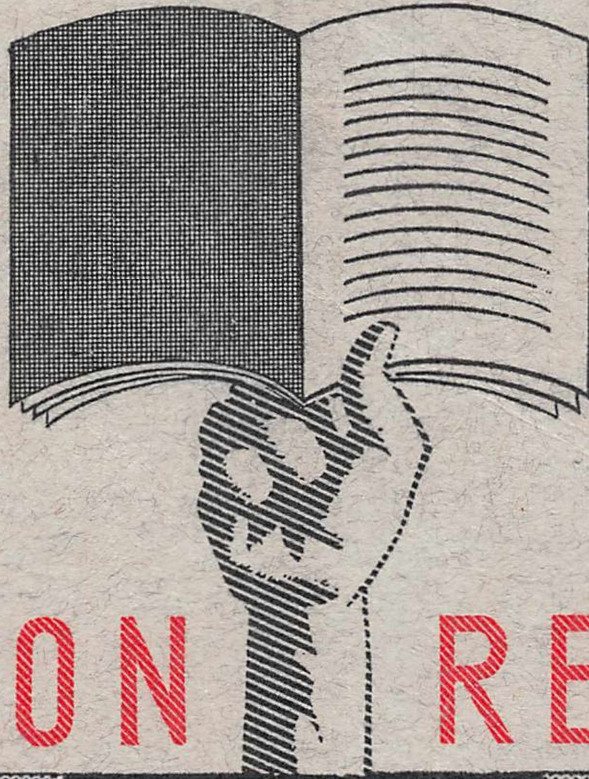


TORONTO JULY 3-5 1948



TORCON REPORT

PHILCON 1947

PACIFICON 1946

DENVENTION 1941

CHICON 1940

NYCON 1939

TORCON REPORT

EDITED & COMPILED

BY

EDWARD A. McKEOWN

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Editorial

On the northern shore of Lake Ontario there rests the majestic city of Toronto, capital of Canada's richest province. An industrial and commercial city of some 900,941 souls (1941 census), Toronto is the home of industry and culture. From the giant manufacturing firms to the internationally known University of Toronto, this is truly "The Queen City." It is Canada's Convention City and ranks fourth on the continent in number of gatherings. At some time or another, almost all organizations make Toronto the site for their annual meeting. Not to be left behind, fandom showed its international tendencies by holding its 1948 convention in this great metropolis.

Fandom — there is a truly nebulous word. Many friends upon seeing the Torcon writeups in the local papers, came to me with questions on their lips. "What is science-fiction?" "What do you do at these conventions?" "What does Torcon mean?" "Do you really believe in ghosts?" These and many more were fired at yours truly within a short month after the Torcon. They made me begin to think. Was I really ready to answer these questions in such a way that I would keep these people from looking down on our hobby? In most cases the questioners were quite satisfied that our pursuits were harmless, but only because I had a wealth of information at my fingertips. This knowledge was there as a result of research necessitated by the Torcon.

How and why has fandom grown — or for that matter has it grown? In his speech, Bob Bloch dwells on the psychological reason for s-f writing and reading. Therein I believe he has covered a great part of the answer to the above question. In my opinion, the majority of people become fans partly because of a great interest in their hobby but also partly for the chance to express themselves. In other words, for the "ego-boo" offered by publishing and letter-hacking. But don't get me wrong now. This is not a failing — it is a purely normal reaction. Any person gets an inner lift from seeing his name in the local paper. Think how

much greater must be the unconscious surge when a fan sees his name in a national magazine that is read by thousands of people.

But, letter-hacking is only the first stage. How long a fan stays there depends on the length of time required to form a local fan club. In some cases it may be years and in others but a few short months. These fan clubs are normally built around one or more major personalities. Without them the organization would stagnate and almost cease to function until another leader came along. Some people have the ambition and energy and definite flair for organization that stamps a man as a good leader. Some people are not similarly blessed. Does this mean that the Number One Fan is any better than Joe Doaks of Main Street North America? No it does not! Each has his definite useful place in the scheme of things.

So our fan has now formed a local club. Whither he goes from there depends not only on himself but also on the enthusiasm of his confreres. If the club becomes bogged down with constitutional difficulties and endless arguments, it will never amount to anything. But there is also the danger of it being so unorganized that nothing will be done because of the lack of intelligent supervision and direction. Somewhere in between there is a happy medium.

From a purely local view our fan may now get big ideas. But one thing he must remember is that he was once an uninitiate himself. To forget the small fan is to commit Deweycide. He becomes interested in the national setup and attends his first convention. A word is in order about these conventions.

The first was held in New York in 1939 in conjunction with the New York World's Fair. At the Nycon it was decided to make the gatherings an annual affair and thus the next meet was set for Chicago in 1940. Continuing the gradual trend toward the west, the delegates at the Chicon selected Denver for 1941. No one at the Denvention had any inkling of Pearl Harbor and its meaning, so when they picked Los

Angeles for the following year they did not know that the Pacificon would be postponed until 1946. It was a huge success marred only slightly by the internal bickerings of the LASFS. Milt Rothman was the only prominent eastern fan at the meeting, and he did the east justice by snagging the 1947 meeting for Philly.

Philly was my first experience in anything fannish other than a local group. I had often thought about the possibility of getting one of the Cons for Toronto, but when the local delegation left for Philly, we had no thought of making a bid. However, at a last-minute Sunday night meeting attended by Beak, John and myself, we decided to bid. We were surprised and more than a little pleased when the crowd gave us its approval. We returned home and threw ourselves wholeheartedly into the problem of organizing the first truly international convention.

We had our troubles of course, but everywhere we turned there seemed to be somebody ready to help. Our first problem arose when we discovered that no hotel was interested in booking our group. They were all tied up with tourists over the Fourth and did not want to make any further commitments. But one of them did suggest that we contact Mr. McNally at the Toronto Convention and Tourist Association Inc. He promptly took on our problems and helped us over our first major obstacle by suggesting the Rai Purdy Studios as a possible site. From there on in he turned our Convention over to one of his associates, Mr. McClarty, who in addition to being an able organizer turned out to be the custom's expert on their staff. Thus he was able to aid us materially in getting the original illustrations across the border.

Before we left Philly we asked Hubert Rogers if he would do the cover for the Torcon Program Booklet. He very graciously consented to donate his talents and produced the wonderful result that you saw. In some inexplicable manner I neglected to thank him in the booklet editorial. I hope that in some part this will make up for my oversight. Thanks to you Hubert Rogers. I look forward to seeing you next year in Cincy.

Under the able guidance of Beak Taylor, the publicity for the Torcon moved

ahead. Beak worked hard and long at both Torque and the booklet, and is to be congratulated for the fine job he did on them.

Other thank you's have been made in the Convention Chit-Chat and in the editorial of the booklet. However, there are half a dozen professionals who deserve the thanks of the Torcon Society. The two Guests of Honor, Bob Bloch and Bob Tucker, came through right nobly in their speech-making. That indefatigable funster George O. Smith helped us out of many a hole with his ready wit and talented MCing. Mary Gnaedinger, John W. Campbell Jr., Paul Payne and Lloyd Eshbach helped along the auction with their fine donations of original illustrations. While on the subject of these donations it might be well to ponder just what they mean. Don't ever lose your sense of perspective. Fandom is such a minute part of that vast ocean known as the Reading Public that there must be a particular reason for the editors catering to us. Please, let us never forget that they do this mostly because they either tolerate or outright like fans and fandom. But we are not that important — alienation of several editors has already cost us much valuable assistance and publicity. Let us not cut our own throats by being too dogmatic in our attacks on any and all editors.

The cover for the TR was done by Bruce Milne, a prominent Canadian artist who is the Art Director at the Calendar outfit that employs yours truly. Bruce has shown a great deal of interest in fandom, and it is possible that this will not be the last of his work to grace the covers of local publications.

Next year, all eyes will be focused on Cincinatti and the C invention. Under the very able leadership of Charlie Tanner and Don Ford, this Con should carry on the tradition of interesting, informative programs attractively presented, a tradition that was nurtured carefully by the committees of the first six conventions. I am looking forward to meeting all my friends at Cincy next year.

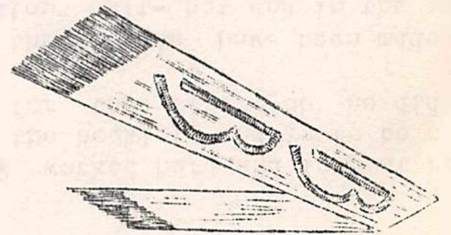
So there you have it fans. Turn the page and start right in on the TR. Please write and let me know how you enjoyed it.

BOB BLOCH

PSYCHOLOGY

AND

FANTASY



Friends:

Several years ago, I wrote an introduction to a book of my short stories, in which I mentioned that I had a Jekyll and Hyde personality — somewhat of an exaggerated schizophrenic.

Many people have commented to me about this statement, and I gather that they do not believe it. But I assure you it's quite true — I do have a dull nature.

Now when I was flying up here on the plane, I sat back and began to think about what I was going to say to you. And the first thing I knew, this alter ego of mine began whispering to me.

"LISTEN TO ME NOW — I'LL TELL YOU WHAT TO DO, MY FRIEND. THE FIRST THING YOU HAVE TO SAY, YOU KNOW, IS HOW GLAD YOU ARE TO BE HERE. TELL THEM HOW FLATTERED YOU ARE, EH?"

I didn't pay any attention to this, but the voice kept on.

"WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, YOU FOOL? DON'T YOU KNOW HOW TO MAKE A SPEECH? TELL THEM THEY'RE WONDERFUL — THROW IN A COUPLE OF JOKES — FUNNY STUFF. GO AHEAD — DO AS I SAY — I'M YOUR FRIEND — I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU."

I wouldn't listen to this, either. I was still trying to figure out my subject-matter. But the voice kept coaching me.

"YOU KNOW WHAT FANS WANT TO HEAR, DON'T YOU? ABOUT HOW SCIENCE FICTION FANS ARE THE MOST BRILLIANT PEOPLE IN THE WORLD — HOW THEY ARE SMARTER THAN ANYBODY ELSE — HOW IT WAS REALLY SCIENCE FICTION FANS WHO INVENTED THE ATOMIC BOMB."

I shook my head, because it wasn't true. The voice droned on above the motors of the plane.

"WELL, THEN, WHY DON'T YOU MAKE SPEECH NUMBER TWO? YOU KNOW — ABOUT HOW SCIENCE FICTION FANS ARE GOING TO CREATE A NEW AND BETTER WORLD? EVERYBODY LIKES THAT SPEECH — THEY'VE ALWAYS LIKED IT, AT EVERY CONVENTION."

This I couldn't go for, either. The voice got pretty angry now.

"ALL RIGHT, YOU STUPID FOOL! THEN AT LEAST YOU CAN TELL THEM THAT SCIENCE-FICTION IS GREAT LITERATURE — THAT FANS ARE READING THE BEST WRITING IN THE WORLD TODAY. WHY DON'T YOU TELL THEM THAT?"

I still didn't say anything. By this time the voice was raving mad.

"YOU KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, MY

FRIEND? YOU'RE CRAZY — CAN'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I WANT TO HELP YOU. SO IF YOU WON'T MAKE THOSE OTHER SPEECHES, MAKE ONE ABOUT WRITING. TELL THEM WHAT A BIG SHOT YOU ARE, EH? USE NICE LONG WORDS — GIVE THEM PLENTY OF HARD NAMES TO PRONOUNCE — THEY WON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, BUT THEY'LL THINK YOU'RE A GENIUS."

I was just stubborn enough to ignore all this, until finally the subconscious voice went away and left me with my problem still unsolved.

Frankly, it IS a problem to talk to you today without compromising with the truth, as I see it.

Because, you know, that subconscious voice of mine was right — in a way. It would be so easy for me to spend most of my time — and your time — praising you to your face. That's a very fashionable procedure, to judge from speeches I have heard, and articles I've read in both pro and fan magazines for years. The idea that fantasy fans constitute a sort of intellectual aristocracy is quite pleasant and soothing to the ego.

It would also be easy to make that stock speech about the wonderful benefits fantasy and science-fiction have given to the world in the form of inspiration for inventions — social reorganization — and global betterment.

It would also be simple to paint the science-fiction fan as the embryonic superman, the herald of the future. But I cannot honestly agree with these points, and I'll explain why in just a moment.

As for the last alternative — standing up here and spouting polysyllables — that requires no refutation whatsoever.

Besides that, I'm no orator. I'm neither a top figure in fandom nor in professional writing — I'm not even a science-fiction writer, properly speaking, but a fantasy writer. So I can't pose as an authority — I can only give you my personal opinions and observations.

Now that I've spent so much of your time telling you what I WON'T talk about, perhaps I'd better explain what I WILL say. One thing you must remember — everything I say is merely the expression of my own viewpoint. I don't pretend to represent all authors, or all fans, or all editors. Any resemblance to persons living or dead is purely coincidental.

Now, a good easy way for me to kill the next fifteen minutes — and bore you to death — would be to start out by giving a history of science-fiction. You know the pattern — we begin with Greek mythology — Icarus and his wings — work up to Friar Bacon and his talking head of bronze — continue with Jules Verne — describe the early days of Hugo Gernsback — and bring the history of science-fiction right down to its ultimate triumphant conclusion with the birth of Forrest J. Ackerman.

But you've probably heard it all before — so just consider it said. I assume that everyone in this room is, by the very token of his presence, cognizant of the development of science-fiction and fantasy to present status.

I propose, therefore, instead of talking about WHAT has happened — to venture a few theories as to WHY it happened.

In a word, WHY did science-fiction develop, WHY do people write fantasy, and WHY do people read fantasy?

That to me is the most fascinating question of all — and I'm not alone in my interest.

When my novel, "The Scarf", was published last year, I received letters from several psychiatrists and psychoanalysts who seemed to be interested in the subject matter — the story of a writer who was also a pathological murderer.

One psychiatrist in particular — Dr. Edmund Bergler of New York, discussed the problem of writing and writers at length. He was kind enough to supply me with copies of several of his articles and I'd like to discuss some of his theories briefly. In an article in the PSYCHOANALYTICAL REVIEW for January 1944, entitled ON A CLINICAL APPROACH TO THE PSYCHOANALYSIS OF WRITERS, Dr. Bergler says, in part —

That most people commonly believe writers to be unconscious or even conscious exhibitionists — that a man's writing reveals his unconscious wishes and fantasies.

Not so, says the Doctor. Writers are not exhibitionists, properly speaking, but voyeurs — that is to say, they do not take pleasure in self-revelation, but in looking at the secret lives of others. Pretending to be utterly frank in their own writing, they are actually using writing as an excuse to pry, to be curious about, and to inspect the private lives of

others.

This, of course, involves a Freudian concept of psychology and would be a good excuse to use a lot of big words, but let's skip it. We aren't so much interested in the personality of writers but in what makes them use writing as a vehicle of expression, instead of prize-fighting or a-dagio dancing or putting ship-models into bottles.

Writers, Bergler goes on to say, indulge in orality in an effort to substitute for their mothers as a source of "giving" — due to a disappointment in their mothers during the preoedipal phase of development.

This is "autoarchic fantasy" a concept originated by Bergler and Jeckels.

In plain English, most writers unconsciously are trying to take the place of their own mothers as the final authorities — as critics of the activities of others — conferring praise and blame and passing judgement. And at the same time, they are using writing as an excuse to satisfy their curiosity in many cases, to be perfectly frank. But most important of all, they are justifying and defending their own subconscious fantasies and prejudices.

You all know what a large part symbolism plays in the Freudian theories of psychology. Keeping this in mind, it is suddenly very easy to see why a certain group of writers become interested in science-fiction as a field.

For science-fiction is sexual symbolism rampant. Consider the phallic imagery of the rocket-ship — an elongated guided missile — a projectile, launched with an explosion, to pierce the void and bury itself in the soil of a new world. Consider the symbolism of planets and asteroids — all spheres, for that matter. Contemplate the equally obvious symbolic content of ray-guns and blasters. There is also a latent imagery in the robot — the rigid monster, moving mechanically as a menace. The concept of the mutant, the "different" person, carries other implications of withdrawal from the norm.

Now it's a huge temptation for me to take all of this Freudian imagery and, under the excuse of psychoanalysis, start dissecting my fellow-writers — pointing out just why Mr. A is always firing his

rockets and why Mr. B insists on having a strange race of aliens populating the earth, and why Mr. C is so intrigued with the notion of cruel princesses and high priestesses who blast people right and left and trust only their personal robots.

The only trouble is, it would be equally simple for these writers to turn around and analyse my quirks on the basis of what I write.

But I can give you a rough example of how these theories apply.

It is well known that the great Howard Phillips Lovecraft had two strong and self-acknowledged phobias — a hatred of the sea, and an antipathy towards cold which was strong enough to affect him physically.

Remembering that Dr. Bergler says that writers write to defend their own unconscious fantasies and prejudices, see how well this works out in the case of Lovecraft.

His hatred of the sea is rationalized by the creation of the Cthulhu cycle — THE CALL OF CTHULHU, with its monster from the depths of the ocean — THE SHADOW OVER INNSMOUTH, with its hordes of hideous sea-monsters. The entire Lovecraft Mythos seems to owe its inception to this sea-phobia. And in AT THE MOUNTAINS OF MADNESS we find that hatred of cold — a hatred curiously inverted in the short story, COOL AIR. There are other interesting facets to the Lovecraft stories; for example the recurrence of plots involving the mystery of paternity — fantasies regarding the father.

Now we can only attempt to guess at just what the sea and cold symbolized to Howard Phillips Lovecraft; that they were symbols is self-evident in his work. And if you will reread your favorite science-fiction and fantasy authors' works and deliberately looking for themes of symbolism running through them, you'll undoubtedly find a great deal that will surprise you. So it is safe to assume that just as the classically inhibited old maid turns to writing TRUE CONFESSIONS because of a psychic drive, so does the fantasy writer unconsciously adopt this vehicle as the one best-suited to express the conflicts of his personality and justify his attitudes to the world.

But why do people READ fantasy.

Why do YOU, for example, read the stuff?

Now that I've stood up here and virtually admitted that I must be crazy to write what I do, it's your turn to get under the microscope. Or as they say in our best psychoanalytical circles, "Just lie down on that couch over there and relax while I probe your psyche."

Again, Doctor Bergler — this time, in an article entitled MYSTERY FANS AND THE PROBLEM OF POTENTIAL MURDERERS — from the American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, April 1945.

As a practising psychiatrist, Dr. Bergler found it necessary to learn everything possible about the background of his patients. During years of practise, he discovered it was helpful to ask them questions about their interests and hobbies. He came to realize the importance of an individual's tastes and preferences in recreation — so after a time he began to compile notes on this body of material; what patients liked to see at the movies; what books they read, what music they enjoyed.

