



CARPE DIEM



This is UTGARD #2, the contribution of Dave Hulan, 17417 Vanowen St., #21, Van Nuys, California, 91406 (but watch this space for a change next time...), to the 13th mailing of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance. It is Jötun Publication #43

"A SFPA Mailing Underneath the Bough, a Can of Bheer, Pretzels to Eat, and Now..."

It would seem to be about time to make another appearance in SFPA. After, all, I haven't had a zine in a mailing since last December. It has only been the fact that there is after all no waitlist and the OE is a Ghood Buddy that has kept me from being dropped for lacktivity already. I have decided that I'd better not try to impose of friendship any longer, even though Joe is a Ghood Buddy too - apas are for activity, after all, not excuses.

You will all have noticed that I have a new title. LOKI is not defunct - let us hope - but from henceforth it will be an irregular genzine; I simply cannot keep up an apa-type schedule with it, and that has been the main reason I have missed the last two mailings. When I have to get a big zine ready for a mailing, any little thing, like especially the baby getting fussy about my typing, which is frequently the case, can throw me behind schedule and I never catch up. So from now on SFPA will see UTGARD as my SFPazine and LOKI as an occasional entry whenever I get one out. LOKI will go through whichever mailing follows its publication, so that all SFPA members will get copies in their mailings, but it won't be for credit.

As for why UTGARD #2 instead of #1 - the title was originally intended for an OMPazine; I deemed it appropriate for an American zine in a British apa. The first issue was published in Feb '63, but then I decided that I couldn't afford four apas (I was in SAPS and N'APA as well as SFPA at the time), so I never mailed it to Cheslin (the then-AE of OMPA) but instead sent it through SAPS. Now, though, I feel that I'm even more of an outlander in SFPA than I am in OMPA (which I've now re-entered), since I'm further from the South than anyone and there are several other OMPans as far or farther from England than I am. So UTGARD becomes a SFPazine and my old N'APA title, FENRIS, will be revived in OMPA. Now all I need to do is get back in N'APA and try to figure out a title for a zine...

Let's do some mailing comments on the last couple of mailings; then I'll do a short article on heraldry and maybe that will be enough for at least my six pages and maybe a little more. So first the 11th mailing:

Southerner #11 - OE: So, the membership is growing like mad. Good for us. There are a couple of members whose contributions are at best worthless, but mostly it looks like we have a pretty good group here. And only four short of full membership!

Warlock #3 - Montgomery: I might make this the point to mention to new members that I rarely read fiction in a fanzine and even more rarely comment on it. If a glance at the first paragraph or two catches my interest I may read the whole thing, and if the whole thing impresses me as funny or (as has happened all of twice) well written, I'll say so. But as a rule, don't expect me to comment on fiction. I am not saying it shouldn't be printed; I'm all for it being printed as long as I don't have any obligation to read it..

The comments on "Swords and Sorcery" are noted. That type of literature, of course, is probably the oldest of all and certainly owes nothing to Burroughs or Lovecraft (mythology is nothing but sword-and-sorcery fiction - or S&S fiction is nothing but modern mythology); you give the (perhaps false) impression you think it does.

Don't get me wrong - I'm a Burroughs fan from way back (since I was 8) - but I don't really think he can be called a seminal influence on any kind of literature. He did manage to cash in on a certain type of writing to an extent that no other author has so far. His real fortune, though, was made in land speculation; most of the West San Fernando Valley, including the area where I live, was once owned by ERB.

dol-drum #2 - Dave Locke: Hi there, Lockeness old buddy. Yeah, we'll have to put out another PELF RSN... I got your column, and as soon as I can get mine written and the whole thing on stencil and run off and collated and mailed...say sometime next July...no, I'll try to get it done in time for the next SFPA mailing, the December one. There Is Always Hope.

I wonder if you will have made it to the Pacificon and we'll have met by the time you read this? I doubt if any of the other members of SFPA will, though I could get a pleasant surprise.

I might mention right now, Dave, Bill, Joe, and Al, that I fully intend to write each of you a long personal letter after the Con. I haven't had time to write any letters at all this summer; things keep piling up, and right now with the Con coming I'm doing well to save my membership. I'm doing this writing on stencil off the top of my head; it would take as long to write a letter. There's something about California that cuts correspondence fanaticism down - like mostly in-person type fanaticism. Like - I'm Treasurer of the LASFS, so that takes care of every Thursday night. Most nights the Pelzes, Ron Ellik, Lois Lavender, Katya and I gather here or at the Pelzes for cards and fellowship. One other night a week we usually either visit the Pelzes, or they visit us, and most Saturdays we go over to the Ed Coxes or such. Together with a normal amount of shopping and such, that takes care of most of our spare time...

