but they don't talk to anybody else" reaction. This too is an old familiar story.)

Fortunately the whole thing seems to have worked out with reasonably successful results. Some of the newcomers were weeded out (I assume by choice) but most have remained and are completing the process of integrating into L. As usual the newcomers and the Host Culture are in the process of modifying each other.

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Comments on L-365:

Vixen: I have no doubt but what you have been deluged by offers from various dirty old men to demonstrate the differences between very positions. I can't help feeling that your comment to Greg Chalfin is a put on since, for the life of me, I can't see what he said that would have prompted your comment. Interestingly enough your comment raises a valid point (er, perhaps I had

better rephrase that.) Most sex manuals go into considerable detail on various positions and so on but they don't really explain why one might try them (outside of general comments on variety.) Actually of course there is much more to intercourse than "sticking the same thing in the same thing." There are a large number of parameters such as angle of attack, depth of penetration, ease of motion of various parts of the body for both partners, access for fondling, degree of physical contact of various parts of the body, etc., all of which play a part in the experience. No single position is equally satisfactory in all these respects and the effectiveness of all of them varies from pairing to pairing according to specific details of body build, emotional state and attitude, etc. So yes, various positions do make a difference. The fuss about the missionary position arises from the fact that it is the most natural, comfortable, and easiest position for most couples. Even couples who tend to be very experimental in their love making tend to use the Missionary position most of the time. Because of the intrinsic cussedness of people there are groups of people who therefore insist that it is the only way things should be done and others who heap scorn on those who so insist. And, yes to the question you're probably going to ask, I am a dirty old man.

Aljo: You are making me very nervous. What with you complaining about Cudzines and various people discussing teats (excuse me, that should be tits, but I'm old fashioned) Apa-L is beginning to take on a very bovine cast. I am expecting to read any day now that somebody will announce an all Mastitis issue.

Come to think of it I don't think I've commented to you before so maybe you've got something there with your complaint about a baptism in ice. Why don't you announce an all comment to Aljo disty? I don't really see why you want constructive criticism - there doesn't seem to be anything particularly wrong with your zine. Your layout and repro are readable; your content is reasonably intelligent, intelligible, and interesting. What more do you want? The only comment I might make would be to chuck the NEO bit. However that is mostly prejudice on my part - I tend to feel that the Neo/Bnf mythology is badly overworked and based on a false sense of values.

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APA L 370 IS THE ALL COMMENT TO ALJO DISTY

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Mike Glycer: I was fascinated but somewhat startled by your list of Sercon fans. I wouldn't even count them for a hefty minority of all sercon writing in NA. I suspect it isn't just a matter of articulate opposition - as much as anything it is a matter that the opposition doesn't care. I.e., the faanish writers are writing about fandom (or at least their corner of fandom) and the sercon writers are writing about SF and crazy Buck Rogers stuff like that. My impression is that the people the Faans irritate most are convention oriented fans who don't write for fanzines. Interestingly enough the hyper faans remind me of the radical right (despite their mostly being in the counter culture.) They are, after all, the romantic reactionaries of fandom.

My Colphon thanks you.

Robin Johnson: Loverly! One of the big splits in US fandom is between the straights and the power junkies.

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Recycle this space.

Sheila Stephens: *

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Richard Hart. I can already see the television ads - guy calls on girl, guy gets repulsed, and goes away dejected. Then out comes the big flash *Don't Strike Out - Use Umpire*. And then in cuts the singing commercial, la de la la. You know, you've got something there.

Larry Nielson: Correction - NESFA corresponding membership dues are \$4.00 annually, not three. Sorry for the misinformation. They used to be three but they were raised with the postal increase.

Bruce: I wonder if the following situation wouldn't come into the category of justifiable rape. Robin D. Cradle, who likes them young, courts and marries a young miss who happens to be under the age of consent. Unfortunately for him the friendly J.P. who married them had let his paper work slip and was not legally empowered to perform the ceremony. As a result poor Robin became guilty of statutory rape the moment he possessed himself of his marital rights. (Actually he had been guilty of statutory rape for the previous six months, but let's not complicate the question.) The question is - does this situation come under the heading of justifiable rape?

Jay Freeman: Well actually the Large Orange and Blue Pussycat is, like Alphonse, a visitation from my subconscious and I haven't the slightest idea what he is doing on the scene. He is big and fat, has a wide face, and has bright orange and faded electric blue stripes. He mostly stalks up and down the hall while I am typing L stencils. Occasionally he sits on a stack of reams of mimeo paper and looks disgustingly self satisfied. I don't know what else he does but I expect I will find out.

Don Eastlake, who is a NESFA member who works at project MAC, has supplied me with another stack of AI reports. I haven't had a chance to browse through them yet but I will give you a report when I do.

Hugh Kramer: Of course the mighty Staniel first drafts. It's just that he does it on stencil...

Jack Harness: Tsk, tsk. Laying traps for the unwary again. I wonder how many people reading your "I purchased a soul from Dan Goodman most inexpensively." line will jump to the conclusion that it was Goodman's soul you bought so cheaply.

Regardless of the price you probably got taken. It is well known that he got kicked out of the East Coast for hustling counterfeit souls at cons. The crowning touch was when he sold five different counterfeit Bob Tucker souls at the same con. It wouldn't have been so bad except that Charlie Brown bought two of them and eventually caught on that something was wrong. Charlie gave him the choice of exposure or exile, so now you know why Dan is gracing the fair shores of the Pacific.

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Please throw this space away - the recycling center has more than it can handle.