He was particularly impressed by those patients who were mystery fans, and fantasy fans.

He questioned them as to why they preferred this form of fiction, and the answers varied. In the case of the mystery story readers, some of them said they read mysteries because they didn't like love stories — others said they were potential murderers and identified themselves with the villains in the stories. Many said they liked to see the authorities outwitted by the criminals. Still others said they identified themselves with the authorities; liked to match wits with the detective and unravel the crime, liked to feel superior by outguessing the author.

Undoubtedly you've heard such statements from your friends who read mysteries — and you accept them as true.

Now bear in mind, however, that the Doctor asked his question of patients undergoing analysis. This gave him an opportunity to match their answers with his findings regarding their personalities and temperaments.

And he came to the following conclusions. All of these reasons cited for liking mysteries and fantasy have a least

common denominator; they are all AGGRESSIVE reasons. Identification with the murderer, or the detective; aggression against authority or against the criminal, or against the author's plot.

Actually, the patients who read in this field were found to be of a passive nature; their aggression was not genuine, but a defense against the opposite tendency, passivity — and secretly they identified themselves not with the aggressor but with the victim.

The real "thrill" in reading this type of fiction came from unconscious feelings of fear, helplessness. And of course, all the stage-trappings of fantasy add to this enjoyment of the uncanny; the reader secretly longs for a fatalistic concept of the universe where strange forces move immutably to destroy him; it justifies his own weakness of action.

Coupled with this is a touch of the same voyeurism — pleasure in looking — that motivates the author. It is very significant that most mysteries and fantasy stories are laid at night — and there is an unconscious identification with the sexual mystery and sex fantasies of childhood, when the night held a forbidden secret.

Now by presenting these psychiatric opinions, I am aware that I'm laying myself wide open to a charge of sensationalism — that there are many who do not uphold the psychoanalytical theories of Freud — and many others who will feel that I am attempting to make a clinical mountain out of an aesthetic molehill.

It is possible to point out that a Jungian psychoanalytic concept is equally plausible — that fantasy and science-fiction embody symbolic archetypes which evoke responses from the subconscious.

But my guess is that a number of people who pride themselves on being utterly "logical" and hardheaded will object on more mundane grounds.

"We read science-fiction, in particular," they will say, "Because we're interested in science, not sex." This is a very popular theory, and one much publicized by the editors of these magazines.

I could point out here that, just as mystery fans deny their passive tendencies by rationalizing their reasons for liking mystery fiction, so science-fiction fans

deny their passivity with such arguments. The parallel is obvious. But I think there are easier ways to show the partial fallacy of the so-called "scientific" attitude towards science-fiction.

Science-fiction fans, writers, and editors — editors most particularly — are always eager to point out the large number of so-called "scientists" who are active in the field as fans, writers or editors. A dozen names spring readily to mind.

But after the dozen names have sprung, what then?

There are perhaps 500 people alive today who have written enough science-fiction stories at one time or another to qualify them for consideration as authors of science-fiction.

There are perhaps 500,000 people who have read enough science-fiction at one time or another to qualify them as present or past "fans". Even by reducing this number in turn to 500, to embrace the rabid, or dangerous type known as an "active fan", I still defy anyone to make any sort of case based on the number who are either actively engaged in scientific pursuits or seriously studying towards that end.

No, it cannot be the lure of abstract "science", per se, which attracts readers to this field.

For every scientist or student of sciences who enjoys science-fiction, there are literally thousands who do not and will not read the stuff.

And one of the most obvious reasons for this defection lies in the peculiar concept of "science" in these stories.

Almost without exception, the "science" in science-fiction is synonymous with infallibility.

What do I mean? I mean that the philosophy motivating science-fiction unconsciously assumes that "science" — in quotation marks, mind you — is the end-all and be-all of existence; that it is the final answer to all problems, the key to ultimate power, the synonym for the Forces of Destiny.

Stop and think — how many science-fiction stories dealing with the future have you ever read in which this "science" was not naturally assumed to be supreme? Even if the wonderful weapons and technological powers were in the hands of evil-doers, still they represented the greatest

achievement, the treasure-trove of knowledge and the Great Arcanum.

There is a strange assumption that from now on, time without end, this mysterious "science" is the answer to all problems and the sole origin of all so-called "progress."

The "history" of science-fiction stories is merely the record of the development of new weapons and skills; the tapping of new personality-facets through "scientific" means.

The power and authority in all science-fiction stories is vested in the "scientists" who control the skills and weapons.

In a word, we're back in the old Freudian rat-trap again. As the eminent Doctor would say if he were alive today, "My dear pyoobils, der scientific concebt iss noddings budt der Fadder Image yedt. Yah, sure!"

Yes, the "scientist" of science-fiction is the Father Image. Wiser than the child, the reader; able to do marvelous things, for good or evil. He has all the answers. The child, little Slophead, doesn't know what happens to Daddy when he goes away, for the child's world is confined to the single block on which he lives. The science fiction reader has a new Daddy — the storybook scientist, who goes away to other worlds, other times. Little Slophead's Pa returns with gifts or spankings from that strange, vague outer realm across the streets and downtown. And the storybook scientist brings back his own marvels.

It is significant that many actual scientists and many readers of science-fiction are agnostic or atheistic. For unconsciously they adopt Science as the new God, embodied in the mythical figure of the storybook scientist.

It is merely assumed that "science" has all the answers — have faith and ye shall be saved. The religious parallel is so obvious that I won't waste your time citing it. I think we have all read enough stories in which the world of the future was painted as a sort of super-Heaven to know what I'm talking about.

Now just what resemblance does this storybook "science" have to actual science as we observe it today?

If there are any semanticists in

the crowd, I trust they will forgive me for not defining terms. I hate arguments, and near as I can recollect, whenever you get a bunch of semanticists and ask them to agree on a definition of terms, they end up in a fight and start using language which has no semantic acceptance anyway.

Let's just assume that by science, I refer to technological developments, through pragmatic methods, and let it go at that.

So what is the status of today's science — in all fields?

I think that it's purely commercial. Certainly it is not a holy thing, set apart from worldly considerations. There are Communist scientists and Fascist scientists; capitalistic scientists, religious scientists and atheistic scientists — many of them actively engaged in promoting political or religious or anti-religious causes, and utilizing their skills consciously and solely to that end. However unselfish these activities may seem on the surface, few of them are purely humanitarian — and the money that supports scientific enquiry and provides training for those who would enter the field is hardly given without a definite motive.

It is sad but true that even today scientists have the ability to create a much better world in theory — the work you do could be lessened, the clothing you wear could be bettered, the furniture, mechanical aids and techniques available are far superior; your health could be guarded and longevity increased — but it would step on somebody's toes; somebody who now subsidizes the sciences whether he be president or prime minister or dictator; head of a commune or head of a commercial or industrial concern. And university professors can be fired, laboratory chemists or biologists can be dismissed: every day new Galileos are forced to recant or suffer under a conspiracy of silence.

Then too, scientists are human and fallible. The history of advancement in the fields of scientific discovery and research is a history of unceasing struggle — struggle between the established leaders with their outmoded theories against newcomers with fresh viewpoints

and techniques. Almost no new so-called "scientific truth" of any importance has been accepted without bitter opposition — and significantly enough, this opposition has been led, not by the unlettered masses, but by the acknowledged heads of orthodox science. There have always been learned savants ready, willing and able to give positive proof that disease is caused by "humors" — that there are only six planets in the solar system — that machines heavier than air can not fly.

More striking, and more terrifying to me, is the realization that even today the major advances in scientific achievement are generally made under the abnormal stimulation of a state of war. The pretense of working "for the good of all humanity" drops away immediately when the bugles sound, and all of our scientists, whether professed humanitarians or supposedly cold and disinterested technicians, eagerly plunge into the fray, competing with one another to see who can produce the most destructive weapons.

I think there is a great danger if fans accept a sort of abstract concept of "science" as an infallible authority.

It just isn't true.

For example, the world today is blessed with literally thousands of profound theorists. These men have the honor of bearing after their names more degrees than a rectal thermometer.

As savants, seers, supreme authorities, they will give you all the answers. Suppose you ask them the age of the earth.

They'll be only too glad to tell you.

Professor A. will inform you that the world is three billion years old. Professor B. will say the earth is three million years old. Professor C. will tell you the earth is three hundred thousand years old. And so on, ad infinitum, ad nauseum.

They're all scientists, remember. They all have theories to back up their opinions. But not one of them really knows how old the earth is, or, what is more important, how much older the earth will get, now that science has blessed us with the atomic bomb as its crowning contribution to the future.

Actually, this kind of "scientific authority" reminds one of the old theological disputes concerning how many an-

gels could sit on a pin without getting stuck.

But despite human weaknesses — despite the obstacles of greed, intolerance, smugness, commercial and political chicanery — advances have been made and will be made. There ARE intellectually honest scientists, and there will be more — if the bomb does not fall. Not in our time, perhaps, but it will come.

But it will not come through a blind rationalization, a blind worship of the status quo on our part, a blind acceptance of all scientific endeavor as infallible.

We must never fall into the vulgar error of the "Ain't Science Wonderful?" attitude — standing around worshipping the working parts of an automobile motor as though the millenium has already been attained.

We must always remember that even though science per se may someday evolve a world that is technologically perfect, the world will never be any better than the people who live in it — and that people are never any better than their ideas, their attitudes and their temperaments.

The gigantic task of giving the world a "sound body" is as nothing compared to the effort necessary to give it a "sound mind" — and this effort has been almost completely neglected by the mechanistic techniques of science as we know it today.

But there is hope, yes.

That hope is mirrored to a miniscule degree in the very lure of science-fiction. As I say, it is my personal opinion that only the unthinking read this type of literature because of their interest in science — and only the smug with a secret notion that so-called "scientific interests" make them members of an intellectual aristocracy are willing to accept the science in these stories as of primary importance.

I believe that the primary appeal in science-fiction stories lies in a simple psychological fact — science-fiction stories are a glorification of the individual.

Whether your protagonist in the average space-opera is a man of action or a technician, he is almost inevitably an iconoclast. Consider the typical science-fiction heroes — they may be blood-and-thunder space pirates, renegades, explor-

ers, or mercenaries. On the other hand they may be inventors, engineers, pioneers. But they have one thing in common — they are individualists. You seldom read a science-fiction story in which the hero is a slave, an automaton, a meek conformist. And again, almost inevitably, they are builders, not destroyers. They are optimists, they face the future.

Of course many times these characters are crude, even juvenile. But at least, their basic psychology and motivation is healthy.

The other side of the picture can be found in wierd fiction, where a fatalistic attitude prevails — where doom and death and destruction are almost the inevitable results of challenging the Unknown.

Yet even in supernatural fantasy, the heroes usually exhibit an intellectual curiosity — a willingness to pry, to seek to defy the Fates.

Perhaps this sounds a bit pretentious to you — even though it is merely a superficial attempt to analyse some of the concepts of fantasy, you may feel that I'm presumptuous in even bothering to deal with such a trivial aspect of writing.

That attitude, if you possess it, is the result of reading too many professional critics.

Just as the juvenile fan is apt to go overboard and praise some cheap pulperoo as being greater than Proust, so does the average professional critic lean over backwards to condemn all fantasy as trash. All current fantasy, that is.

Mark that well, for the same critic will unhesitatingly accept the "Odyssey" and the "Iliad" as epics — swallow the ghosts and fairies and monsters of Shakespeare — and even grudgingly concede a bit of merit to the writings of Hawthorne and Foe.

As a matter of fact, it is interesting to observe that the great bulk, by far the greatest portion of all literature that has survived the centuries, is fantasy, or contains elements of fantasy. The "new realism" and the "naturalistic and reportorial" schools of writing are late-comers on the scene.

It is amusing to observe how the critics unanimously shunned the early writings of H.G. Wells, dismissing his efforts as fantasy and therefore hackwork — how

eagerly they rushed forward to embrace him in his middle period when he turned to "novels of the current scene" — and how, today, only a few years after Wells' death, we can already see that almost the only portion of his creative work destined to survive for a time is his fantasy.

The same critics who so united in praising the early Aldous Huxley comedies of manners were much less impressed with his "Brave New World" — and in discussing "After Many A Summer Dies the Swan" they did their best to ignore the fantastic theme of prolongation of life and concentrate instead on his social theories. As for the metaphysics of "Time Must Have A Stop" — many of them gave up completely. And yet I submit that fifty years from now, "Brave New World" will be a timely book, its satire acute as ever, and its scientific perception keen — whereas even today the sophistries of "Antic Hay" and "Point Counterpoint" are utterly dated.

I will not attempt to explain the basis of this critical attitude. There is no need to explain it. Time itself has a way of knocking the props from under the orthodox — and despite the pious wails of the critics, people will continue to find some sort of entertainment in Mrs. Shelley's "Frankenstein" long after the titles of her other, critically-approved "serious" works are forgotten. Professor Dodgson's mathematical theories will be dismissed as outdated and irrelevant, but Lewis Carroll's "Alice In Wonderland" will still appeal.

So let the critics who, after all, are merely men who write for a living, even as the veriest hack, continue to dismiss fantasy as not worthy of their attention — as for you and I and the guy next door, we'll go on reading it.

Remember, these are my personal opinions. I don't want you to go away with the opinion that I consider all critics are dolts; all editors greedy dogs, all writers of fantasy potential or actual psychotics, and all fans a group of adolescents. For there is another side to the picture — and again I can cite only personal experience.

As far as editors are concerned, I think they are conscientious and hardworking — patient to a fault. I think the fantasy field has reason to be proud of

its editors, past and present; no reader of fantasy fiction can ignore the selfless devotion of a man like Farnsworth Wright, who quite literally gave his life to editing "Weird Tales". Suffering from an incurable and disabling affliction, he almost single-handedly carried the torch for many years, and the memory of his wisdom and kindness is alive in all of us who benefited from association with him.

And as for the writers — well, at the risk of repetition, I can only submit my own story.

I became a fan when I was fifteen, and wrote a letter to my favorite author. Not only did he answer; he offered to send me his out-of-print stories to read, and he placed his entire library at my disposal. In addition, he introduced me, through correspondence, to other writers, and in a short time began to encourage me to write stories of my own. He helped me, criticized my work. Yes, because a fifteen-year-old kid liked to read fantasy, Howard Phillips Lovecraft did all this — and I was introduced to the kindness and comradeship which seems to exist almost solely amongst fantasy-lovers.

I received the same courtesy and consideration from August Derleth, from Clark Ashton Smith, from E. Hoffman Price. Then, when I was seventeen, I began to sell stories of my own. Almost immediately I was invited to join a local group of writers — the Milwaukee Fictioneers. I received more help and encouragement from such members as Ray Palmer and Ralph Milne Farley, and became friendly with a brilliant, warmhearted guy who soon offered me the use of his library and research facilities — a man named Stanley Weinbaum. Why not? Weren't we both interested in fantasy?

When Lovecraft died in 1937, it came as a terrible shock to me. I felt low, and one of the people I corresponded with must have known it. He promptly invited me to come out and spend six weeks as his house guest — he'd never met me personally in his life, but we both liked fantasy and writing, and that was enough. So I went to California and met Henry Kuttner. During this trip, I made the acquaintance of the California gang; again, fantasy formed a common bond.

During my stay, we had another visitor

— C.L. Moore, who later became Mrs. Kuttner. And we became acquainted with another young man who was just beginning to write — Fritz Leiber Jr. These people have become my close friends, which means that I also now have the pleasure of knowing Lewis Padgett, Keith Hammond, Kelvin Kent, Paul Edmonds, Hudson Hastings, Lawrence O'Donnell and heaven knows how many others.

The list of people I have met — and to whom I am indebted for favors far beyond the call of duty, or pleasant and stimulating acquaintanceship — is almost endless. Offhand, I can name Otto Binder, Julius Schwartz, the late Otis Adelbert Kline, Manly Wade Wellman, Carl Jacobi, Donald Wandrei, Clifford D. Simak, Ray Bradbury — but as I say, the list is endless. And it is a varied list, for it includes editors, agents, and writers of both weird and science-fiction. But the one quality they all possess is a genuine interest in, and devotion to, fantasy; and a feeling of friendship towards others in the field which I do not believe is duplicated in any other type of writing.

When I attended the Pacificon, I became acquainted with Leigh Brackett, and with Canada's own A.E. van Vogt, and E. Mayne Hull. Their cordiality and interest is remarkable in a world where all too many writers of so-called "serious" fiction hesitate to fraternize. Why, the way they treated me, you might have thought I was the author of "A Man and His Sins"!

This isn't mere lip-service or flattery, remember. The field of fantasy fiction has living monuments to prove the devotion of its writers. In 1937, following the untimely death of Stanley Weinbaum, it was the Milwaukee Fictioneers under the leadership of Palmer and Farley who produced the Weinbaum Memorial book — at a time when publication of a so-called anthology of science-fiction short-stories was a daring and unprofitable venture. But these friends of Stanley's were determined that his work would live on in book form; they raised the money during the blackest hours of the depression and carried the project through.

Again, following the death of Lovecraft, August Derleth and Donald Wandrei kept their resolution to see his work in book form. We all know what success has

come to Arkham House since that time, but if you can recall those days, you'll remember that it was a risky and foolhardy gesture at the time; booksellers couldn't dispose of the volume, readers couldn't afford it, and 1200 copies was a huge edition. But Lovecraft's friends kept faith with his memory.

It is gratifying to me, as a writer of fantasy fiction, to see how much more widely accepted this type of literature is today as compared with ten years ago. Of course, there are still many readers and critics who turn up their noses; but I can honestly say that I'm proud to be numbered among the fantasy writers, not because of their work alone, but because of their status as kind, generous, friendly human beings.

Now, as to fans and fandom. There has been much interest and excitement centering about the Tucker Report, with its cross-section of fan interests, likes, dislikes, occupations, avocations. But, however comprehensive its scope, it must necessarily ignore what to me is the most important activity of fan aspect.

No report, no investigation or poll, could ever hope to include or enumerate the following statistics — the number of man-hours of work and study devoted by fans to the furtherance of fantasy fiction, through publication of fanmags, through research, editing and writing material for same; through correspondence with other fans. No report can show the number of dollars loaned or generously given to fan causes, or to individual fans by other fans who recognized their need. No report can tell of the millions of gestures of genuine friendship — offers of bed and board — transportation — assistance of all sorts.

Fandom, organized fandom in particular, has its faults and flaws. We all recognize them. Feuds, petty vanities, cliqueish snobbery, intolerance, attempts to inject political or religious bias, these things have inevitably played a part in the history of fan organization.