I think I've answered your comment to me in personal correo, so I won't go into it here. For public consumption - the whole difference of opinion is on the definition of atheism. The rest was misunderstanding.

You have some very good comments here on the subject of apas in general. I hope that some of our newer members read them perceptively; judging from the 12th mailing they may well have.

Stranger than Fact - Harkness: As an ex-smoker, may I make a few remarks on your editorial? Since I'm "ex", I can't be accused of defending my own lack of willpower, can I? Therefore I say, the available evidence shows that smoking can cause lung cancer. It also shows that it isn't really very likely to - more smokers than non-smokers die of lung cancer, but not very many smokers die of it either, considered beside the total number of smokers in the population. And smoking is a bad habit that is potentially dangerous almost wholly to the user. The reason why narcotics and alcohol are harmful lies less in the harm they do to the individual than in the fact that under their influence it is more likely that a person will harm someone else. Drunk driving is a major menace to life, and to the lives of innocent bystanders; smoking is something like driving a car for pleasure. I would guess that you're about as likely to die in a car accident as ~~ix~~ from lung cancer; both are dangerous, but a person has a right to choose to risk his life as long as in so doing he doesn't risk others. (When I refer to driving, I mean driving sensibly, not reckless driving. But even sensible drivers get killed.) Now if smoking offends you esthetically, you have every right to assail it from that standpoint, and if you prefer to avoid smokers - but I don't think anyone is justified in telling another person he can't do something because it will adversely affect his health.

How do I propose to get the mailings up to 200 pages? Not too difficult - if we can get our roster up to full size and most of the members active. If 12 people hit a mailing (not unreasonable in a 20-member apa), that only requires about 16 pages per member. Since there are several members who regularly put their sizeable genzines through SFPA, the average number of pages for the members who only do shortish apazines drops to maybe ten. Anyhow, 200 pages really isn't necessary; if SFPA can consistently keep up an average of 150 pages it will be doing fine. 150 pages of good, readable material is close to ideal for an apa - the reason more total count is desirable is because there's usually at least 30% unreadable in most apas.

SFPA is unique, incidentally, among the apas I'm currently associated with. You hardly get a single mention of W----- B----- and/or B--- D-----.

The Invader #2 - Staton: Artwork very good, as is to be expected, though the nipples on the gal on page 9 are unlike any I've ever seen...or maybe they're pasties?

This typeface is pretty typical; probably half the elite typers around use it. This typer is a Smith-Corona, but I have a Royal of Lee Jacobs' I'm keeping for him while he's in Atlanta and its typeface is so near the same I'm sure you couldn't tell them apart on stencil, though you might on paper.

Let's see - you remind me that I really should give the answers to the crossword I ran in TSAM; some of you cats seem to have actually tried to work it. So here they are - across only: 1 - Cry; 4 - La; 6 - Akroa; 11 - Rue; 12 - Or; 13 - Mauve; 14 - Only; 16 - Cave; 19 - Res; 20 - Melee; 22 - Lan; 24 - No; 25 - Ozite; 27 - Gasp; 29 - Wonder; 31 - Op; 32 - As; 34 - Ay; 35 - Eire; 37 - Za; 38 - IR; 39 - APO; 40 - xat; 43 - Oman; 45 - arena; 47 - Xi; 48 - Eric; 50 - Lisp; 52 - Aegis; 54 - School; 57 - Ami; 58 - Imp; 61 - Elea; 62 - Gur; 63 - Sub; 64 - Serb.

Nemesis #1 - Katz: I think that the other members have answered you reasonably well in the 12th mailing, Arnie baby, so I will only add my invitation to theirs - if you don't like SFPA the feeling is quite mutual, so why don't you get the hell out?

