

WARM CHAMPAGNE 10

Lion's Gate Press Publication 29, for ANZAPA, begun 1:30 am, Sunday Jan. 22, 1978. Mimeo assistance will be by Eli Cohen, sometime later today. Words and typographical errors by Susan Wood, Dept. of English, UBC, etc.

It was a bad fall term, people. It's being a bad winter term. It's early or late, depending, and I've forgotten to reset the spacing. Those of you who hear from me semi-regularly know what's been happening. Well, there's been more of the same. And I Officially have an Ulcer. Enough news.

JAN: I never did answer your letter, which is, in itself, a response, I guess. I'm running 2½ careers, each one full time, at the moment, and I'm sorry but I don't have time to do columns or articles for anyone. (I'm also doing programming for 3 conventions; don't really ask why.) I've been making efforts to answer my mail... just uncovered a layer from Feb. 1977... but have faltered due to a combination ~~of~~ of flu and termpapers. Besides, each time I work down to the Eric Lindsay Pile, he writes me 6 more pages...

DERRICK and CHRISTINE: Re the typewriter, Michael wrote an ENERGUMEN editorial about how fortunate he was to be marrying me, because he got a typer, a car, a cook, a laundress and etc. (Not to mention part-interest in a doctoral fellowship.) The permanence of print leads to some interesting ironies...

Your historical excerpts, Derrick, remind me once again of why I'm not a member of the Society for Creative Anachronism (well, one of the many reasons.) They recreate the Middle Ages as we would have liked them to be (for example, with sanitation); all the evidence points to how uncomfortable, not to mention unpleasant, life must have been for everyone, nobles as well as peasants. I have the feeling that the Speer view of fandom (akin to Harry Warner's and others' longing for the good old fannish days before uppity women wormed their way in) is akin to the popular view of the middle ages: a lost Golden Age, idealized and glamorized, when the reality was much less pleasant. My cynicism was rather confirmed by reading Damon Knight's THE FUTURIANS, this past summer. Ah, those marvellous days when we were all young and struggling in New York... turns out, in Knight's retelling at least, that everyone was starving, unemployed, getting divorced, feuding regularly, getting drunk, getting ill... a singularly depressing life.

Re "being Jewish"... elementary sociology would point to the "tribal" aspects of fandom as a small group held together in part by traditions (notice that most of the fan terms come from the '40's and '50's, though the Miniapa people seem to have evolved a whole set of words-and-sounds for themselves) but in part by oppositon to the "outside" group, the majority... hence early fans, feeling they were social misfits, started to sneer at "mundanes" and develop a fans-are-slans attitude. Right now, I'm getting a certain amount of flack for criticizing the sexism within fandom, along the lines of: "how dare you say that, fandom is all one big happy family, and even if it isn't, well, things are better here than in the Mundane World." Closely followed by snotty remarks like "When a woman discovers feminism, her brains get screwed up" courtesy, that, of Joe Haldeman... ((I recently had a woman fan tell me 'feminism isn't fannish.' I'm still not sure what that even means.)) The security of the community is nice; I like feeling that I belong to fandom, that it's my tribe. What I don't like is the defensiveness that precludes any criticism from within. Adademics are the same. Most academics have a self-image of being terribly Aware and Liberal and Enlightened, which they take as license to do and say the most extraordinary, obnoxious things. Like pay women teachers less than male teachers, for one example. Muttergrumble.

PAUL ANDERSON: 80 movies... I must be one of the few non-movie-freak fans around; I'm not especially visually oriented, I think, and if I have any "free" time, usually read (or answer the mail, or...) Eli and I did see "Julia" last week: it's superb, and so

emotionally powerful that we didn't even want to talk about it for 24 hours... We also celebrated end-of-term at Christmas by seeing "Star Wars" for the third time. Strange to realize you people and the Brits were only just getting it, after we'd had 6 months of film plus all the commercial extras: toys, t-shirts, comic books. I admit I have more than reached nausea point on fanzine articles, illustrated with the same basic film ~~still~~ stills. However, in my class on Children's Literature... which is mostly a pretty high-level class on fantasy... we've been analysing the patterns of fairy tales for 3 weeks, and I have at least one person doing an analysis of "Star Wars" as a fairy tale. Which it is, and which is why it's so popular, I think; I found it very satisfying.

ERIC: re your comments to Bruce and John... I've had a couple of people accuse me of insincerity if I write about joyous things, but the reason I do so is rather the same reason you go on long overseas trips. Life is very short, and very uncertain; let's get as much good out of it as we can... It's not that I'm constantly bubbling over with Hallmark-card happy-happy gush-- that, I think, is insincere, and not what "joy" is about anyway. But if something good happens, I'd rather talk about it, than about the intervening grey weeks of bleh, problems, termpapers and the like. Besides, I get rather tired of the "here I sit at my typer, miserable as usual; see how sincere and Deep I am, moaning over the existential anguish of my life" school of fanwriting (which as you know is very different from real despair, and depression. One of the characteristics of genuine depression, for me anyway is that I simply can't write, can't do much of anything.)

"The biggest slob around can find companionship..." Maybe, but not friendship, which tends NOT to come up and bite you on the ankle. Then there's the problem of offering friendship or love to someone who doesn't want it, a topic I find too depressing to continue to contemplate...

IRWIN: How's holidays? I can't imagine any such thing as a hunk of free time being boring for a fan... so I'll expect 100-page contributions with 4-colour mimeo work from you in this mailing. From where I stand, 6 weeks of open time would be paradise, and almost impossible to envision. Open time? there are days when I'd settle for a job that stopped at 5 pm, so I'd have evenings free. Speaking of which...

JOHN BANGSUND: Congratulations on your return to the world of the 9-to-5ers, I guess. High on the list of reasons why I keep thinking about writing as a means of earning a living, and then rejecting that idea, is that the lit. bus. is such a time-consuming and chancy way of earning the daily peanut butter. I admire people who can do it; I can't. I pressure myself more than enough... anyone in the lit. bus. who isn't a cold-blooded hack must, I think, work to certain internal (and unattainable) standards of perfection. Add to that external pressures of working to deadline, and working to pay the rent-due-yesterday, and the result, for me at least, is a) paralysis and b) destruction of any sort of personal life. I'm luckier than you, or most people, though in that I have a job which I enjoy (the teaching aspect, not the administration) which is also intellectually satisfying, much of the time. (I've done book indexes, for example; marking termpapers is about equal on the mind-numbing scale, with the occasional flash when someone does really good, insightful work, or you realize you've gotten through, to redeem the yards and yards of spelling mistakes and fuzzy thinking.) As for being a Scholar, well, I do it on 3-hour snatches once a term... (Actually, for my fantasy class, I've had to do some Real Thinking; feeling the brain stretch is a Good Feeling.)

ANDREW BROWN: Yes, but for \$39 US, you can take the bus from Berkley to Vancouver... there's a special fare for a straight-through trip of less than 25 hours. This only works if you're a Small Person and can fit comfortably into Greyhound seats. The John Berrys of this world spend more money and take the train. When you get settled, if you have any access to transportation, call up Charlie Brown, volunteer to collate LOCUS, and get yourself introduced to the 3 or 4 overlapping Bay Area sf "scenes." Lot of fine people there. I may see you come Nebula time in April. Everyone else, I'll see you next mailing. ps. MARC: the sf class stuff was *wonderful*, and I apologize for not writing locs...