But these manifestations have never passed unnoticed. They have never been accepted as ideal. And always, constantly and unceasingly, there have been fans interested in correcting these conditions, bettering relations, building for the fu-

ture.

Fans have also been accused of a defensive exhibitionism based on personal inadequacy — but I have yet to find a fan meeting or a convention that offered anything along that line to compare with the antics of college fraternity members in session, or a veteran's convention, or a meeting of middle-aged hardware dealers, or for that matter, a convention of morticians.

At the other extreme, fans have been labelled as introverts. This, of course, is a completely erroneous designation. The typical introvert, in the popular mind, is a little guy with horn-rimmed glasses who spends his time sitting in a corner playing chess.

What is forgotten is that when our little chess-player gets to a chess tournament or hobby group where he finds other chess devotees, he becomes just as talkative, just as animated, just as aggressive as any group of so-called "typical, red-blooded, two-fisted" bowling fans. Introversion is mistakenly gauged by individual behavior in, and reaction to, a group or crowd — but I feel that it's the composition of the crowd that provides the true measure.

If a man likes to be one of fifty thousand spectators at a football game or hockey match, he's commonly assumed to be an extrovert, particularly if he does enough idiotic yelling and sloppy drinking.

I submit that you can find louder braying and even more hoggish swilling of liquor on the part of a professor of Greek if he happens to be surrounded by people of similar interests. Just because there are more baseball fans than fantasy fans does not mean that the former are more extroverted than the latter; they merely have more opportunities to gratify their tendencies towards overt public activity. And from the standpoint of actual participation, fantasy fans are the true extroverts; they give themselves more aggressively to their hobbies than do the devotees of spectator sports and such ritualistic ceremonies as card-playing and public dancing.

There is still another concept of fandom which has been, unfortunately, sponsored by a group of fans who may truly be designated as fanatics. They have,

directly and indirectly, promulgated the notion that fandom is some sort of crusade to save the world — a sort of mystic fraternity necessitating an initiation on the part of the budding neophyte — a group composed of the intellectual elite, the forerunners of tomorrow. They endeavor to convey the impression that they are somehow sowing the seed of a super-race — they are dedicated to the Sacred Flame of Technological Improvement, and guard the mystic arcana of engineers and biologists. The funny thing about nearly all these people is that they no longer READ science-fiction or fantasy stories at all; and the few who keep up the pretense certainly never seem to enjoy anything they do read. They are so busy planning and feuding and analysing — in a debunking spirit, of course, how else? — so busy trading and selling and contracting — that fandom has become only a sort of vehicle on which they ride to glory as superior intellects.

Fortunately, this represents a minority attitude. The majority of active fans do not exhibit a monomaniacal devotion to

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CONVENTION CHIT CHAT

You have now finished the first of the two major speeches presented at the Torcon. I hope that you have enjoyed both the subject matter and the manner in which it was reproduced.

Saturday was a very busy day for us regardless of what Art Rapp may say ("..no last minute running around!") As a matter of fact, we were practically tearing our horns off all the time. The whole thing would have been impossible without the aid of several very generous and hard working fans. First and foremost the Torcon owes its thanks to Harry B. Moore and E. Haydn Russell for the way in which they chauffeured us about town both during and preceding the convention. On Saturday morning they picked up John and the movie equipment. That's where the first monkey wrench appeared. John got fouled up at the movie place and I was stuck without a car. But to the rescue came The Terrible Three: Dampam, Goldberg and Slanne (Husband and wife are as one, you know.) In a trice their chariot was piled high with

(More chit chat will be found on pages 26, 38 and elsewhere in the TR.)

their hobby, to the exclusion of other interests.

It goes almost without saying that I consider a gathering such as this one a manifestation of the healthiest aspect of fandom. You have come here today, for this Convention, not to save the world, or convert unbelievers, or to grind the axe of self-aggrandizement — you have gathered here because of the pleasure you take in associating with others who share your liking for fantasy. And again I repeat, I take a certain pride in writing fantasy, pride in the realization that what I write reaches an audience capable of such interest and reaction. It is not without significance that in a world so torn by discord today, such a group is still in existence — able to generate sufficient enthusiasm to make this Convention a reality.

You — all of you, gathered here — are living proof of the enduring quality of fandom. You are your own justification for being. You satisfy my concept of fandom, which is simply this:

Friendship, based on mutual interests.
No one could ask for more.

the loot of the Torcon: illustrations, books, programs and all the necessary accessories for the auction etc.

At the studios, an anonymous fan made himself extremely useful and saved us much trouble. Without a word he sat down at a table and began to stencil numbers for the auction material; Mike Fern directed a crew in the sorting and numbering of the originals, and kept things running smoothly.

Frank Deitz fell into the spirit of things, and spent almost an hour making up lots of programs, maps, AB's, catalogues and anything else we had for the attendees.

Before we knew it, there it was, twelve noon and we were no where near ready. Again an out-of-town fan stepped into the breach and filled it right nobly. While John went ahead with the introductions, Mike Fern broke out the Nash and whipped me home where I doffed my rugby sweater for the more proper garb of a grey business suit.

I have been asked to dissipate a few moments of your time here tonight, in some amusing and/or edifying manner. Accordingly, you are about to be subjected to a brief disquisition on one of the most recent developments in the field of General Semantics.

As you all doubtless know, the study of semantics, since its discovery by A.E. van Vogt in 1945, has proceeded headlong at a positively suicidal pace. In this field, the extravagant theory of today no longer has time to become the cold fact of tomorrow. It is, therefore, most essential that the newest look in General Semantics be at once promulgated with the utmost despatch. Believe me, it is only for this reason that I am prevailed upon to ventilate at this time the following development which, admittedly, has yet to emerge from the empirio-descriptive stage to its ultimate form of completely vacuous generality. I refer to the recently advanced "Theory of Thing Things."

Now what, if anything, do we mean by a "thing thing"? We find that in the present development of the theory it is not possible to formulate a suitable general definition of the term in any known symbolism. We must learn much more about the extent and ramifications of the class of "thing things" before we can surely say that it is feasible to exhibit examples, in limited and specific subsets, you understand, of "thing things".

Examples of thing things and their applications may be found in most technological fields. Take the manufacture of drills, for example. You know, those instruments for boring holes. Frequent use is made of hollow drills, such as the core drills used in mining engineering. And no doubt our master of ceremonies could tell us much about the use of hollow drills in the manufacture of coaxial cables. But I digress: the point is, that in order to make a hollow drill we take an ordinary solid drill and bore a hole through it in the direction of its longitudinal axis. This can only be done by using a thing thing — namely a drill drill.

Other examples, on a larger scale, can also be cited. The largest example I know of was brought to my attention by a certain steel worker of Pennsylvania.

(No, his name is not Richard Sharpe Shaver.) He told me of the Mesta Machine Company, manufacturers of rolling mills for the steel industry. This outfit maintains a huge, sprawling thing thing on its premises — a mill mill.

An entirely different class of thing things, is illustrated by that lowly but necessary article of ~~romance~~ — bird seed. This, as you doubtless know, is a vegetable product which must be grown — with or without hydroponics — from seed — bird seed seed. This brings up an interesting reflexability property of this particular class of thing things. Bird seed is also bird seed seed. In fact, a hierarchy of thing things thus arises, bird seed seed being also bird seed seed seed, bird seed seed seed seed, and so on ad infinitum.

Though I deign to mention them only as horrible examples of semantic confusion a word ought to be said about the so-called pseudo-thing things. An example occurs in spaceship design; wherein the weight of all fixtures and equipment must be kept to an absolute minimum. The lighting system of a spaceship requires light lights.

And as a final example of this latter class, I note that a number of fan fans are in use in the audience. At this distance I cannot tell whether or not any are being used by admirers of other fans, thus making them fan fan fans.

Thus, as we have shown, the class of thing things is wide open for explanations. A start has been made, and it is now up to science-fiction fans with their fine minds and smoke-filled rooms, to carry the "Theory of Thing Things" to its ultimate deforestation.

I thank you.

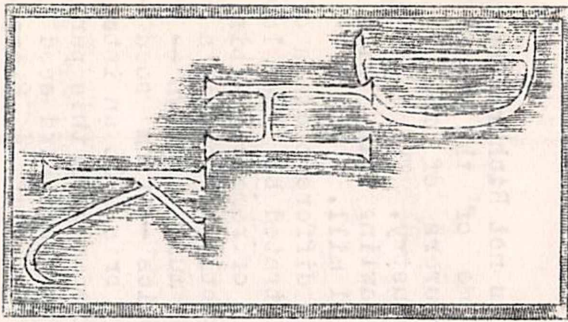
((Not only was Norm's material amusing, but his delivery was as funny as they come. During his very learned dissertation, Norm kept taking things from a brief case and seemed to have no apparent interest in his audience.

You might add another pseudo thing thing to Norm's list. I'm sure there are more but this is just one that was mentioned in one of the smoke-filled rooms. It was suggested at this time that those interesting items of womens apparel "short shorts." Undoubtedly there are many more, but this extremely brief item was voted the most interesting.))

SCIENCE

MASTER OR SERVANT?

DAVID H. KELLER



Science has made rapid strides since man came down from the trees and started to live in caves.

With the use of the thumb in apposition to the fingers came an increase in the number and depth of convolutions in the human brain. This resulted in greater intelligence and the development of imagination which later became the inspiration of inventions.

Prometheus tamed fire which was at once used as a protection against terrible lower forms of life; it gave warmth and cooked food, sharpened hunting sticks and burned out logs for canoes.

Men could only live by killing other men. They learned to throw stones; then fastened the stones to sticks to make lances and axes. An unknown dreamer discovered tension and an inventor fashioned the bow to hurl stone-tipped arrows. Very early in history it was realized that it was advantageous to kill at a distance.

Natural caves were gradually discarded for artificial ones made of stone or wood. Those who lived in the strongest cave-houses lived longer. Fire in these houses made life possible during the long winter. Dogs gave warning of danger and helped in conflict, asking in return nothing but food, shelter and companionship.

Tubal Cain hammered iron, learned how to harden it, devised metal weapons and men graduated from the stone age. Tribes without metal were destroyed by tribes armed with the new weapons.

Horses were domesticated and man travelled faster. Swarms of mounted warriors came from Asia and conquered the pedestrians. Then the wheel was invented, terrestrial symbol of the sun god. Horses were fastened to carts and the chariot dominated the struggle for existence. Philip of Macedonia introduced armed cavalry into warfare. His son, Alexander, led an army east into Asia defeating the nations who fought, as best they could, with foot soldiers and platoons of elephants. Rome and Carthage fought for supremacy in the lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

Lances became longer and sharper. The principle of the bow and arrow was used in evolving the catapult which threw Greek Fire and jars of poisonous snakes as well as stones. Man constantly learned to kill

at a greater distance.

With the improvement in weapons, better bodily defense was necessary. The material for armor changed from leather and wood to iron. The little army of Cortez conquered a nation living in the stone age because the Spaniards had armor, steel weapons and horses. In Europe, ten armed knights could kill a hundred peasants. At Crecy the long bow of the English won against the flower of French knighthood but the day of the arrow was passing.

The principle of expanding gases was discovered. Gunpowder, confined in a steel barrel, destroyed chivalry. Galileo discovered the parabola and artillery benefited by its use and became a weapon of terrible devastation. Napoleon said that God was on the side that had the heaviest cannon. Now, man in large numbers engaged in warfare, killing and being killed in hordes at great distances.

For centuries books were few and owned by the priesthood or the very rich. Consequently, education was extremely limited and expensive. Gradually the book, written in exquisite penmanship, became a novelty, a real collector's item. It was replaced by the printed book, often of poor format but powerful in its propoganda appeal. The Chinese used movable type for printing as early as 150 A.D., but it was not until about 1440 A.D. that Lourens Janszoon Castor of Harrlem introduced modern printing into Europe. His methods were improved on by Johan Gutenberg of Mainz. Works varying from elephantine folios to small chap-books were printed in the language of the common people. They read the Gospels, one of the important causes of the Reformation. Payne wrote "Rights of the Common Man" and when this was published by the thousands in cheap editions and read by the colonists it became a vital factor in the winning of the American Revolution.

Watts watched a boiling tea-kettle, and from his dreaming, man learned to harness steam. The canal boat, stage coach, and Yankee Clipper were rapidly replaced by the steam engine and steam propelled ship. Stationary engines made thousands of industrial laborers paupers. Cottage industry was replaced by the factory. When gasoline and fuel-oil entered into competition with steam, men's brains gave their muscles a vacation. A few men with multi-

ple ploughs and combines did the work of thirty horses and a hundred men in the western wheat fields. Huge scoop-dredges cleared harbors, built canals, and dams and did things that man's muscle power could not accomplish in the same time or with as great ease.

The automobile lessened time and distance. The airplane made the automobile look like the covered wagon. Distance was conquered; time was almost annihilated; men are now travelling in the air at a speed faster than sound.

Franklin brought electricity to earth with a key and a kite. Morse confined it to wire and invented the telegraph. Soon spoken words replaced code and man talked over wire. Edison dreamed of, and then invented, the phonograph. Pictures were imprisoned on celluloid and the human race had a new amusement in the cinema. When the sound track was added the illiterate, adenoid moron could understand the picture even if he could not read. All he had to do was to see and hear.

Then came the universal use of the radio. The day of the town crier and the Pony Express changed into the hectic never ending flow of commentators, singing commercials, and Murder Incorporated. The Masked Rider and the Fat Man took over the work of the dime novel.

Electricity invaded the home with new stoves, refrigerators, deep freezing units and air conditioners. Life, for the house wife, became a series of pushbuttons. The tin can and the can opener made old fashioned cooking obsolete. The electric washing machine, sewing machine and vacuum cleaner gave the average woman more time to listen to the melodrama of the soap opera.

Para first applied the ligature; Harvey divined the correct circulation of the blood; Morton developed anaesthesia; Lister, anticepsis. Oliver Wendal Holmes discovered the cause of the large maternal death in childbirth. Modern surgery became a reality instead of a dream. Typhoid, tetanus, diptheria, all were conquered. A Canadian, Dr. Frederick Banting, discovered insulin and gave it freely to a world where diabetes meant early death. Blood transfusions saved many lives. Bottled blood became of the greatest value on the battle field. Mothers and babies were

kept from death by modern obstetrics and the Caesarian operation. The span of life expectancy rose from forty years to sixty seven years.

Because of science, life has become longer, easier and more comfortable since man left his tree nest and cave. Science is paradoxical in its action on the human race. First Man was the master, then an equal, and now it is evident that he has become a slave to the machine. For up to the present time man has invented no machine to enable him to live more happily and at peace with his fellow man.

Every scientific discovery proved to be a two-edged sword. It could be used to either benefit or destroy mankind. The airplane is used to dust vast forests, cotton fields, and other grain fields, but its greatest use has been to dust death. Mussolini's son, laughing, dropped a bomb on hundreds of Ethiopians. He said that when it burst the blood looked like a beautiful rose. Humanity saw more of that in World War II; not just one but large fields of such roses.

Explosives can harvest wheat, haul trains of food, save millions of men fatiguing labor; but it can also hurl projectiles across a sea and destroy six hundred thousand homes in London. Gasoline can take a family on a picnic, but it can also rush armies across Europe or the Pacific in huge transport planes. Atomic energy can provide unlimited industrial power but just one bomb killed one hundred and sixty thousand Japanese. In the next war it might wipe out cities like London, Paris, and New York before anyone living there could see or hear the descending death bomb.

A furnace makes steel for farm machinery, but in Germany the scientists built furnaces capable of burning sixteen thousand people every hour after their clothing, gold teeth and tattooed skins were removed.

Medicine and surgery have saved the lives of millions, but in World War II we saw these sciences prostituted in Germany by experimentations of the utmost depravity. Not so long ago we sent thousands of our young men to study science in Germany. We revered Germans such as Goethe, Mendelssohn, Frederick Jacobi philosopher and sociologist, Karl Jacobi mathematician

and scientist, Wasserman and Erlich and Freud, all great physicians. But the great German scientists, following the teachings of the syphilitic Nietzsche, used their science to turn Europe into a Hell far more terrible than Dante or Lovecraft ever conceived.

Unless man conquers science and makes it a servant for good instead of a master for evil, mankind will be destroyed. Add to atomic war, death from scattered germs, poison gas and guided missiles, and a future war can be prophesied that will leave only a few survivors again living in caves.

What has this to do with a Science-Fiction Society?

The Answer is simply this:

The writers dream; the inventors make these dreams come true through the application of old scientific facts or the discovery of new scientific principles. Examples of this are Verne's "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea" in which the modern submarine was dreamed of, and Phil Nowlan and his Buck Roger's interplanetary torpedo-shaped plane, the basis of several war-born planes. The dreams of the science-fiction writers are published by the editors who cater to the science-fiction readers.

What is being written for the fans to read?

New methods of war; novel instruments of destruction; inventions by which inferior races can be destroyed by superior ones. Even the comic strip which has a large following in fandom (see OC TNFF) gives fine lessons in gangster warfare and murder incorporated. Such is the pabulum

on which the adolescent mind is fed. The writers may not realize it, but even in their most fantastic stories they may tell of a machine which the mechanical inventor will perfect for the future destruction of the human race.

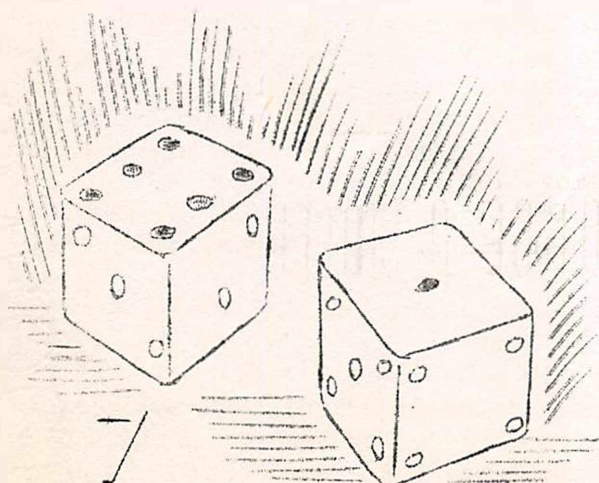
The science-fiction story should continue to be written, but the writer should tell of inventions beneficial to man, dreams of the future in which society is happier, life more comfortable, old age more satisfactory. Their scientific prophecies should benefit instead of harming our race. Such stories are possible, but as long as the editors refuse to print them the commercial writer will not write them and the non-commercial reader can not have them printed.

Science-fiction literature is molding a new generation.