I was the only N'APA/SFPA biapan as of the time I wrote TSAM; I can't help it if you joined SFPA and Kent and Proctor joined N'APA between mailings. However, I dropped N'APA after that mailing, which made it even less true. I dropped N'APA because the only person in N'APA who was doing anything for the apa who wasn't in SAPS too was G.M.Carr, and if I were that interested I could get GEMZINE by LoC for considerably less trouble than pubbing a zine. I may get back in N'APA one of these days - I keep fairly close tabs on it, since several of my friends out here are members and Patten is OE. He keeps trying to get me to rejoin; I haven't seen any good reason to yet. The last mailing was large, but from a casual glance-through largely crud. I'll agree that it's not how many apas you're in but what you put into them that counts; unfortunately, your contributions have been limited by the fact that you're a klutz.

The Invader #1 - Staton: That picture is Dejah Thoris? Now tell me this - what use does an oviparous female, whose young is hatched in a moderately developed state (must be; ten years pass between the end of A PRINCESS OF MARS and THE GODS OF MARS, and Carthoris is an egg at the beginning and has been a warrior for some time at the end.), have for breasts? Other than esthetic appeal for astral projections of Earthmen, that is...which hardly sounds like a very strong evolutionary mechanism.

Have you read "Jungle Girl", printed by Ace as "The Land of Hidden Men"? I consider it one of Burroughs' most neglected works; it isn't earthshaking, but it has some of the best characterization in Burroughs.

Iscariot #11 - Andrews/Ambrose: You say I don't usually comment too much on Is-
cariot, so I'll try to make up for it this time. The reason is that I learned to
do MCs in SAPS, where most comments aren't evaluative but responses - more like a
round-robin letter than a fanzine review, if you dig. And while I always enjoy
Isc't, there usually isn't too much in it that evokes repartee. But let's see
what I can dig up in this issue...

Your new policy is to my liking, being much the
same as I have followed with LOKI. I'm faanizing a bit now that I have some friends
(like Ed Cox) who like to write the more faanish material, but the minimizing of
fiction and poetry fits in with my sentiments.

You must not have been looking at the
artwork in LOKI very closely if you hadn't realized Joe was a talented artist. He
first appeared in LOKI 3 and did virtually all the artwork for LOKI 6, besides
about half of that in LOKI 4 (#5 didn't have any art). He also did the cover for
LOKI 7, but then you haven't gotten LOKI 7 yet; I may get the SPPA copies done in
time for them to circulate in this mailing.

Plott did very well, getting five pages
of commentary out of two issues of a magazine. I do the same thing in "From Un-
known Worlds", of course...

Fandom might survive the demise of the SF magazines; I
don't think it would survive the demise of stf itself. But then, how could stf
die? there is enough of it in print that it will last quite a number of years
even if all new publication ceased. New readers would be running across it in
libraries and used-book shops for at least ten years, I'm sure. But this is all
pretty academic; stf will be around for a good many years yet, and so will fandom.

Double-spacing between paragraphs is wasteful of space (which may be good or bad,
depending on whether you're trying to save paper or make pagecount), but it defi-
nitely improves the appearance of a zine. I would go so far as to say that if you
use elite type, double-spacing or at least nonstoparagraphing as I'm doing on this
page is almost essential to avoid a run-together appearance. With Pica type like
yours you can just get away with single-spacing, but double-spacing or nonstpp-
aragraphing still looks neater.

The activity requirements, according to the legal
constitution of the SPPA (which I wrote and which no one else seems to have read,
although it was approved), are up to the discretion of the OE. The last set of
activity requirements I published, which should still stand because Plott never
changed them, were six pages every other mailing, of which four had to be the mem-
ber's own original writings and the other two could be outside contributions and/
or artwork. Joe can change these if he feels like it, though. In fact, in view
of the nature of the SPPA, I would strongly recommend a change from this SAPS-type
requirement to the OMPA-type requirement of 12 pages a year. With openings in the
roster and no waitlist, there is no good reason to attempt to force frequent ac-
tivity out of the members; someone who hits one mailing a year with a substantial-
size zine is still of value to the apa, and there is no reason to throw out anyone
who is of any value at all unless by so doing you open a position up to a person
who will be more valuable. This, however, is merely a recommendation, not anything
else. I do strongly suggest that Joe print the constitution and OEfficial Rulings
for his term in this mailing; the last time they were printed was in the Spring
1963 mailing, and since then we've added about 9 or 10 new members, none of whom
have any but the vaguest idea what the Constitution or rules say.