Will the future bring new wars and further crucifixion of humanity on the cross of science, or will it bring peace, tolerance, happy living and world-wide sympathetic understanding between nations? The time has passed when the science-fiction story can be considered simply a form of anaesthetic pastime. If used properly it can become a powerful means of bringing peace on earth, good will toward man.

This may be the voice of one crying in the wilderness, but if enough voices cry, then something will be accomplished. It may be a beginning to change science from a Frankenstein into a beneficent giant laboring for the welfare of the human race.

That would be worthwhile.



7 LUCKY
NUMBER 7
LUCKY



THE
PROBLEMS
OF
INTERPLANETARY
COMMUNICATIONS

GEORGE O. SMITH

Some time ago the subject of interplanetary communications as a topic for a talk was suggested to me and I dismissed the idea with a mere wave of the hand. Why, I argued, talk about a problem that has already been answered? Frankly, I know right now that if the need arose today, I could design a system that would communicate at will with any of the planets, so therefore, why bother to ruminate the problems.

The answer to these arguments were twofold.

First was the usual answer, that George O. Smith would far rather face a firing squad than give a talk — and therefore why not let Toronto know just how brave a man you are by doing just that.

Second was a bit more to the point.

How do I know that all the questions about interplanetary communications have been already answered, and if they have, there are a hell of a lot of people who know little about the problem. Ergo, why not let them know how these surmountable obstacles could be surmounted by the brilliant engineer.

I asked who was the brilliant engineer and from the back row someone yelled Don Channing.

Now, frankly, the problem of communicating with the other planets is not truly solved; there remains one large problem. This is a problem so vital that I am going to use up some time by approaching the point like the proverbial master of ceremonies — which is to embroider all around the edges until everybody knows all of the possible approaches and the reasons how and why.

Any means of communication — to reduce it to its fundamentals — consists of two active factors. These two factors are a sender and a receiver, to use simple terms, or respectively a generator and a detector. In simple communications, the vocal cords are the generator of the communicating device and the auditory nerves are the detecting device.

In the telegraph system, a key interrupts an electric current, which interruptions are measured in length and announced by a sounding relay. The telephone accepts the various densities of air pressure caused by sound and produces a varying electrical current proportional to

these air densities; the receiver re-converts the currents back into air-densities.

Heliograph and blinker-lights can all be placed in the same category, and the radio follows right along. The only difference between two men yelling across the street at one another is the medium employed and the means used to convey the information.

The distance across which communications can be maintained is a function of two inter-related things. As a man with a loud voice can be heard at a greater distance, so can a radio transmitter hurl its message farther when its output of power is greater.

Secondly, a man with more sensitive ears or a radio with more sensitivity can receive any given signal from a greater distance.

These two factors are a flat statement of fact. They are empirical, academic intrinsically honest and as close to the self-evident truth as any that I have encountered. As Adolph used to yell, "This is not basic, it is fundamental!"

On earth, however, there are disturbing factors that interfere with the simple statement of fact. On the very short waves employed by the television and frequency-modulated services, there is what is known as 'Horizon Effect' which causes these very short waves to travel only in straight lines as light does — so that beyond a distance dictated by a formula including the curvature of the earth and the height of the antenna above ground, the transmitter can not be heard excepting during freak conditions that have no place in this discussion at present but which I'll take a moment to explain after this talk if anybody is interested. On longer waves there is a 'Skip Distance' wherein the radio waves are reflected from ionized layers of atmosphere far above the earth. These waves bounce back to the earth at a considerable distance, and often a station a hundred miles from the transmitter can not be heard while the transmitter is talking quite affably to a fellow radio operator in New Zealand. These ionizing layers are well known and charted, and there are graphs and figures that will permit the technician to predict with alarming accuracy just what his chances are of covering half the earth at such and

such a frequency at such and such a time of the day at what part of the year.

Radio engineers are all a bit whacky, I must admit, and this includes the amateur radio fan. I used to know a fellow in Chicago who went to bed at five or six o'clock every evening so that he could arise about three o'clock ayem because the skip was right at that time to talk and maintain a daily schedule with an old schoolboy chum in Australia. Now I've been up as late as three ayem but seldom that early and one night I was with this character and listened to the schedule. About five o'clock when dawn was beginning to break, the ionized layer changed its shape due to the solar activity and the angle of reflection changed — and Mr. Australia was as dead and gone as Aunt Mary's cat when the cat decided to chew on the high voltage lead.

Broadcast frequencies do not act like this, but instead, their character is such that they tend to stick to the ground, modulating the earth surface itself in many cases, so that the broadcast stations can surpass the horizon effect but seldom enjoy the ultra distances found in the so-called short wave reception.

Now, the reason why radio waves shorter than a few meters in length do not reflect from the heaviside layers is because they penetrate. And once out in space, where there is neither earth to cause refraction nor ionized layers to cause reflection, the power of a radio wave is a dictating factor in the distance of transmission.

The development of higher and higher power in radio transmitting equipment is a rather long story that covers almost a hundred years, believe it or not. Heinrich Hertz made his first experiments with a crude apparatus consisting of a loop of wire and a spark gap. With this gear he was able to transmit across the space of a few yards, a radio wave. This is interesting but eminently impractical, and it served only to demonstrate the principles suggested by Maxwell. The receiver Hertz used was far less sensitive by comparison than his transmitter. He took a similar loop of wire of the same size and in place of the spark gap he left a tiny opening which, when the transmitter was sparked, took enough of the energy from the trans-

mitter to cause a tiny spark to jump the gap in sympathy.

The first real successes in radio transmission employed no such true brute force methods, but means whereby far less energy was required to cause a response in the receiver.

Now I am not going to trace the rise of radio from Marconi to Fred Allen. DeForest invented the radio tube, and, from that moment on, the transmitters were designed to have greater power and the detectors required less energy to excite them. Radio, the wireless as some erudite peoples term it, evolved from an amazing collection of junk and wire to the present day furniture, and then went on to more specialized services as the necessary technologies were developed. Means and methods were invented and devised to handle the microwaves and wire became an almost unused number; the radio waves progressing down a chunk of rectangular guide that looks as though it would carry beer ad infinitum but not a radio wave or any other electrical circuit.

With the development of radar came the multiple cavity magnetron and the klystrons and other techniques for the generation of radio power. This plus the fact that microwaves are admirably suited for beam transmission places the radio transmitter in a fine position to hurl its intelligences out into interplanetary space. Only in a very few times during my engineering experience has a number of interlocking factors been mutually beneficial; but the ultra-short waves do penetrate the heaviside layer into outer space, and the ultra-short waves are also well suited for beam transmissions, which means that you can pack your signal into the wanted area instead of spraying the entire universe with it.

Now the sensitivity of the receiving equipment has progressed to the point where the limiting factor is the noise generated in the equipment itself. The electrons passing through the wire, the electrons emitting from amplifier tube cathodes, create a random racket the level of which is difficult to keep low. I have seen the day ten years ago when packing a coil of wire in dry ice to lower the thermal agitation of the electrons in the wire itself lowered the noise in a radio set and made

a hitherto impossible signal useful.

So granting the available factors of transmitting and receiving equipment of practical power and sensitivity, let us get along to the problem remaining in hurling a message to Mars.

This, of course, would be in code of some sort. There is little sense in using speech when more than a minute must elapse between question and answer, rebuttal and rejoinder. Asking how the weather was on Mars might take a quarter hour, and the usual, "I'm Joe, who's this?" "I'm Pete, Joe, how's the golf game?", might take up a half hour. Now code might be the simple dot-dash system of the telegraph and commercial radio, or it might be the more complex code of the teletyper. In either case, the usable signal distances are greater for legibility than is the case with voice frequencies. This is due to the fact that voice frequencies require the ability of the medium to transmit audio frequencies covering the middle register of the human voice. Code signals require no such bandwidth, but only the ability to accept and use the single frequency emitted by the transmitter. Naturally, a wide door able to admit a hundred men at a time will also permit a large number of unwanted men to enter, if all you want is men exactly six feet tall, of the hundred entering you will have all sizes, the other sizes might be considered noise. If, on the other hand, you have a gauge of some sort with a single doorway, the odd-sizes will not be permitted to enter. Ergo, a narrow bandwidth prevents the entry of unwanted noise.

Now let us examine the necessary power levels and compare them with the available equipment.

I am indebted to Doctor Arthur C. Clark of the British Interplanetary society for the following figures.

First-off, to send a usable signal to a spacecraft operating in the region near the moon, a bit of high-powered calculation shows that the required power would be in the general neighborhood of sixteen watts. Enough power, ladies and gentlemen, to light a couple of christmas tree bulbs to full brilliancy. There is no use in worrying about that in this day of half-million watt transmitters and million watt magnetrons, for this sixteen watts is for voice transmission!

We'll wait awhile, until the space-

craft gets out a bit farther, remembering that radio waves are radiant energy and inclined to diminish as the inverse square of the distance. The ship goes in a long orbit to Mars and we find the time of transmission has increased from a matter of a couple of seconds to about five minutes, which makes speech impractical. We use telegraphic code which requires less power to a value of about one hundred to one.

The figures show that for a spacecraft operating near Mars, the necessary transmitting power must be at least 6,000 watts.

This is not peanuts but it is no great problem. 6,000 watts is six toasters or six electric flatirons worth of operating power, and radio stations considered first-class broadcast service, deliver a shade more than eight times that amount. Broadcast transmitters are limited by law but not by technology to 50,000 watts.

So we wait a while longer. The ship arrives at the orbit of Jupiter. At this point the time lag runs up to 35 minutes, and the necessary power for code transmissions amounts to forty thousand watts.

This begins to present a problem, but there is one redeeming feature. If we insist upon getting farther and farther away from home, we can build an antenna of larger dimensions so that the beam is less divergent. Increasing the size — area — of the reflecting area of the radiator by a factor of one hundred would reduce the necessary power by a similar amount, so that at Jupiter, with an antenna of about one thousand square meters, only 400 watts would be needed. This, of course, would present another problem, since the success of beam-transmission depends upon the ability to direct the beam accurately. Just exactly how to hang an antenna-array of that size on gymbals to be rotated would be a problem I'd gladly hand to a mechanical engineer with experience in the designing of telescope mountings. However, the smaller array would not be difficult.

And so, my friends, we return to the main problem of interplanetary communications. This question I can not answer. I don't see Willy Ley in the audience, and so I can not ask the man who might know just when we can expect a customer to listen to the other end of our very simple system of interplanetary communications.

Mike Fern and I arrived back at the hall just in time for me to make the introduction for Mr. Robert Bloch. Then we sat back to enjoy his speech. Bob has an ease of delivery that makes all his listeners relax and listen attentively to what he has to say.

The intermission gave many fans their first opportunity to look at the originals that we had managed to snare for the auction. Actually, there were fewer illustrations than at the Philcon, but as will be seen later, Inflation reared his ugly head.

The assembly, called back to order by the stirring tones of Beethoven's Fifth, listened eagerly to the messages from the publishers. Everybody had something of great interest to say to the fans gathered at Toronto. To cull a few highlights from their offerings, we start off by informing you that the New Collector's Group has now split into two sections. The first under Dave Kyle and associates, to be called the Gnome Press, will shortly publish "The Carnelian Cube" Pratt and deCamp's most recent novel. The second, headed by Paul O' Connor, will continue to publish under the name of the NCG, and, as far as is known, will present material of a nature similar to that of their first two books.

Paul Spencer of the NFFF gave us the word that the "Sign of the Burning Hart", after innumerable technical difficulties, is finally headed for the press and should be out in the very near future. He also pointed out that the organization was taking a terrific loss on the publication of the Keller book.

The other fan in the small publishing field, Sam Moskowitz, said that Avalon did not contemplate publishing any further material. He said, "Avalon was formed for the express purpose of bringing the best of Keller before the eyes of the American public. We have succeeded in our original intention and we are quite content."

The big publishers, Fantasy Press Shasta and Prime, announced very ambitious publishing schedules to the assemblage. After a little joking back and forth between Eshback and Korshak, it appears that both FP and Shasta have more copy from JW Campbell Jr. slated for future attention.

The latest word we have from Reading and Chicago is that both of them are

closing off their other business affairs so that they can put all their time and energies into the publishing game.

98 copies of the galley proofs of Theodore Sturgeon's "It", from the forthcoming Prime Press book "Without Sorcery", were bound into a thirty page booklet and presented to the fans by Jim Williams. This is sure to become a collector's item.

The afternoon session was cut to the absolute minimum to allow the fans time to get out and see the town. Al Betts made a very good suggestion when he offered his liquor permit book to any Yanks who wanted to stock up on Dutch Courage for the long, dry week-end. Several other Canadians made like offers and everybody seemed well satisfied with this arrangement.

I closed off by asking if there were any questions they wanted to ask about Toronto or local customs. Although there was some murmuring, the Canucks in the audience managed to straighten out all pleas so the session was adjourned without further ado.

It seems to me that Saturday evening we ended up in the Savarin with Tucker, Mari, Bloch, Les Tina, Judy Merril, Sam Bowne, Havelin, Millard, Kyle, Fern, Counté and mayhaps more. We chattered long and hard while sipping tall cool ones and then moved on to Letros for one of their excellent steaks.

The evening session was opened with the presentation of the civilian North American Premiere of "Atomic Physics", a British Instructional Film. Although in parts it was highly technical, about 50% of the audience sat through the whole picture and appeared to be intensely interested. The scientific theme of the night was carried on by George O. Smith, when he discussed the Problems of Interplanetary Communication. His speech is reproduced on pages 23-25. Although the talk was fairly short, the part of the program devoted to the scientific talents of George O., was not. The finish of his talk was the signal for a barrage of questions, most of which seemed to be of the intelligent variety.

We were finally forced to call it quits, but when he left the hall, George was still surrounded by gesticulating questioners.

((More on page 38.))

E X C L U S I V E

5 October 1948

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that The House of York
of 1398 Mt. Pleasant Rd. in Toronto, Canada
is appointed sole Canadian representative for
all fantasy books published, or to be published
by Shasta Publishers now located at 5525 South
Blackstone, in Chicago, Illinois.

This arrangement is to remain in force until
such time as either party wishes to terminate
this arrangement, at which time it is to be
done, in writing, to the other party.

(signed)

Melvin Korshak
Melvin Korshak for ~~Shasta Publishers~~

(signed)

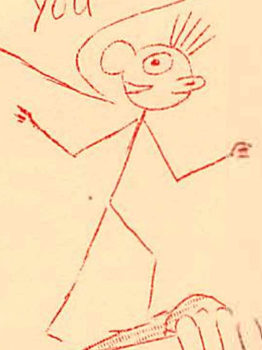
Joseph W. Taylor
Joseph W. Taylor for House of York

E X C L U S I V E

BROTHER!
WHAT I
DON'T KNOW
ABOUT
YOU



AND BROTHER
WHAT
MARI BETH
DOESN'T
KNOW ABOUT
YOU



RESULTS OF THE FIRST-

FAN SURVEY

WG

BASED ON 173 RETURNS FROM THE STATES
CANADA ENGLAND AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN...

As my opening statement for the defence, I'd like to say that there is absolutely no truth to the vile rumor that I'm a small time Dr. Kinsey. Perish the thought. There simply is no valid comparison, as you'll realize after you've read — really read — the Kinsey book. You'll find he asked hundreds of questions on a given subject and then made elaborate cross-checks to catch the modest liars. I asked only six questions pertaining to the same subject and, due to a mistake on my part, one of these was redundant. But that repeated question served a better purpose than I knew — I found a few modest liars, too. I enjoyed watching some fans giving contradictory answers when they came to that repeated query.

But time after time I've heard and read references to the Kinsey-Tucker report, and its so much wishful thinking on your part. If you can get a fan's sex history out of one of these, you have a sharper eye than I have, Gunga Din. I found many a note and snide crack written on the back of the survey — most of them requests to see the uncensored results. (More about that later.)

The first line asked about your age, your sex, and your marital status. Generally speaking, as you've probably seen by these charts, Joe Fann is between 17 and 27 years old. The really big grouping falls between those ages.

For several years now we've had a character among us who has been pleased to refer to himself as the Grand Old Man of Fandom — or, in short, "oh, foo." (Speak to EEE:) Happily operating under the delusion that he was fandom's oldest fan, he has been throwing his weight around and demanding priority for a number of years. By this time I suppose, he's seen the charts and met defeat.

(To EEE:) In the event you have not seen them, brace yourself Junior, you're in for a shock. The survey turned up three other fans who have you beaten by several moons. One of them, living in the Midwest, is 4 years older than you, but that isn't the ceiling. A retired school-teacher living on the east coast is 13 years older than you, but that still isn't the ceiling. I hate to bust up your dreams, Junior, but the Grand Old Man of Fandom is a southern gentleman of 70. And

incidentally, he is a fan, an active fan, in a small way. By that I mean that he belongs to clubs, buys fanzines and so forth. He's been known to buy old fanzines by the pound — he collects them.

Our youngest fan is 15. Several years ago I took a small postcard poll somewhat similar to this and the youngest fan turned out to be 14. I couldn't find the address of Mary Helen Washington — and my apologies to those of you who see nothing in that remark. Some years ago one of our southern fanzines sparkled with the soul-stirring stories of Mary Helen Washington. Her age was about 9 or 10.

The first line of the questionnaire was rather easy to fill out — I figured that even Ackerman could work through it without a hitch, and anyone who has been number one face for as long as he has can not be very bright. Well, how old are you? I got answers like: 19 and 3/4, 18 — will be 19 next May 6th, and from a girl: 24 — but if this wasn't anonymous you wouldn't get that one answered. Another woman said simply: ancient. That kind of coyness on the part of females pains me.

Now — the chart shows that about 89% of fans are male, and nearly 11% are female. But what the chart doesn't show is that actually, according to the survey sheets returned to me, actually there are four sexes in fandom. There are the usual males and females, and then there is one mail, M-A-I-L. Lastly, there is one YES.

Are you married: 34% are, and 67% of our single people want to be for some queer reason. Incidentally, of that 67% who wish to marry, 40% want to marry a fan. 40%, that's nearly half of this pie, and less than 10% of our female population are eligible and willing. Somebody's going to get trampled in the rush. But at the moment, 34% are married, 60% are single, and 6% are divorced.

Are you single: I had trouble here because several suspicious souls thought I was getting a little nosey. Not in their being single, but in what they did for recreation in the single state. Of the single fans, 77% date, and over 22% do not date. Six-tenths of one percent — one man — isn't sure whether he dates or not. He gave contradictory answers of such nature that I could only put him down as un-

THE AGE OF FANDOM

	1.8%			15
	1.2%			16
		4.2%		17
			6.0%	18
			7.2%	19
		4.2%		20
			8.4%	21
			6.0%	22
		3.6%		23
			6.6%	24
		3.0%		25
		3.6%		26
			8.4%	27
	2.4%			28
		4.2%		29
		4.2%		30
	2.4%			31
	2.4%			32
	1.8%			33
	.6%			34
	1.8%			35
		3.0%		36
	1.2%			37
		3.0%		38
	1.2%			39
		3.0%		40
	.6%			41
	.6%			42
	.6%			43
	1.8%			44
				45
				46
	1.2%			47
	.6%			48
				49
				50
				51
				52
				53
	1.2%			54
				55
				56
				57
	.6%			58
				59
				60
				61
				62
				63
				64
				65
				66
	.6%			67
				68
				69
	.6%			70

decided.

By and large, single fans date occasionally and play the field for all its worth. The regular dater is rare, and the man who keeps coming back to the same girl is rarer still. (One married fan reports that he also dates — but keep my big mouth shut.) Then comes the stuff that started my Kinsey reputation.

I asked people if they indulged in sex activity, and in the instructions at the top of the page, asked for a simple yes or no answer if they cared to answer at all. What did I get? All sorts of complaints and confessions. Here are some examples: (These were written in;) mild, damned little, huh?, decent, moderate amount of necking — and by the way, if this guy will check the definition of necking in the Kinsey book, he'll be a little surprised at what he just said — mind your own business, frustrated, secret, fifty percent, pleasant, not yet but hopeful, vigorous, do you want the truth?, regularly, great, very little, none damn it, whaddya care, you writing a book?, occasionally, when possible, good, some, none mostly, normal, pet — again see my previous remarks about checking the definition in Kinsey — usual, sometimes, Kinseyish, not at 70, and an asterisk. Checking the footnote at the bottom of the page to see what inspiring answer was in store for me, I found: what do you mean by that?

To sum up, 41% of the single fans answered yes in some fashion to the sex question. Later on, on the third page, a combination of married and single people chalked up a 73% yes vote.

To continue with the single fan: 14% keep company with members of the opposite sex who are fans or readers — and I believe every one of those 14% came from communities having clubs — although one young lady from a city with a large club told me she didn't discriminate against the outsider, she bestowed her favors on fans and non-fans alike. As already mentioned, 67% intend to marry and 40% want to marry a fan. Some of the reasons for wanting to marry a fan are worth quoting: we'll have more in common, she'll have less objection to my favorite hobby, I'll expect better harmony, mutual interests, it'll avoid trouble, I'll drive her crazy if she isn't, so I won't catch hell for reading stf, he would be more fun and understand me, to have a companion in my

insanity, I want sympathy, and, the missionary instinct.

On the other hand, here are some reasons for wanting to marry a girl who is not a fan, one who is a rank outsider: don't like radioactive food, there aren't any pretty fans, I want the pleasure of educating her, it would be a welcome change, so I can show off my intelligence, less likely to be neurotic. And of course there was the third course open to those who answered these questions; that of having no preference at all, the I-don't-care boys. My favorite I-don't-care boy came through with this reason for his not caring: "Completely immaterial; I'll marry for sex, money, or preferably a combination of both!"

I mentioned that 6% are divorced — that means now. An additional 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ % have been divorced but have remarried. Seven people are enjoying their second marriage, two have been married more than twice. Almost without exception the divorced people report they are having more fun now than while married, but half of them would like to be married again. One man reported a fannish reason for his divorce, another one said yes, he is definitely sour on women.

And that brings us to the FANZINE section.

Considering the great number of fanzines that are appearing all the time, surprisingly few people own publishing equipment. Something like 27% have a mimeo, 8% a hekto, and only 5% a press. It is more surprising to find that many presses and so very few printed fanzines. All of which brings us to an error I made in the survey — asking for the titles you have published. Almost everyone leaped to the conclusion that this was my secret method of obtaining your identity, of finding out your name and skeletons in the closet. I realized that when the first returns came in, and at the same time realized my mistake.

What I had wanted to do was to find the total number of fanzines that had ever been published — since way back when. They must run near a thousand in number. I soon saw I was going about it wrong — I should have asked for the number of titles you pubbed, not the names of them; and in addition I would have had to get a full reply from all of the 500 fans who received the survey. That was expecting the impos-

sible — did I mention that at the time I drew up the charts, 173 had come back? So the fanzines published query had to be written off as a failure, although the 173 people who replied reported a total of 204 different titles.

Everyone wants to get into the act: almost 63% of fandom writes or illustrates for the fanzines. But they are ruggedly divided on the worth of the publications. Of every hundred fans, 48 think fanzines are good, 32 think they are poor, 6 think them trashy. The rest have no opinion. In addition, of that hundred, 1½ want to ban them, 25 think that there are too blamed many, and 25 believe there are not enough of the little gems.

And still the flood continues: 23% intend to publish one in the near future, and 12% of these hopefuls expect to reap a profit on their brainchild. I want to see that. If memory serves, only three or four publications in all fan history made money.

Next question: What is the best fanzine? That was a laugh. So many shy, modest fans named their own brainchild, or named the one they have a personal or financial interest in, it was virtually impossible to find an honest answer to which

However, the following five, in given order, polled the largest number of votes among those fan who didn't name their own: Gorgon, Fantasy Commentator, Fantasy Advertiser, British Fantasy Review and Dream Quest.

The Philadelphia mob out there is probably sitting around with their mouths open, waiting for me to mention their club magazine, Variant. They saw to it that it got a good vote. I've got a surprise for them, too. First, though, let me explain how some of the survey sheets were mailed out: to each of the four big clubs, the Portland, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Newark organizations, I sent a package of 30 or 40 questionnaires. Each package was sent to some one man in that club who could be relied upon to distribute them. Two of the clubs, L.A. and Philly, mailed theirs back in a package after completing them almost at once.

Now apparently this is what happened in Philly, verified: Milton Rothman passed out the sheets at a meeting and some bright boy in the crowd asked: "What's this?"

Rothman must have explained that Tucker was taking a survey and please fill it out right away. So then the bright boy cracked a wide grin and probably said: "Come on gang, let's have fun!" They did. The result was that fully one-third of the surveys returned from Philly had to be thrown out. They were so hopelessly useless, so completely without value to me, that I couldn't use anything in them. I discarded them along with a few others from elsewhere that were no good.

Now: the Philly club organ is named Variant, and almost without exception the Philly membership named Variant as the best fanzine. Also, and almost without exception, they named Le Zombie as the worst.

Well, the Philly lads and lassies will be very happy to know this: outside of themselves, no one named Variant as the best fmz, and no one picked LeZ as the worst. BUT: elsewhere across the nation, 3 people chose Variant as the worst, and, 2 chose LeZ as the best. So yahhh.

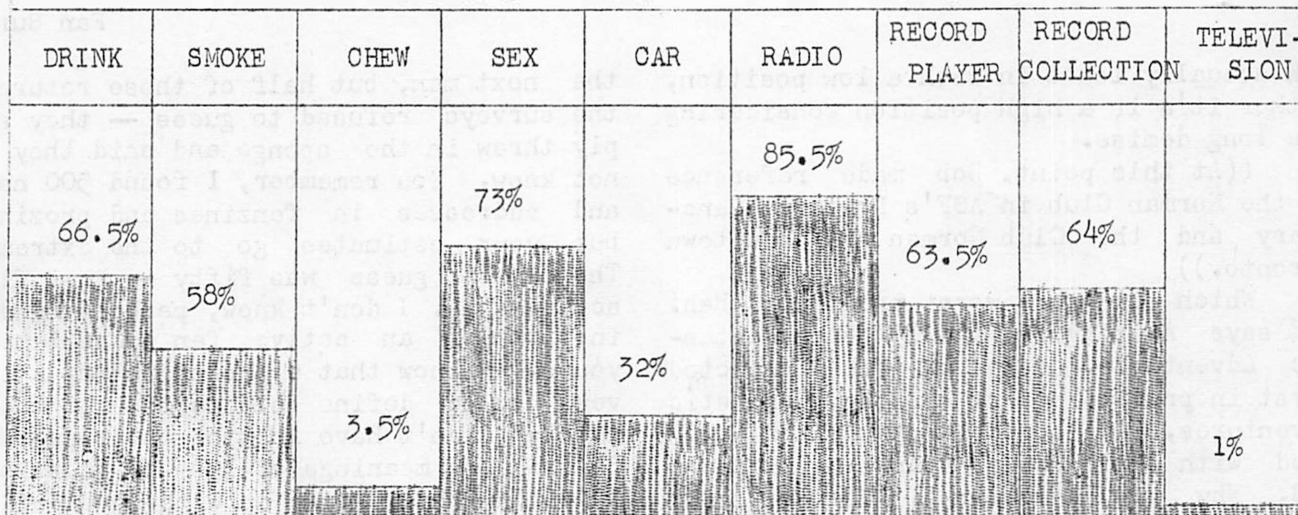
As to the worst fanzine, that too is impossible to determine. Too many fans picked too many individual fanzines as the worst to be able to get an accurate vote. The only one which showed any signs of being universally disliked was something called L'Oxygen — 6% of fandom named that one offender.

As to sending your fanzine to a professional mag for review, in the words of many who replied: "Why not?" Three-fourths of you said sure, why not? 5% said no, definitely, and another 5% said yes, but not to the Z-D magazines. And by the way, 10% of the fans — a rather startling figure — get no fanzines at all and some have never seen the critter.

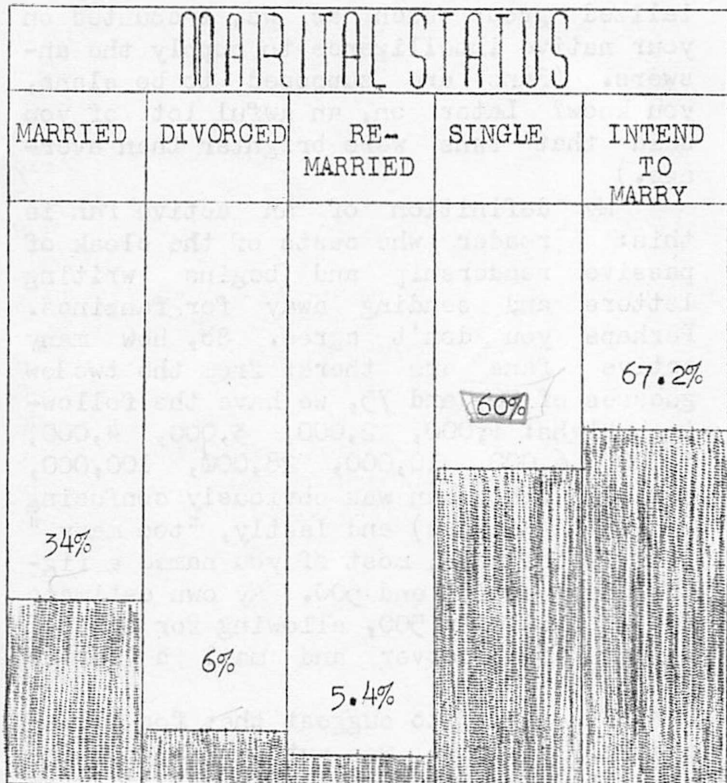
PROZINES:

I imagine that most of you expected these results, because the same magazine has been winning this poll year after year. Astounding polled 70% of the votes for favorite, and 46% think Amazing is the worst. The line-up of the entire field goes like this, in order of popularity: Astounding, Fantastic Novels, Weird Tales, Famous Fantastic Mysteries, Amazing Stories, Startling Stories, Thrilling Wonder Stories, Fantastic Adventures, Unknown Worlds, Avon Fantasy Reader and Planet Stories. I think you should realize that

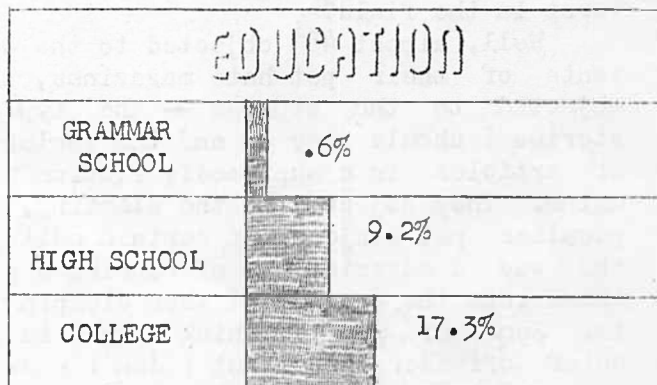
HABITS AND POSSESSIONS



MARITAL STATUS

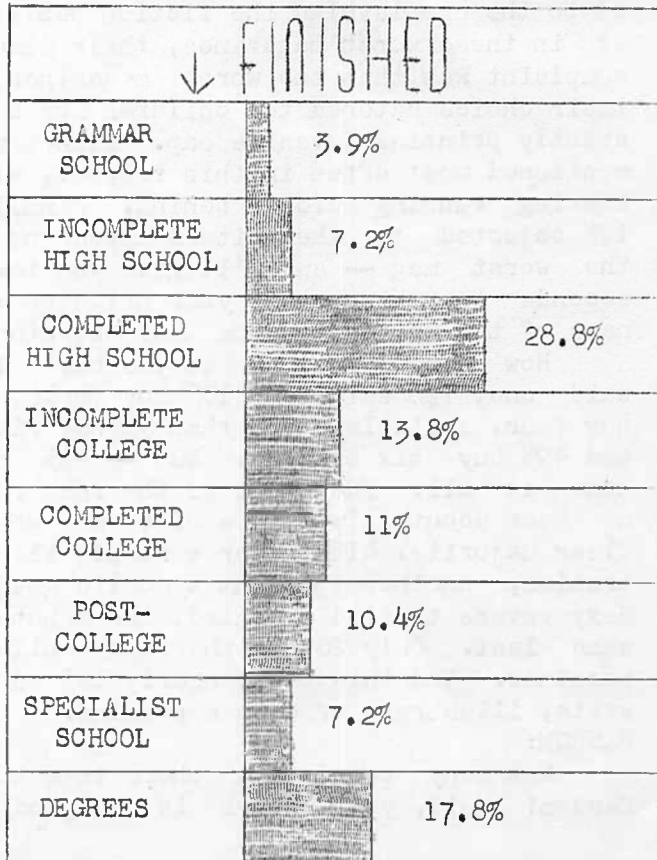


EDUCATION

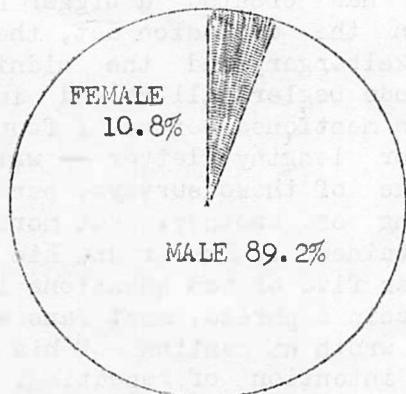


NOW ATTENDING

↓ FINISHED



SEX



UNK actually isn't in such a low position, rather it's in a high position considering its long demise.

((At this point, Bob made reference to the Norman Club in ASF's Dreadful Sanctuary and the Club Norman in downtown Toronto.))

Which is the worst prozine? Hah! 46% says Amazing is, and 15% says Fantastic Adventures. Here are the selected worst in precise order: Amazing, Fantastic Adventures, Planet, Weird, aSF, and then tied with equal votes: Startling, FFM and TWS. Why are they worst. What was your reason for voting these magazines the worst in the field?

Well, almost 48% objected to the contents of their pet-hate magazines, they objected to the stories — the type of stories I should say — and the inclusion of articles in a supposedly fiction magazine. They objected to the slanting, the peculiar pet subjects of certain editors, the way a magazine has of running a good theme into the ground and then stomping on it. Some of you may think Palmer is the chief offender here, but I don't know, I get awful mad at Campbell when he climbs up on a particular horse and rides it for three or four issues running. 13% objected to the age level of the fiction published in these worst magazines, their common complaint was that the worst magazines of their choice catered to children by constantly printing juvenile pap. Planet was mentioned most often in this respect, with Amazing running close behind. Finally, 12% objected to the writers appearing in the worst mag — and I'll give you three seconds to whisper to your neighbor the name of the writer to whom they objected.

How many prozines do you buy? 11% said one, 7½% said two, 10% buy three, 6% buy four, a little more than 9% buy five, and 49% buy six or more. But — 4½% buy none at all. They must be the fake fans we hear about. Two types of covers won a clear majority: 41% prefer a simple illustration, another 35% want symbolic covers. Sexy covers trailed in third, the monsters came last. Only 26% of the fans collect prozines. And this year, nearly 10% of us write, illustrate or edit a prozine.

FANDOM:

How many people are there in active fandom? Well, your guess is as good as

the next man, but half of those returning the surveys refused to guess — they simply threw in the sponge and said they did not know. You remember, I found 500 names and addresses in fanzines and prozines, but your estimates go to the extremes. The lowest guess was fifty — just fifty active fans. I don't know, perhaps my definition of an active fan doesn't match yours. I know that a person taking a survey should define his terms, but I certainly didn't have room on three pages to define the meanings of 140-odd questions. I would have wound up with more definitions than questions, and in a small, specialized group such as we, I counted on your native intelligence to supply the answers. (Fans are supposed to be slans, you know? Later on, an awful lot of you said that fans were brighter than average.)

My definition of an active fan is this: A reader who casts off the cloak of passive readership and begins writing letters and sending away for fanzines. Perhaps you don't agree. So, how many active fans are there: from the two low guesses of 50, and 75, we have the following highs: 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000, 5,000, 6,000, 10,000, 28,000, 100,000, 500,000, (this man was obviously confusing fans with readers) and lastly, "too many."

In the main, most of you named a figure between 250 and 500. My own estimate is a bit over 500, allowing for those I failed to discover and mail a survey sheet.

I'd like to suggest that for illustrative purposes, we put our fan population at about 500, until evidence decrees otherwise.

Now we come to that man of distinction, Richard S. Shaver. Undoubtedly that man has created a bigger fuss in fandom than the exclusion act, the telegram to Dunkelberger, and the midnight ride of Claude Degler all rolled into one. As I've mentioned before, I found many a note — or lengthy letter — written on the backs of these surveys, pertaining to one thing or another. But more of the notes pertained to Shaver and his work than any other five or ten questions in the survey. To coin a phrase, most fans wax exceedingly wroth at mention of his name. I have no intention of repeating, now or later,

any of the quotes concerning him.