As to why no ICs
in non-SPPA copies of some zines - I think you will find the genesis of this prac-
tice in Another Apa, namely SAPS. Back a couple of years ago, when FM Busby and
Richard Bergeron were feuding in SAPS (instead of FAPA, where they are now feuding),

Buz criticized Bergeron rather strongly for putting his SAPS Ncs in WARHOON, with its 200+ circulation, because this meant that 200 people were getting Bergeron's side of the argument and only 36 Busby's. (The fact that Bergeron had a bad habit of misquoting and misrepresenting his opponents in arguments made it a bit more bitter.) So anyhow, during that time Armistead and I were both SAPS-SFPA biapans, and I had something uncomplimentary to say about him in LOKI in my SFPA ICs, and he took me to task about it, so I agreed that I would keep my ICs strictly in the apa. This, anyhow, is the only good reason I know of. It is unfair, in some ways, to circulate statements in a genzine about something that has not previously been circulated in genfandom. I don't consider this a serious thing - most fanzines circulate their editor's opinions on subjects which haven't previously come to the attention of large portions of his readership - but since it's no particular extra trouble for me to leave out the IC section of a genzine I've done it for the last few issues. Now, of course, with no combined gen/apazine, I'm not faced with that problem.

As for your handling of the let-col in Isc't, I have long thought that you are one of the best letter-commenters in fandom; you could decrease the quantity of your comments some without hurting anything, but better that you keep them as they are than over-react. I do think that from a strictly typographical standpoint your format could stand improvement. Use of underlines or all caps to set off either editorial comment or reader remarks gives an unfortunate appearance, with the additional disadvantage of emphasizing just how much of the lettercol you are writing. I personally prefer double virgules //like this// to set off editorial comments, because they aren't any kind of standard punctuation and so don't occur in the body of a letter, as double parentheses sometimes do. Roy Tackett's Venusian Lancers [something like this] are also good but take longer. And Joe Gibson sets off his comments by indenting and using plus signs (difficult if you don't have a + on your keyboard as in the following couple of lines.

+ The advantage of this method is that it
+ makes it harder to interpolate comments,
+ so that you tend to wait till you really
+ have something of significance to say
+ before you say it. It prevents inter-
+ rupting too frequently just to get in
+ a witty remark.

However, as I said, I'd rather see you overdoing it than underdoing it. (Maybe if I wrote the letters instead of just reading them I'd think differently, though I don't think so.)

It was announced at LASFS the other night that Burroughs PBs had sold 13,000,000 copies in 1963 - this might be an interesting addendum to your Walker article.

Now, that's two pages, almost, of comments on Isc't 11. Suit you better?



JEEVES

Zaje Zaculo #1 - Bailes: Welcome to SFPA; this is hardly enough to comment on, so I'll wait till I've reread what you had to say in the next mailing before commenting further.

Sporadic 11 - Platt: Hi, Bill - er, congratulations on getting married; I really meant to send you something as a wedding present, but it came at a very tight financial time for me and I'm afraid I didn't even get around to a congratulatory card. As I said in my comment to Locke, I will be writing you after the con, honest I will.

I discovered recently in unpacking some stuff that had been sitting boxed up ever since we moved that I hadn't given you all of the J&Tun Press. I will send the oddments shortly - it's the two static reducers that fit on the drum and help keep paper from sticking to it. Also I have some extra ink-pads for it, which it looks like you could use. I know that mimeo and you should be getting better repro out of it than you are; new ink-pad should help some.

Which wraps up the 11th mailing and we move on to the 12th:

The Southern #12 - OE: Did you change the title on purpose or by accident? And if on purpose, what purpose? "The Southern" doesn't sound right, somehow...

A 150-page mailing was worth waiting for even if it was late. This is certainly one of the best SFPA mailings yet (I still have fond memories of the 6th; 135 pages from 6 members must be some kind of record for average zine size, and all of it was good, too), and there is no reason it shouldn't continue to improve. Most of the zines were from relatively newer members, and if some of the rest of us just can bring our activity up to where it has been at times we might not miss that 200-page mark for this time. I know that I've gotten going and will surely have more than minac in this issue, because I've already cut enough stencils for minac and I see no reason to quit now.

dol-drum #3 - Locke: There's nothing wrong with your syllogism as a syllogism. It makes about as much sense as some of Carroll's sorites that end up with some such conclusions as "Left-handed kittens shouldn't play polo with crocodile-eating ostriches, but it's just as logical.

Your remarks on SFPA are rather insightful. I think that the thing I like best about SFPA is the fact that it's different. Of the seven charter members, none had ever been in an apa before. Subsequently some of us joined other apas, but with the exception of myself the SFPAs who joined other apas weren't ever very active in SFPA and gradually dropped out. The result was that SFPA developed a personality and style of its own which make it something different from a neoish SAPS, which is all N'APA is. Another reason I like it is because I was one of the charter seven and as much as anyone else I think I helped set that style (along with Al, Dick, and Bill - look over the first eight mailings and see how thoroughly the four of us dominated them). I like SAPS, too, because many of my friends I've made since I came out here are in it; I've been rather more active in SAPS than in SFPA since my move because it's easier to keep up with; I can wait till almost the deadline, get the zine on stencil and mimeo'd, and then carry it over to Bruce for the mailing. SFPA stuff I have to get done well in advance of the mailing date so it will arrive in time, and sometimes a deadline slips up on me.

This zine is crudily reproed, but it looks like the mimeo and not you. Bill was obviously in a hurry when he did this; can't say I blame him, but I hope if he runs your zine off in the future he'll be a little more careful. If this had been by almost anyone else I wouldn't have struggled through it.

Wormfarm #3 - Gibson: You are committing Layout Error #347 here - never, never, never put an illo or a title in the middle of the page and skip back and forth across it with the print. It is maddening. If you just have to put an illo in the middle of a page, the best way is to do the whole page in double columns. If

you can't be bothered to take that much trouble, at least go from top to bottom on one side and then back up to the top of the other side and down. This is still lousy layout, but it's better than #347.

Staton's girls aren't so fantastic. They haven't got a thing on (I could stop that sentence right there and escape gracefully but I might as well continue rashly...) Katya. Some of Rotsler's babes do, but then Bill has shown me some of his photographic essays and by damn there are even some like his (I'm referring to his realistic drawings, not his cartoons).

Overall this was funny as hell; I hope you are able to contribute more to SPPA in the future. Incidentally, don't worry about first-drafting your ICs; ICs aren't worth the trouble as long as you can write intelligibly in the stick, which you demonstrate here that you can. Save the work for your other stuff, like "Ohm Brew", which reads like it might well have been written by John Berry. Keep it up. In fact, I invite you to write some similar piece of faan fiction and I'll run it in LOKI 9 if you can get it to me before November.

Despite its thinness this was the best zine in the mailing for my taste.

Zaje Zaculo 2 - Bailes: Quite an acceptable apazine - it's much more SAPSish than most SPPazines are, but then so is thish of UTGARD, so what can I say?

Talking about fandom and adolescents, anyone who believes that most fans are teenagers should attend a LASFS meeting sometime. Most of the members may have originally become fans in their teens, but offhand I can only think of five or six teens who attend LASFS with any degree of regularity, and a couple of those only because their parents are fans and sort of brought them up in it. Most LA fans seem to be in their 20s and 30s; there are relatively few over 40, and hardly any under 16. I imagine that fandom as a whole runs a little younger, because LA is a city where it is difficult to get around without a car, and to get to LASFS meetings must be more trouble than it's worth to anyone who can't drive, but I doubt if even a majority of fans are adolescents. At a guess I'd put the proportion at about 1/3 teenagers, 1/3 in their 20s, and 1/3 over 30, mostly under 40.

Warlock 4 - Montgomery: Here we go on ERB again. Some of the Mars books were good, no doubt about it (except by iconoclasts like Joe). Some of them, like SWORDS, were sheer crud. Someone once said that nothing Burroughs wrote after 1930 was any good; I wouldn't say that was completely true, but it doesn't miss it far. TARZAN AND THE FOREIGN LEGION is a notable exception; I consider it his best book by a fair margin, and it was also one of his last. It is the nearest thing he ever wrote to a real novel (the others are long adventure stories - which isn't to say they are no good, but they aren't comparable to novels, any more than plays are.). Burroughs, I think, had real writing talent, which he seldom exercised because he had the knack of writing salable stuff to such an extent that he didn't have to write anywhere near his best to sell, and all he was interested in was selling. For 2¢ a word who can afford to polish?

While I can't say I disagree much with your reply to Katz, it lacked somewhat in subtlety. Like, it was about as subtle as a 12-pound sledgehammer on the cranium.