Have you taken a stand on the Shaver affair? 15% of the fans are all for him — 5% believe his tales to be the literal truth and another 10% are on his side but wish to voice no opinion on whether the series is fiction or truth. An additional 6½% are dreadfully confused — their answers were contradictory and made no sense whatever. Either they didn't know what I was talking about, or they don't know what Shaver is talking about, but they believe it anyway.

Does fandom have a purpose? 69% said yes.

What is that purpose? The most common answer given was something along these lines: to allow people with mutual interests to become better acquainted, and: enjoyment of a common hobby. But I want to quote the uncommon answers — they're more fun. For example: to improve prozines by criticism and get nowhere, to educate youth into the right thinking channels, sex sublimation, to give the world a better future, getting better stories, to trade magazines and ideas, to get an idea of what the future will be, to enable us to congregate, to keep FJA from working, to make some of us mortals attempt to explore the unknown, to air sickly egos, damned nonsense, to furnish fans with a little world of their own, to sell books; to prove these can happen: life on the planets, peace, a war that could destroy earth; a mating place of lost souls, a roundup of certain types of neurotics, mutual appreciation society, no foundation all the way down the line, to spread knowledge, to improve the condition of the world, to allow a lot of little men a chance to become important, to enjoy discussion with other nuts, sheer egoboo, to engage in stupid, moronic feuds, gives me — at least — an interest in just living, and finally — and this is my favorite — to gather together as many juvenile delinquents as possible to heckle the few remaining intelligent fans.

Some of the following items, in brief: 69½% belong to a fan club, and 39% of them have held an office at one time or another. Only 34% attend meetings regularly, and 8% does not believe their club is worthwhile, although 18% could make it over better. 21% says that fandom bores them. As pre-

viciously mentioned, 54% think that fans are brighter than the average man, but 6% think we are morons. ((Here, Bob has a pencilled note to mention the price of \$70 paid for the Finlay cover. There is a connection?)) Most fans have from one to ten correspondents, although five people registered 100 or more, but qualified that answer by saying that most of them were business connections, not bona fide social correspondents.

The next and final chapter is labeled YOU:

Do you drink: 66½% said yes, but here again as elsewhere in the survey where a flat answer was called for, I found many a quibbling note, designed to make me believe the fan answering yes wasn't quite as black a sinner as a yes-answer painted him. Frankly, I can't see why anyone should go on the defensive when someone asks him if he drinks. Perhaps the WCTU and church propoganda have taken a better hold on the country than is imagined. In answering that question there were a lot of "Yes — buts." But just now and then, but just occasionally, a little beer once in awhile, and not very often.

Do you smoke: only 58% smoke, which was surprising to me. I thought there would be a greater number of smokers than drinkers. Chew? Disregarding all the funny boys who admitted to chewing gum, and chewing their food before swallowing: 3½% chew tobacco. And as previously mentioned, the total number who enjoy sex activities is 73%. 32% own a car, 85½% own a radio. 63½% own a record player but in many cases it is combined with the radio and previously recorded. 64% own a record collection — the reason this figure is greater than the number owning record players is that several young fans have record collections of their own, but use the family radio and player. And finally, 1% have television sets — east coast of course.

What with the rapidly expanding television networks, there should be an increase in that figure next year.

Hobbies and occupations. Well — there just isn't time and space to go into all of them here — 65 different hobbies were reported, and 57 different occupations. However, the most popular hobby was sports, with photography and writing

FAVORITE PRO

Astounding	70%
Fantastic Novels	6.9%
Weird Tales	5.8%
Famous Fantastic Mysteries	5.8%
All others	1.5%

DISLIKED PRO

Amazing Stories	46%
Fantastic Adventures	15.6%
Planet Stories	6.9%
Weird Tales	6.6%
All others	24.9%

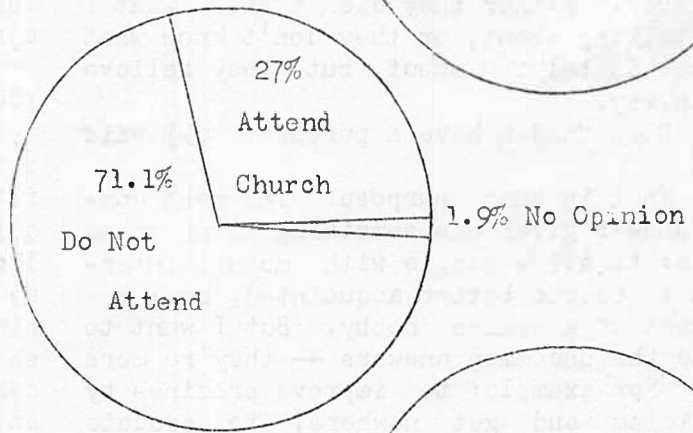
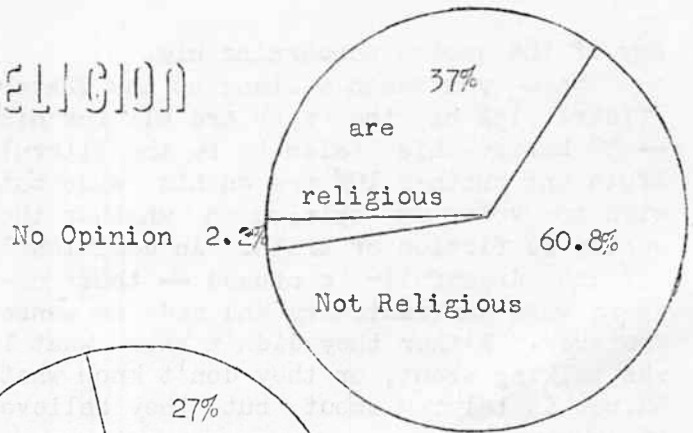
REASONS

Objection To Writers	12.2%
Objection To Content	47.9%
Objection To Juvenility	13.3%
Objection To Others	26.6%

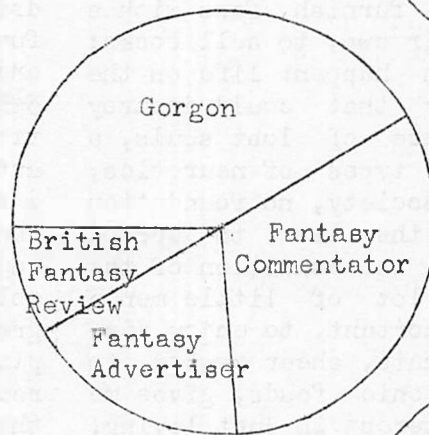
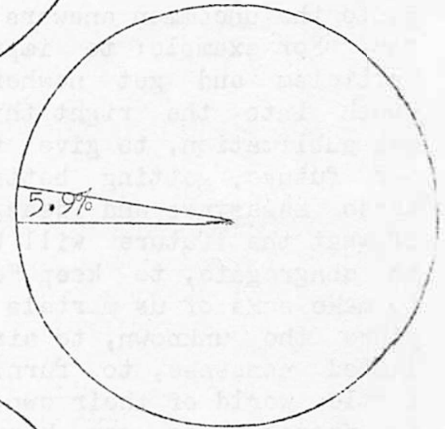
PROZINE BUYING

Buys One	11%
Buys Two	7.5%
Buys Three	10.4%
Buys Four	6%
Buys Five	9.2%
Buys Six or More	49.2%
Buys None	4.7%
Collects	26%

RELIGION

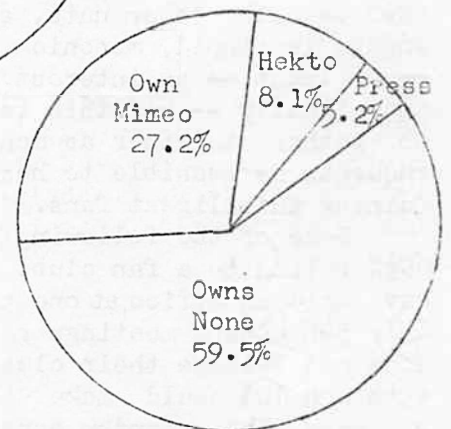


Not Religious
But Does
Attend Church



FAVORITE

FMZ



EQUIPMENT

close behind. Among occupations, fandom numbers: a lawyer, a doctor, advertising men, a movie actor, news reporters, several engineers, and so forth. You'll have an opportunity to check up on these in print, as I'll explain in a few moments.

((Tacked on to the end of his script, Bob had the following note: "Add on screwy answers." By this I assume he meant the following additions to the occupation and hobby class: a male street-walker, a girl wrestler, a Swedish masseur, and a girl who collects guns.))

Do you allow fans to visit your home: only $6\frac{1}{2}\%$ said no. Shouted it, rather. Do you own a library? Nearly 85% do, but the number of books in that library varies so widely that no average can be drawn. For instance, $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ own less than 25 books, 18% own up to 500 books, and another $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ have more than 2000 volumes. This too will have to wait for publication, as well as the next question, how many books do you read per year?

Concerning that query, an estimate was all that was needed. If you have a habit of reading one book a week, you can safely say fifty a year, and so on. But you'd be surprised at the snide remarks I received from people who wanted to know if I kept track of every book I read last year. Fans are brighter than average — hah! The lowest figures, though, were from one to ten books a year, and the highest, registered by three different people, was 300 to 400 per year. The lawyer I just mentioned, for instance, reads one a day.

Astronomy was the leading contender for the question, which particular science interests you? Following that were psychology, and physics, and then biology and chemistry.

Looking for a calamity? The question was: are you optimistic about the future? 55% are not. They expect any and all kinds of wars, and/or depression, collapse of civilization, a chain-reaction explosion of universal dimensions, an explosion

of the sun, the coming of Fascism, and (quote) "Something, but not war." 49% thought a few lucky ones would escape whatever doom struck us. How they believed that in connection with an explosion of the sun, for instance, I can't imagine. Maybe they've made their reservations in the dero caves.

Will there be a moon rocket soon? Yes indeed, nearly 90% chalk up a vigorous yes in that score. (My own private guess is that the army will get a robot rocket there within a year or so. The latest report I've read said that the White Sands army group had sent one up — what was it, 75 miles?) Most of you believe the rocket will reach the moon in from one to ten years — and, 45% are ready and willing to go, providing it's a passenger rocket. Of that 45% hardy percent, 30% think they'll live to come back.

Now we come to those gadgets, the flying saucers. (By the way, Astounding had a nice story concerning them in the July issue. "Police Operation" I think it was called.) What are they? Well, 27% believe them to be man-made objects, 16% think they are messengers from another planet, and more than 37% say your imagination is working overtime — they are hallucinations or else natural phenomena. Among those who believe them man-made, and possibly weapons of war at that, the majority think they are of US manufacture and a small group think they are Russian. One man told me confidentially they are Lemurian.

Your religion and education.

The charts give a pretty good picture of these questions. 37% are religious, nearly 61% are not, and 2.2% declined to give an answer. 27% attend church, 71% do not, and 1.9% , no answer. Most interesting is the 5.9% who say they are not religious but do attend church.

((Elsewhere in the TR you will find Bob's publication plans for the complete results of his poll.))

'49

CONVENTION COMMITTEE

'49

I don't know how everybody spent that first night, but I can give you a fairly good idea of what happened to me and the people in my immediate vicinity. This is perhaps as good a place as any to point out that although this chit-chat is a reasonably official report of the program, it is necessarily colored by my personal views and experiences during the convention.

About thirty people gathered in the beverage room at the King Edward and spent over two hours talking and discussing the first day's program. The majority of fans seemed to be quite surprised at the large turnout. The only note of disappointment was sounded when someone mentioned the apparent dearth of pros.

Along about one o'clock, Jim Williams, Fred Hurter, Chan Davis and I wandered up to Jim's room and spent several very enjoyable hours playing bridge (for the usual tenth.) All three of these immigrants play very good bridge — we might be playing yet, but Milt Rothman, with whom Jim was sharing the room, came up to go to bed along about three and we were forced to clear out.

And so to bed. It was a very busy and extremely enjoyable day for my whole family. Speaking about the family, I would like to publicly thank all the McKeowns, and my mother in particular, for the way in which they handled the situation when I wasn't home. My Mother answered 117 calls on Friday while I was at work. Not content with that, some fans decided that five in the morning was a good time to call for information. But all in all, they seem to have stood the gaff quite well and they claim they enjoyed every minute of the Con.

I don't remember how I got down to the hall on Sunday, but I'm fairly sure that somebody came and called for me. Thanks to some kind person!

The auction got started under the very capable gavel of Earl Korshak. That boy doesn't stop until he has wrung the top bid from the audience, and he was certainly in top fettle on that Sunday.

The average price paid for the illustrations was slightly higher than that paid at Philly in '47. The one big change this year was the complete absence of big dealers from the auction scene. Dr. Bar-

rett was the only fan to buy more than six articles, and not by any stretch of the imagination can he be called a dealer.

Several very excellent Cartier's went for as low as four to five dollars and there were many fine Donnell's for from two to six dollars.

The only prices that really showed the influence of higher prices in the outside world, were those paid by Harry B. Moore for the Finlays. The majority of fans will remember the way he and Alfred C. Prime forced the Finlay cover, from the FFM containing the "Devil's Spoon", up to the point where Harry got it for \$70, the highest price ever paid for a single item at a fan auction, but how many fans realize that he also bought all the other Finlays that were offered for sale?

In the middle of the auction various firms and individuals began to offer us material for sale. To mention just a few: thanks to Dr. Keller for his copy of the rare French edition of "La Guerre du Lierre" (The Ivy War); to Russell Swanson for his two fine astronomical paintings; to Fantasy Press and Lloyd Eshback for the hand-assembled copy of "Sinister Barrier"; to Shasta and Earl Korshak for a copy of the "Checklist"; ((It was amusing to note that no matter how hard he tried, Earl was unable to run this up to the retail value. Of course the crowd was just kidding, but he finally let it go for \$5.75)) to Morton Montgomery for a copy of "The Face"; to Mike Fern for his copy of a letter from RSS that drew down 15¢; again to Shasta and Earl Korshak for the manuscripts from (These were bought by John Millard and are now on loan to our mss library where they join "Slan", "The World of A" and others) to the MSFS who donated a copy of "Millenium"; and to any others that I have forgotten. Every little bit helped to make the auction the biggest ever!

And so on to Sunday evening and Bob Tucker. I'm afraid I can't make much small talk about Bob's speech. It is reprinted on pages 25-37 and it speaks for itself. Just let it go at, "It was a scream .. and so educational." The chairman spent the entire time on the platform holding Bob's charts for him. The chit-chat back and forth between us evoked much laughter.

((Shuffle off to page 56))

The Characters

In the order of their appearance.

Announcer: James A. Williams

Gaylord Greenberg: Milt Rothman

Portia: Josie Benderavage

Music arranged and conducted by Milton A. Rothman of the Philadelphia Symphony For Schmoes.

The script was adapted from an original short story written by Mozart Hemline for the Tuesday Morning Toothpick and was specially rewritten by Milty for presentation at this time.

Announcer: Robert's Rhythmic Robots presents: Life Can Be Horrible.

Quartet: (To tune of Onward Christian Soldiers.)

We are rhythmic robots,
Marching on to serve,
Listen to our program
If you have the nerve.

Announcer: Do you have a rhythmic robot in your home? If not, why not? Robert's Rhythmic Robots are geared for thousands of uses around the home. Their hyperelectronic brains make them indispensable for cleaning house, washing dishes and acting as a fourth at bridge. Hear what Sadie McSnuffle has to say about her robot.

Sadie McSnuffle: Before I got my robot I used to lose all my bridge games. Now that I use Tyrone — that's my robot — as a bridge partner, I win all my games, and none of my friends talk to me anymore.

Announcer: Thank you, Miss McSnuffle. And now we bring you another thrilling installment of Life Can Be Horrible.

Music: (Milt Rothman.)

Announcer: Portia, our heroine, has been pursuing the space pirates from Saturn who have captured her younger brother, seeking to wrest from him the secret of DAKKA, that irresistible atomic weapon made from a hairpin and two empty beer bottles. With her is Ken Kennedy, a lowly radio technician on the Arcturus, that mighty ship which has just been wrecked on the fourth moon of Jupiter.

Music: (Milt Rothman.)

Ken Kennedy: Portia, now that we are wrecked on this, the fourth moon of Jupiter with little if any hope of rescue, I must make a confession. I am not really a lowly

radio technician on the Arcturus, that mighty spaceship which has just been wrecked on the fourth moon of Jupiter, in actuality I am Gaylord Greenberg, Number One Secret agent of the Interstellar Patrol, on the track of Black Bertrand, the nefarious interplanetary bagle thief.

Portia: Why Gaylord, how wonderful. I, too, have a confession to make. I, too, am not entirely what I have seemed.

Gaylord: Oh, Portia, spare me this. Can it be that these electronic eyes, these fluorescent teeth, these incandescent lips have all this time been concealing from mine eyes a vile, nameless mystery?

Portia: Oh Gaylord, yes. For know now that I am in truth a secret agent of the Interplanetary Girl Scouts, assigned to determine who has been stealing the bubble gum from our Martian Sewing Circle.

Gaylord: Bubble gum! But that is one of the secret ingredients of DAKKA, that irresistible weapon whose operation only one person in the solar system can explain. Then that can mean only one thing!

Portia: Yes?

Gaylord: This is a terrible thing I must tell you, Portia. Sit on my lap.

Portia: Yes, Gaylord.

Gaylord: If your brother was the only one to know that bubble gum was one of the ingredients in DAKKA, that irresistible weapon, and if bubble gum has been missing from the Martian Sewing Circle, as well as from the Bar and Grill of the Interstellar Patrol, then I can deduce only one answer.

Portia: And that is, Gaylord....?

Gaylord: Your brother is the bubble gum thief!

Portia: Oh Gaylord! No! No! Not that! Such news must needs cause me to weep and ruin my makeup. But never mind, for my brother is not really my brother at all, but is in actuality three members of an interstellar bubble gum smuggling ring which has been encroaching on the Interplanetary Girl Scout's territory for the exclusive sale of opium-flavored bubble gum.

Audience: Laughs, we hope.

Announcer: And, may we take this opportunity to remind you that DOPO, that refreshing, minty, opium-flavored bubble gum may be obtained at your neighborhood candy store now. Go there immediately and ask for our big economy size — enough to blow

holes in your heads for the next six months.

Music: (Milt Rothman.)

Gaylord: And now, Portia, that we are wrecked on this, the fourth moon of Jupiter, it is necessary that we seek means for calling help. I shall busy myself with the problem of building a radio transmitter, using an entirely new principle of electronics that I just happened to think up. This shall no doubt take me several months. But time, darling, means nothing as long as we are together.

Portia: And I, Gaylord, shall forage for provisions, shall keep our little campfire burning, and shall prepare clothing to cover our naked limbs.