Hope your Deep-South-Con was a big success. I hope Lee Jacobs made it; I told him about it when I heard he was moving to Atlanta and he said he'd try, if he could get settled in Atlanta soon enough. And I hope you invited Wally Weber; he probably would come, and is a good fannish type. There are two established BNFs who've moved to the South in the past couple of months; Joe, you should try to recruit them for SPPA if you can. Both of them are in SAPS and Wally is in N'APA while LeeJ is in FAPA, so they are ayjay types. Lee I know pretty well (we're keeping his TV and typer for him while he's gone) and I'm uncertain as to whether he'd be interested in SPPA or not, but after he's been in Atlanta a while someone ought to try to recruit him; if he hasn't found much to do he might feel like joining another apa. Weber I don't know well personally - I've just met him once - but he seems like a better bet; I know there isn't much else to

do there.

The Invader #3 - Staton: What's this? A Staton zine with a Hyland cover? He isn't a bad artist, but much inferior to you, Joe - why use him on the cover?

Good mailing comments, but they don't evoke any response. The article on the popular depiction of Southerners is all too true; I find that the longer I stay in California the more I tend to exaggerate my Southern accent, just to give a little demonstration to some people that words spoken with a Southern drawl don't have to be irrational and fuggheaded. I'm not being assisted any by certain individuals in Alabama and Mississippi, particularly the Governors of said states, but 'tis a cross the liberal ex-Southerner must bear, I guess.

Sporadic 11 - Plott: Something told me that I had commented on Spore 11 already and I checked back and discovered that bighod I had - it was in the 11th mailing too. I shouldn't talk, I guess - there are two LOKI 4's floating around, too, one of which should be #5.

A good zine, but I'm going to cut my comments on it short. I want to do that article on heraldry and I'm running out of time, and there are a lot more zines to go.

Iscariot 12.- Andrews/Ambrose: No, this issue won't get a 2-page MC, for the reason given above. In fact, a cursory glance-through, which is all I have time for, doesn't reveal anything I want to say anything about, except that some of your MDs were funny as hell, but I wish you and Dave Locke would quit sniping at each other. Alternate issues of your zines have these little digs which are unworthy of both of you.

JD-ARassy 60 - Hickman: Welcome to SFFA, and what an introduction! When I said Gibson had the best zine in the mailing I meant the best produced especially for the mailing; the artwork alone in JD-A would have to make it one of the top zines in any apa mailing I've ever seen. The written material is also excellent; if you published more regularly and circulated more widely you'd be nominated for the Hugo, I'd think. Certainly this is a top-flight zine; will it be circulated through SFFA regularly?

The Huckleberry Fipnzine #1:- Hickman: Once again nice artwork and pleasant writing; it's nice to have an "old hand" in SFFA. (I think I'm overusing "nice". One of the hazards of composing in the stick.) I don't much care for Rackham (assuming he's the "R" - yeah, I see he is), but even his stuff, when done so well repro-wise, is more than adequate.

THFZ #24 - Hickman: Well, I notice someone did mention Breen in this mailing. However, you agree with me, so there's no problem there.

Egoboo Poll Results - OE: I didn't vote in the poll, because I didn't care for the format or the categories, and also because I hadn't paid sufficient attention to the mailings - I read them, but not having done MCs on but one mailing, I didn't feel that I should trust my memory from one reading, and didn't have my own comments handy to prompt my memory. Also I consider that 1963 was something of a transition year for SFFA, moving from the tight little nucleus we established the first two years into a much larger and looser group. Now most of the new members have settled down into the group and another period of good, solid mailings seems to be upon us. I would say that with the exception of Katz, Labowitz, McDaniel, and Proctor all of the members are good solid types. Gary does a good solid zine but seldom hits mailings; Proctor and McDaniel can both do OK but may have lost interest.

The next mailing should tell whether they will join the ranks of the solid members or will remain on the fringes, or drop out. Anyhow, 12 active members is enough.

Which finishes mailing comments. Now, I will conclude with a little article entitled...

HERALDRY AND FANDOM

A recent upsurge of interest in heraldry in fandom can be traced to Dick Eney's Spring SAPSzine, in which he outlined some of the basic principles of heraldry and proposed a shield for SAPS. I thought that I would attempt to do somewhat of the same thing for SFFA - give a brief rundown of the laws of heraldry for the benefit of those of you who don't have books available, propose a shield for SFFA, and see if anyone else was interested in carrying on the discussion.