Gaylord: And in these months ahead of us we shall, in accordance with Rule 3, paragraph 6, of the Interplanetary Girl Scout Laws, keep ourselves pure and sweet, in preparation for that joyous day when we shall be rescued.

Portia: Oh darling, hold me close.

Gaylord: Nay, Portia. Remember, pure and sweet. Oh, groan.

Music: (Milt Rothman.)

Announcer: And so our intrepid pair labor mightily, endeavoring to build a radio station which will signal their plight to the Interstellar Patrol.

Gaylord: Portia, hand me the pliers, the soldering iron, screwdriver, flint and steel, scalpel, sutures. Dammit! I burnt my finger on a hot cathode.

Portia: Gaylord, watch your language. Remember, pure and sweet.

Music: (Milt Rothman.)

Announcer: Will the radio transmitter be finished? Will the message reach earth? Will Portia remain pure and sweet? You too can remain pure and sweet! Why go around smelling like a human being? A half gallon of UNSTINKO applied under each armpit will keep you pure, if not sweet. And now, to return to our story, Gaylord and Portia have received a flash that aid is on the way.

Audience: Applause.

Music: (Arturo Rubenstein!)

Gaylord: Portia! They are approaching — whirling down from on high in the Cosmos, greatest spaceship ever to flit through the void. In a moment I must give them landing instructions, and then our ordeal will be over.

Portia: Ah, Gaylord. This is the day for which we have so long waited.

Gaylord: I must call them. Hello; Hello. Calling Cosmos; Calling Cosmos. This is Gaylord Greenberg, of the Interstellar Patrol, calling the Cosmos, that mightiest of all spaceships. Standing by for a reply. Over....Hello Cosmos. Why how are you Mart, you old son of a space warp? Flitting on all jets, eh? Look, I'm going to buzz you in. Yeh, knock you down on the beam. Gimme your co-ordinates. Six-four-H-nine-seven carry nine and one makes eleven. Roger, and here's your blast instructions. Give her 2g with 240 mils azimuth and 30 elevation, correct for windage, and integrate from zero to infinity around a counter-clockwise contour. Come in on the fourth mesh of a Riemann surface, and land at the second oak tree from the left. That's it. Roger and out.

Portia: She is landing! Men are emerging from her depths. Ah, here comes my father.

Father: Ah, my daughter. What a joyous reunion this is. How have you been, Portia?

Portia: Utterly pure and sweet, father, dammitall.

Gaylord: Yes, father. I can say, staring you straight in the eyes, man to man, that your daughter is well — and unharmed; that we have thoroughly obeyed Rule 3, Paragraph 6 of the Interplanetary Girl Scout Laws.

Father: Is it true, my children, this that you are telling to an old and feeble man? Are you truthfully looking me in the eyes, man to man, and asserting that my daughter is well and ... unharmed?

Gaylord: Yes, father. Well and ... unharmed.

Father: Well, then, don't father me, young man. My daughter isn't going to marry any character who can't make better use of his time than you do.

Music: (Milt Rothman.)

The curtain falls.

The End

((This playlet was handled very well by the Philadelphia group. It seems to me that there was another actor in there somewhere, but his name has slipped my mind. Many thanks to the PSFS for this fine piece of extremely enjoyable entertainment!))

Past gateways of the conscious mind
 Vistas wait of madness and delight;
 Towers rise up for me
 By day or night

And Shadows clustering, bow low —
 An empress, absolute am I,
 Of endless kingdoms
 Over and beyond the sky.

— G.K.S.

LOKI

An amateur publication of science fiction and fantasy with both

PROSE AND POETRY

Edited by

Gerry de la Ree
 46 Johnson Avenue,
 Hackensack, N.J.

Genevieve K. Stephens
 530 Moyer Avenue,
 Alma, Michigan

* * * * *

In its first two issues, this magazine has presented to fandom, prose and poetry by such well-known pros and fans as Eando Binder, Richard S. Shaver, David H. Keller, Stanley G. Weinbaum, Dorothy Quick, Lin Carter, Joe Kennedy, R.L. Farnsworth, George Ebey, Albert Toth, Marian Zimmer, Joe Schaumberger, Russel H. Woodman, F. Flavia Carson, Theophilus Alvor, H. King, Stephanie Grace, and Jeanne Koehler.

* * * * *

LOKI IS STILL LOOKING FOR SHORT FICTION OR PROSE PASTELS OF LESS THAN 1,000 WORDS. SEND YOUR PROSE TO MR. DE LA REE AND YOUR POETRY, TO MRS. STEPHENS. THEY WILL RECEIVE PROMPT ATTENTION.

* * * * *

If you wish to receive the Fall 1948, issue of LOKI, send 10¢ in coin to Mr. de la Ree. No long term subscriptions, please.

* * * * *

May I take this opportunity to urge you to support the Seventh World Science Fiction Convention! Remember the CONVENTION

* * * * *

SALE

ASTOUNDING

1945 — Apr G; June E; Dec E;
1946 — All except Apr, May, July, Aug, G;
1947 -- All except Apr & June E;

UNCANNY TALES

1941 — May G; June F; July M; Dec M;
1942 — All M; Sept-Oct '43 M;

CAPTAIN FUTURE

First three issues M; Winter '41 & '44 G;

AVON FANTASY READER

First three issues M;

FTM

All of '46 & '47 - 4 sets - 2M & 2G
Vol 1 #1 & 2 #1

PLANET

Most issues in good or better condition.

STARTLING

All except first issue in good shape.

TWS

All from 1936 in good or better shape.

CANADIAN SUPER SCIENCE

All 21 issues in good or better shape.

DYNAMIC STORIES

Both issues - 2 sets M & G

COMET

1 & 2 M;

FUTURE

First three issues G;

AMAZING STORIES

Most from 1934 in good or better shape.

FANTASTIC ADVENTURES

'39 - '41 — All in good shape;
'45 - '47 — All in good shape;

S-F QRTLY

1 & 2 F;

In addition to the above stuff there is much assorted crud. There are over 1500 magazines here that have to be sold within two months to make room for expansion. They are the residue of several collections that I have bought during the last year. The highest bidder will get the mags — give second choices in all cases. BUT — PREFERENCE WILL BE GIVEN TO THOSE OFFERING TRADES. Although the Canadian mags are very rare and in good condition, none of them will be sold for exorbitant prices. Don't haggle — make your bids on any item you want and then wait. If you have not heard from me by the first of the year, you can assume that your bid has not been accepted. Not because I wanted more for that particular mag, but because someone offered more. The non-reply setup is a necessary procedure to protect myself from being swamped with letter-writing.

CODE

M ... Mint	If I feel that the mag
E ... Excellent	is not worth the price
G ... Good	that you offer I will
F ... Fair	include reading copies
P ... Poor	of other duplicate mags

Ned McKeown
1398 Mt. Pleasant Rd.,
Toronto 12, Ontario,
C A N A D A

This is your chance to complete your own collection CHEAPLY. Many mags are going a deal less than cover price.

You may order one or a hundred.

Prefer to trade.

If your bid is low your money will be very promptly refunded.

See next page for WANTS.

WANTS

ASTOUNDING

1931 — Jan, Feb, Oct;
1932 — All except May;
1933 — Jan, Feb, Nov;
1934 — Apr, June;
1936 — Jan, Dec;
1941 — Mar;
1944 — Jan, Apr, June, July, Aug, Sept;

FFM

1940 — Dec;
41-42 — All of Vol 3;
1943 — Mar, Dec;
1944 — Dec;
1945 — June;
1948 — Aug;

FANTASTIC NOVELS

1941 — Apr;

UNKNOWN WORLDS

1942 — Aug, Dec;
1943 — Apr, Aug;

STARTLING

1943 — Fall;
1949 — Jan;

WONDER

1929 — June, July;
1930 — Apr - Sept;
1931 — Feb, Apr, July, Sept, Nov;
1932 — All except Mar, June, Oct, Nov;
1933 — Feb - May & Sept - Nov;
1934 — Mar, May, Nov, Dec;
1935 — Feb, Apr, June
1945 — Winter;
1948 — Oct, Dec;

AMAZING STORIES

1926 — Apr, May, July, Dec;
1927 — Aug;
1928 — May;
1930 — Mar;
1935 — Mar;
1941 — Apr, May;
1943 — Jan, Apr, July, Sept, Dec;
1948 — Sept, Nov, Dec;

MARVEL

1940 — May, Nov;

PLANET

1941 — Spring, Fall;

S-F QUARTERLY

All except #'s 1, 2 & 8;

FANTASTIC ADVENTURES

1941 — May, June, Oct;
1942 — Jan, Aug;
1943 — Apr, May, June, Sept, Dec;
1948 — Sept, Nov, Dec;

TALES OF WONDER

All except #'s 1, 2, & 4;

SCIENCE FICTION STORIES

1941 — Mar, June;

FUTURE FICTION

1941 — Mar, Aug, Oct, Dec;
1942 — Feb, June, Aug;

MYSTERY TALES

All issues

UNCANNY TALES - American

All issues

Ned McKeown
1398 Mt. Pleasant Rd.,
Toronto 12, Ontario,
C A N A D A

Wants must be in E to M condition!

This ad will not be repeated.

Mags must be sent postpaid.

Also interested in any mags similar to
Mystery Tales & Uncanny Tales. I will
pay cash or trade for them.

Please reply as quickly as possible.

ALL MAGS ARE SENT POSTPAID

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Peace has descended once more upon Rai Purdy Productions. The fantastic originals have been yanked down and carted away; the popping of 7-Up bottles and the yammering of fannish voices have subsided; the Sixth World Science Fiction Convention has become another page in the dusty annals of Fan History (a nameless volume of legendary lore, the contents of which are known only to Cthulhu and Sam Moskowitz.) Here — listed in no special order — are some things which especially stand out in my fog-beshrouded memory.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE TORCON:

These are murky as all hell. Since railroad connections got all fouled up, I didn't get into town until 2PM on the first day of the convention. Though burdened with a suitcase, I managed to outrace several elderly ladies, and commandeered the nearest taxi. Perespiring like a sodden sponge, I sprinted the steps of the meeting hall. Some lady receptionist stuck a copy of the program booklet in my limp paw. I stumbled to the doorway of the hall and leered in. Robert Bloch was giving a speech. Still dragging my battered suitcase, oblivious of the fishy-eyed stares of the assemblage, I toppled through the doorway, flopped into a chair next to the Wollheims, and lapsed into a trance which wasn't broken until the session ended and Schaumberger grabbed me by the collar and hoisted me to my feet. Anyway, I'd made it.

THE FOOD:

The food was uniformly excellent. Gadzooks, but I envy you Canadians: after being forced to shell out as much as two bucks for a decent dinner in the States, it was like stepping through the door of Paradise to discover restaurants offering top-notch steak dinners for a flat one dollar! ((Perhaps we natives can't see the forest for the trees, but I have yet to find a place in town that serves a good steak dinner for one buck!)) That very first evening, I was fortunate enough to be invited out to dinner by Colonel and Mrs. Keller — along with Sam Moskowitz, Alex Osheroff, Paul Spencer, Andy Lyon, Russell Swanson, Jack Agnew and several other guys. A superlative roast beef dinner in the King Edward's impressively vast dining room made me extremely happy about the Torcon, humanity and life in general.

Burp.

SUNNY SIDE AMUSEMENT PARK:

Veritably the entrance to this den of iniquity is one of the limits beyond which mortal man was not meant to go, to quote Lovecraft. Christensen and I took several spins on a contraption dubbed "The Octopus", and I came out reeling. Shortly thereafter, like a damfool, I let Frank Dietz talk me into venturing on the whirling airplane ride. While riding back to the hotel on the trolley, I suddenly noticed that two Lloyd Alpaughs were sitting on the opposite seat. Then my stomach started to do the tango. Glassy-eyed, I lurched off the trolley at the next stop, and proceeded to disgorge in the nearest vacant lot. A slightly premature New Year's resolution: If I ever again get to Toronto, I will avoid Sunnyside Amusement Park as I would the plague.

POPULAR SEX FACTS:

The next day, Phil Froeder and I were scanning a drugstore newsstand when we came across a publication by that title. I flipped through the thing, encountered an article all about sexual symbolism in dreams, and when I recognized a familiar pseudonym couldn't help exclaiming: "Migod! Doc Keller wrote this!" Froeder promptly purchased a copy of Popular Sex Facts, lugged it back to the convention hall, and unsuccessfully tried to enveigle Keller into autographing the mag.

FIRECRACKERS:

Apparently inspired by Jack Speers' shining example at the Philcon last year, Froeder and Christensen got hold of a wad of firecrackers. These the duo began strewing around the streets of Toronto during the midnight hours. One of the local gendarmes stopped the lads and inquired what the hell they were doing, going around flinging firecrackers under the feet of passers-by. They replied that they were celebrating the USA's Independence Day. The obliging cop thereupon let them go, with the injunction that it would be better if they set off their fireworks in the daytime, when they wouldn't wake anybody up!

THE PRINCE GEORGE HOTEL:

This worthy establishment is a must on the itinerary of out-of-town tourists. ((Tell me, Joe, are there any but out-of-town tourists?)) But for pete's sake,

tourists, don't register there. Just walk into the lobby. You'll see what looks like the fondest dream of a modern architect: modernistic murals, indirect lighting, lush carpets, comfortable chairs, beautifully designed layout, with streamlined balconies and stairways. Then walk just a little farther and you'll come to a wooden door bearing the pencilled inscription: this way to the elevator. You step into an alley-like hallway. Garbage cans in a heap. Plaster falling off the walls. Junk piled to the ceiling. One wheezing elevator will take you upstairs, if you want to go there. Forsooth, the Prince George Hotel is an astounding study in contrasts. Alpaugh, Joe Gross, Schaumberger, Froeder and Ray Short stayed in the Prince George for a single night, but the management flung them out on their collective ears for shooting firecrackers. They were happy to leave, but before making his exit, Christensen rigged up a dummy, which he affixed to a chandelier with a rope. When the chamber maid came in to clean the room, her jaw must've dropped several inches when she encountered what appeared to be a suicide, dangling from the ceiling, with a sign on his chest reading: I CAN'T ENDURE THE PRINCE GEORGE HOTEL ANY LONGER. THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY OUT.... SUNDAY NIGHT:

Sunday night in Toronto is incredibly peaceful. All the gin mills are shut down dead, and so is almost everything else, even movies. It is possible to walk right down the middle of the street without being nudged in the back by an auto.

PHOTOGRAPHY:

There was a little of it. Dave MacInnes was perhaps the convention's most ambitious shutter-snapper. When Mac suggested photographing a bunch of us standing before the window of an electrical supply store I was kinda puzzled — until I noticed a huge sign above our heads: SPECIAL SALE ON FANS, and observed that the showcase was full of the electrical cooling device of the same name.

PEOPLE:

The Torcon drew an exceptionally good turnout, in my opinion — and fandom on both sides of the border was well represented. It was a great pleasure to meet again such swell peoples as Bob Tucker, Hal Cheney, Andy Lyon, Forry Ackerman,

EEEvans, Paul Spencer, Dave MacInnes, the Kellers, the Wollheims, Frank Kerkhof, Jim Williams, Harry Moore and a heck of a lot more — not to forget friends Millard and McKeown, without whom there would not have been a Torcon. And the chance to meet a lot of people I'd never met before, but had always wanted to, made the whole trip worthwhile. Redd Boggs, Moe Diner, Les Crutch, Don Hutchinson and Jack Doherty of Macabre fame, Mike Fern — who must hold the all-time record for long distance travelling to a convention site, since he flew from Hawaii! — Paul D. Cox, the Michigan fans — Ben Singer, George Young, Art Rapp, Martin Alger (the man who invented the word BEM) and all the rest — meeting guys like that more than justified attendance at the Torcon, for yours truly. FINALLY:

I think the Torcon was unquestionably the scientific event of the year. Personally, I've got only two regrets — first, that I had to make the trip in a rush, and didn't really have enough time to relax and enjoy the proceedings; second, that Christensen never did get around to flinging the bathtub off the hotel roof, as he'd promised. Grateful thanks to the hard-working Canfans, who deserve one heck of a lot of credit for a competently managed, intelligently presented gathering — the first science-fictional meeting in history that really deserved the adjective international. The C invention of '49 will have to work hard to match the Torcon; and I think next yaer's convention committee might do well to take a leaf from the Torcon's notebook in regard to the length of formal sessions. I wholeheartedly agree with the idea of keeping the convention's formal protions within limits; enjoyable as the Philcon was, a few of its sessions ran so long that only a portion of the attendees stayed until the finish. By restricting each afternoon or evening program to a couple of hours, the Torcon left people with more time for the bull sessions and excursions around twon, which same can be the most memorable part of a convention.

I kinda hope, though, that the convention of '49 will take place under one hotel roof, with everybody in the same flophouse. It might save wear and tear on shoeleather.

Look, Doc, if you stick that needle in me once more, you'll never find out what happened to me from July 1st to the 6th — and especially from the 3rd to the 5th.

I'm really not responsible for the state I'm in, Doc. It was the company I kept when I attended that gala affair in Toronto over the American glorious Fourth.

How was I to know I'd meet such a weird collection of people without horns, tails, coffins and so on? If they'd had all those I wouldn't have kicked over the bucket, so to speak. But it was the unexpected that got me.

Hold it, Doc. Just hold that needle. You want to know the reason for this psychosis, or whatever it is that I have got, don't you? Okay then, hold your nanny a minute and maybe I can tell you.

Let me see — when was it I felt the dread symptoms coming on. Was it when I met Ben the Singer from Michigan? Or was it when I saw the beauteous Pam called MacInnes? Or maybe it was Bloch's wondrous God-light flickering balefully in the breeze that wasn't there.

Or maybe it was when I met the Terrible Foo who asked me where in Toronto he could find a house of sin and I was forced to say I didn't know. Yes, I believe that was it — for then my ego, my carefully built reputation received its mortal blow. I — the great Wolf of the Frozen North — I was forced to say that I was unacquainted with the houses of ill repute that Toronto the Good tries so hard to maintain it has none of. ((If the WOTFN was unable to find any dives, how is the ordinary human to find them. This is perhaps the thing that has given rise to the belief that Toronto is without a member of the oldest profession!))

But then maybe my reason was already tottering. I had met so many damned souls.

Let me see now — there was the Chinese Doll who made a noise like a movie projector — there was a not so stern Wheeler — and a behemoth that went under the terrible trade name of Revey. And there were such uncouth fiends as the "Boneless Horror" and its wife — the Ack that walked like a man — and a low slung Studebaker that I believe was called Goldberg Soda. I never did find out whether his head was where his tail was meant to

be or whether his tail was where his head was meant to be. He howled at one end and wiggled at the other so I guess there was a beginning and an end.