The most basic item in a heraldic coat of arms is the shield. This may be of almost any reasonable shape, but most commonly is the triangular or "flatiron" design, as in my coat of arms, for relatively simple coats, and the almost square shape I used for the proposed SFFA shield if the shield is complex or if it makes the design more artistically pleasing. The design I used for SFFA seemed to fit better on the square shield, though it isn't terribly complex.

The first thing described in blazoning (technical term for describing in heraldic language) a coat of arms is the tincture of the field. The field is the principle portion of the shield. If over half of the shield has the same background color, then that is the field (so that the field of my shield is "sable" (black) and the field of the SFFA shield is "gules" (red)). If the ~~field~~ shield is divided evenly then instead of beginning with a tincture, you begin by describing the division as "per fess (or bend, or pale, or chevron, or what-have-you)" and then mention the tinctures in order, beginning with the upper and dexter. The upper is favored where possible; dexter is favored where there is a right-left division and no top-bottom division to override it. (Bear in mind that "dexter" and "sinister" mean right and left respectively from the standpoint of a man behind the shield, so that the dexter side of the shield is on the left as you face it.) After the field comes the principle charge on the shield; there are scores of these, the most basic ones being the fess (horizontal bar), pale (vertical bar), bend (diagonal bar, called "bend sinister" if it slopes from sinister chief to dexter base, but simply "bend" if it slopes the other way), chevron (like a sergeant's chevrons), cross (like an upright cross), saltire (St. Andrew's cross), chief (horizontal bar across the top edge), and pall (a Y shape). So up to this point my shield is "Sable, a bend argent (silver)" and the SFFA's is "gules, a chief argent".

However, these charges, called ordinaries, hardly suffice for all the families bearing arms. In the first place, color combinations are limited. Permitted are five so-called "colors", gules, sable, azure (blue), vert (green), and purpure (purple), of which the last two are seldom used, and two so-called "metals", argent and or (gold), which may be represented by white and yellow without error. Also permitted are the heraldic furs, which are complicated except for the basic ermine, which is shown as a white background with little black ermine tails on it. It is a basic rule of heraldry that a color must not appear on a color or a metal on a metal, so that the limited number of combinations is limited still further. So additional charges, depictions of people, animals, and inanimate objects were added to distinguish one shield from another. Almost anything can be used here, though it is preferred to use traditional heraldic charges and not go charging mimeographs or other such modern items unless there is an exceptionally good reason for it.

It is better at this point, I think, to run through the blazoning of my shield and the proposed SFPA shield as examples; any of you who are interested in designing your own shields and can't find a book of heraldry can either send me a drawing of your shield ~~xxx~~ or a detailed description of it in regular English and I'll give you the technical blazoning of it.

My shield is blazoned, "Sable, on a bend between two foxes' heads erased argent, three flambeaux ignited gules, alternately reversed". The SFPA shield is blazoned, "Gules, on a chief argent, between two skulls a helium atom saltirewise of the field; in base on a saltire of the chief a saltire azure, on both seventeen mullets saltirewise of the chief." This illustrates the rule that a tincture is never named but once in blazoning a particular part of a coat of arms, such as the shield.

Below is drawn the SFPA shield; I'm no artist, but this one was mostly mechanical so I'm not too far off. Joe or Dick or Al or one of the others of you who can draw could do it up better if you like it. I also give the standard code for representing tinctures in black and white.

In case you're interested in the derivation of the SFPA shield - the base portion is of course derived from the Confederate battle flag, with the difference that I put 17 stars on it because there are 17 states in the SFPA "South". The chief represents that this is a stf (the atom) and fantasy (the skulls) apa. There are two skulls and one atom because through most of its history SFPA has been more devoted to fantasy than stf, but the atom is central to show that there is no real favoritism.

Anyone who thinks he has a better design is welcome to try.

There are also such things as helmets, crests, and supporters. Fannish convention seems to be that a crest is OK, but not on a helmet unless you have a real claim to it; supporters are out, being limited to nobles and sovereign powers; mottoes are permitted. Fine,



ARGENT



OR



GULES



AZURE



SABLE



VERT



PURPURE



ERMINE

in Latin, means "Seize the day" and was the motto of the Epicureans and Hedonists, amongst whom I number myself. A good mottox for SFPA is needed - any ideas?