Then there was the Thing Thing whose name was too awful to mention even here; and a strange being from outer space who wanted to establish interplanetary communication with earth but didn't seem to know how to go about it. And also a wench who got stranded on some planet with a bloke who didn't take advantage of his good fortune.

But it was worth it, Doc — I had a grand and glorious time and this state of mind is but a small price to pay for that wonderful experience. So slip the needle to me Doc and let's have it done with. But before you do that, what's your name, Doc?

What's that? Dr. Bain? Dr. George Bain.

So you're the guy? You were there too, hey Doc?

.....
.....

Now all I have to do is sweep up these shreds of raw flesh and mail them to the Globe and Mail.

You know, I feel MUCH better now — evidently what I needed — a mild therapy.

((The Torcon wasn't the only news item to fall to the not-so-tender mercies of one Ex Flight Lieutenant George Bain. It seems that he is unable to write a story that is a reportorial account, pure and simple. He always takes a sarcastic, superior attitude towards anything and everything.

He was given a short press release giving the factual background for the convention — the change in sites, the number of members and so on — but he chose to completely disregard this information. As it happens, I met this schmoe who walks like a schmoe sometime after the Torcon, and asked him why he had not used any of the information he had been given. If I could only remember his exact words I would quote them, but this was the substance of his remarks. People have a certain idea about things and it is impossible to change them. If I had written the story as you gave it to me, it would never have seen print, I had to jazz it up and make it interesting to the general reading

public.

So there you have it fans, judge for yourself the situation.

Who knows? Perhaps, sometime in the not too distant future, we will get the same type of honest report as the Annual Convention of Biennial Growers.))

UGH! — Robert Bloch

"Write something for the Torcon Report" says Ned McKeown. "You know — stories about little happenings that took place in hotel rooms and other likely places."

I have no idea what kind of happenings he thinks took place in my hotel room, but I hasten to deny everything. Everything! As a matter of fact, nothing happened in my hotel room. Oh, there was a small convention going on most of the time, with an attendance of perhaps 300. Unfortunately, it wasn't a convention of people, but a convention of bedbugs.

Yes, and come to think of it, one morning (Sunday, I believe) a couple of elephants wandered in for an hour or so. I asked them what they were doing and they said they'd come down from Sunnyside Beach. This was, of course, a lie. There are no pink elephants at Sunnyside Beach.

Outside of my hotel rooms, a great deal happened. I attended a very enjoyable taffy-pull in George Smith's suite. I went to a lemonade stand with Tucker. Sometimes I sat around holding long philosophical conversations with theorists like Korshak and the MacInnes clan. Then, again, sometimes I sat around holding a glass, or a pair of nines against three of a kind.

But my main interest was in the Convention itself, and the fine hall in which it was held — the only building in Toronto, apparently, that was neither a church, a bank, a pottery and silverware store, a japanning establishment or an establishment with a house detective.

Yes, I'll never forget the Torcon — I was sorry when it ended and I had to leave. As the setting sun sinks in the west, I drop my last dollar into the hotelkeeper's hand and say a fond farewell to Canada — Land of Ten Thousand Government Taxes. As a wise old Canadian Indian Chief once remarked: "Ugh!"

((I believe that Ribbing Robert will

be forced to agree, however, that the producers of pink elephants are much more potent on this side of the line.

While on the subject of liquid refreshments, we turn to another letter in the same line, which seems to agree with Bob Bloch.))

MERRY CHRISTMAS — Wilson (Bob) Tucker

...I have recovered nicely from the convention, thank you, although I have not recovered from the dryness of Toronto. The next time we go to Canada I hope someone from Quebec sponsors the affair — I'm told Montreal and hinterland is satisfactorily wet and wide open.

I'm enclosing a few puthy words — I figured you wanted it brief because of the lack of time and lack of space that must be hampering you now. Trust it will do.

I have no black and white photos, so can't help you out there. I took all of mine in color — and only four came out. For some strange reason, the ones which came out well included women only: Les Tina, Mari, Pam MacInnes, and Judy Merrill and Fred Pohl. Pfui. ((What's the Pfui for, Bob? Perhaps that's for Fred??))

Merry Christmas to you.

RAMBLINGS — Joe Kennedy

...glad to have a chance to contribute some comments on the Torcon — I'd been feeling pangs of conscience because I didn't have a chance during the conrlab to wallop out any material for the TR.

Enclosed are some ramblings which I hope you can use.

Thanks for your letter — and for one hell of a good science fiction convention.

GOOD WISHES — Celia Keller

...belatedly, but none the less sincerely, do Colonel Keller and I wish to thank you for the very fine time we had in Toronto.

Am enclosing one dollar for two copies of TR and am looking forward eagerly to seeing "The best mag ever produced in fandom."

With all good personal wishes to yourself and Canadian Fandom in general, in which the Colonel joins heartily.

((There will be more from Mrs. Keller somewhere else in the TR. Next year, the Convention will be in the capable hands of

Donald E. Ford. Don is a tall rather quiet fan, from Sharonville Ohio. We have much in common in that we both went to our first convention and came home with the next. In the following, he describes his reactions.))

EXPERIENCES — Donald E. Ford

When I first drove an automobile back in 1932, it was quite a thrill. Reading my first science-fiction magazine produced a mental thrill that has never died. A lot of records from my record library thrill my ears with music each time I play them. Flying an airplane is exciting. My triumph at finding a book I have searched for for years has produced an elation keeping me up in the clouds for the rest of the day.

I could go on and on reciting memorable experiences I have had in the past. One that will always stand out in my mind is the Torcon. As long ago as the Denvention I had planned to attend a convention, but something always came up to prevent it. The Sixth World Science Fiction Convention was my first experience with conventions.

So I went to my first convention and came back with next year's meeting for my home town, Cincinnati.

Going to your first convention is quite a thrill. Having a con in your own town is another. Put them both together and you have a double whammy.

((There now follows the aforementioned "more" from Mrs. Keller.))

THE DIAPER BRIGADE — Celia Keller

At the Torcon I classified a group of younger fans as belonging to "The Diaper Brigade." Perhaps that phrase needs clarification. When I have stated just why I have chosen that name for this group, I am sure most fans will agree with me.

But first it is necessary to explain that I realize fully that no nation, society or fandom itself can survive without youth. It is also vitally important that youth be alert and well-informed.

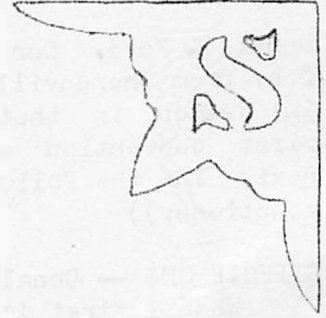
However, if those of you who heard me speak will recall, the subject under discussion by "Bob" Tucker was the extreme youth and almost unbelievable self-admitted wisdom of these same extremely youthful fans. We, Bob and I, were talking of

that group under fourteen years of age. In that particular segment of fandom there are a number of these self-appointed critics who break into print in fanzines or pros, with lengthy and dogmatic criticism of all subjects under heaven.

Naturally anyone has a right to express an opinion as such, but to hurl invectives, say (of a story) that, "It stinks." They sometimes even go so far as to say that, again of a story, "This is the worst story so-called in all the world." That this or that author "Can't write." Or, that he is "Beyond question, the greatest author that ever lived and anyone who says contrarily is a fool." This sort of talk just goes beyond not only good manners but displays a tremendous lack of extensive or understanding reading. Many professors of literature, do not attempt to make so strict a statement but usually qualify what they have to say by first stating that what they are about to say is just a personal opinion.

If one considers the youth of these self-styled expert critics, one is forced to admit that it is utterly impossible for them to have read sufficiently of the past masters of writing to be competently advised on all of the works of all writers even of fantasy; that to keep up with their classes in school and read the very large magazine output is quite a task; and — very important — if these youths were as beyond-mistake in at once recognizing the perfect story as they claim to be, they could command a tremendous salary as editor of a prozine. As such they could save the publishers a whale of a lot of money in that they would be able to select for publication only such stories as would bring nothing but enduring fame and profit to that magazine.

It is, therefore, this group of opinionated, inexpert, highly vocal and prolific of pen that I have dubbed "The Diaper Brigade." Let us have letters, by all means; stories in fanzines; critical analysis of stories, but, rather than such assertive statements, let them be personal and more or less friendly. It is a well known fact that although you disagree with the opinion of another you are not bound to be blood enemies. But above all, let these voices speak with a knowledge of the subject under discussion.



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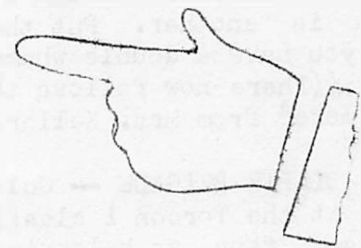
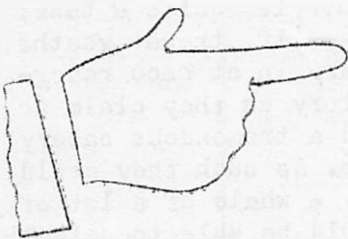
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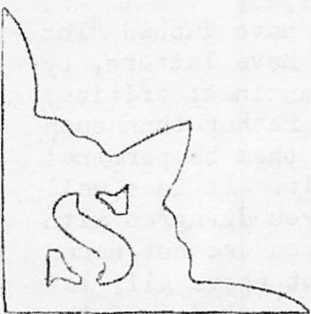
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((The above article will no doubt bring violent denials from the younger set of fans.

Although the Eshbach mss came along rather late, I thought that it merited inclusion in the TR.))

FAN CONVENTIONS AND THE S-F BOOK PUBLISHER

by Lloyd Eshbach — Fantasy Press

Starting at the Philcon and continuing at the Torcon, something new was added to Science Fiction Conventions. It began quite spontaneously in Philadelphia, continued in Toronto and will no doubt turn up in Cincinnati. I refer to the presence of science-fiction and fantasy book publishers — or should I say the manner in which said publishers dominated the scene?

Generally we (and I speak for the other publishers entirely without authority) have been cordially received by fans, since most fans agree that our efforts are really doing fandom a big favor by bringing their favorite brand of fiction a respectability it never had before. But — and this is the reason for the writing of this brief article — there has been some criticism, some cries of "commercialism" from fans who apparently have no interest in fantasy in book form.

I hasten to state that Fantasy Press has no quarrel with anyone who doesn't want to buy its books. To coin a phrase, one man's meat is another man's poison. But I believe a few simple facts will help dispel some of the criticism which has been directed toward FP and the rest.

It is true that we try to sell books at the S-F Conventions. But it is just as true that we don't sell enough books to pay the hotel bill! Remember, only a small percentage of the purchase price of a book is profit. Of course, every sale helps; and the line between success and failure in this highly speculative field is so finely drawn that the book publisher must take advantage of every opportunity to move a few books. But, actually, conventions do not pay!

One further fact seems to have escaped the notice of our critics. At the Philcon and at the Torcon, Fantasy Press donated a large quantity of original drawings for the all-important auction. ((In this, Lloyd has said a great big mouthful.

Without the auction almost any convention is in for trouble. We realized over fifty percent of our expenses at last year's auction.)) We could have sold these drawings ourselves with very little effort instead of giving them away. "But," you say, "Look at the publicity you receive." Sure — our name is mentioned repeatedly — for the benefit of a lot of fans who know all about Fantasy Press and who don't need to be told that we're around.

I know it's very poor form for me to speak about our gifts to the conventions — but then, this entire article is probably in very bad taste. I'd never think of writing a thing like this if it weren't addressed to fellow-fans.

I attend the S-F Conventions because I enjoy 'em — and so, I'm sure, do Mel Korshak, Jim Williams and the other boys. I first met Mel Korshak in Philly, I believe it was in 1936. I met a lot of the other boys in New York in '39. I passed up the Chicon, Denvention and Pacificon simply because I couldn't afford to take them in — those were lean years, lads.

If we make a little noise at the Conventions (speaking again as a publisher) and if we push ourselves forward a bit now and then — isn't that typical of science-fiction fans. None that I've met can be called modest in any sense of the word.

So — I'll see you at the Convention — and maybe I'll sell you a book.

((It surprised me very much to hear some of the fans lay into the publishers for trying to commercialise the conventions. It is about time you fans realized that a convention must first of all be a success commercially! When we took on the job of the Torcon, the first thing decided was how to run the con without going in the hole. Sure, it would have been nice to decorate the hall in a fantastic vein, use murals on the walls, invite pros and promise them their expenses, do many things that might have helped to make the con more successful. But — everything takes money, and these days lots of it. When auction time rolled around this year, we were several hundred bucks in the hole and sinking rapidly. We had hoped to make the Torcon the first self-sufficient con, but we were thwarted by some poor bargaining. We forgot to get a written contract for the program booklet and after a printer's

strike shot the costs sky high we discovered things were going to be rather bad. We had to count on the auction to pull us out of a bad hole. This it did in magnificent style. We covered all our expenses and passed on fifty dollars to the next con. Although the majority of the money from the auction came from material donated by the professional magazines, it was the impromptu gifts made by Lloyd, Mel and others that saved the day.

Aside from the above, let us not forget that the Publishers are doing a marvelous job in publicizing S-F. Critics who pass up stories when they appear in a pulp, are sometimes quite pleasantly surprised by them when they appear between the boards.

Please fans, let's keep our house in order. As long as we insist on making these silly and rather childish accusations, the outside world will continue to label us nuts and crackpots. Perhaps, we have only ourselves to blame for the writeups that appeared in the Toronto papers after the Torcon.

I hope to be here in 2000 A.D.))

AQUAVENTION — Paul Walton

Everybody asked me where Picton is — I'm discouraged! So discouraged that I withheld my bid for Picton in 2000 A.D. This could have been BIG. Picton is growing at the rate of three new citizens per year. By then it would be a roaring metropolis of 12,564 souls, with a S-F society 150 strong. Unlimited possibilities! It is practically in the middle of Lake Ontario, making available unlimited quantities of water. The AQUAVENTION. Unheard of, isn't it? It was a stupendous idea but you discouraged me. See what you missed!

((Many thanks for the thoughts on the Aquavention. By the way, where is Picton?

The following is just a fragment picked off the floor after the Con.))

WIT AND HUMOR — David Hageman

...I enjoyed the entire convention immensely, but above all I enjoyed the wit and humor of George O Smith. He is one of the best comedians I have ever had the pleasure to hear, both on the stage and in the hotel room.

((Those kind words should make George

very happy. How about it George?))

OBSERVATIONS THROUGH A GLASS EYE

— Bob Tucker

I have a sneaking suspicion that fans are growing up — somewhat. The average age of Joe Fann, carefully and scientifically observed at each succeeding convention, seems to be just a wee bit older each year — say a day or two older.

As an example: in Toronto there was but one hot-foot applied in my presence, whereas in past years I have witnessed at least three at each convention. I regard that as a sign of approaching maturity. And not only is the diminishing number of such applications a sign, but hark this: the one lone gentleman who applied the hot-foot at Toronto gave it to a lady! I feel that no one but a wise old veteran with the weight of years upon his shoulders would attempt that. (PS: The lady hollered like hell.)

Upon another occasion I was sitting in the hall supping at my dinner — I had wangled two pieces of cake and three desserts from the chef and was attempting to bolt them down before someone discovered me — when a studious looking chap walked up to me with a pencil and notebook in his hand.

"Aha!" I thought to myself — here's a newspaper reporter, seeking me out to obtain my priceless observations upon the convention in general and the future of mankind in particular. And then I looked closer — the chap was wearing a convention badge. "Oh well," I thought to myself, "not a reporter after all, but some eager fan publisher waiting for pearls of wisdom to fall from my lips."

"Yes?" I said to him airily, lowering myself to speak to a stranger.

"Mr. Tucker," his words rushed out breathlessly, "I'm taking a poll — tell me, who is the number one atheist of fandom?"

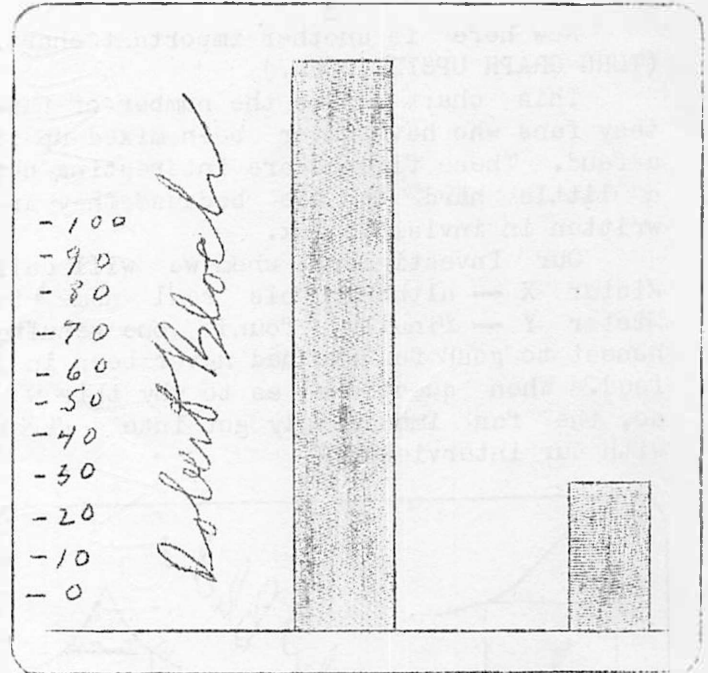
I got up off the floor, righted the chair, sat down again and commenced eating the two pieces of cake and the three desserts — the meanwhile reflecting to myself upon the slowly increasing average age of fans at each succeeding convention.

((And now, back to the other guest of honor, one Robert Bloch. The Report was presented Monday evening.))

Yesterday we were all entertained and instructed by the Tucker Report on Fandom. Today I'd like to supplement it with the Bloch Report. Yes, I took my own survey, and I'd like to show you a few figures indicating the results. Tucker based his report on a written questionnaire — the Bloch report is the end result of a series of personal interviews. The only similarity between this report and Tucker's is that when I finished it I was all Tuckered out.

But let's take a look at some of the charts.

This is Chart Number One. It shows the number of fantasy fans — 12,000 — who answered the questions, as opposed to the number of fantasy fans — 3,699,000 — who kicked the interviewer out on his assignment.



Here is an interesting graph. It shows the percentages of 12,000 fantasy fans, broken down by Age, Occupation and Sex. The little guy on the left is the one broken down by Sex.

You will note that this graph shows the average age of fantasy fans is somewhere between fifteen and one hundred and three.

Remember, this is their physical age, not mental.

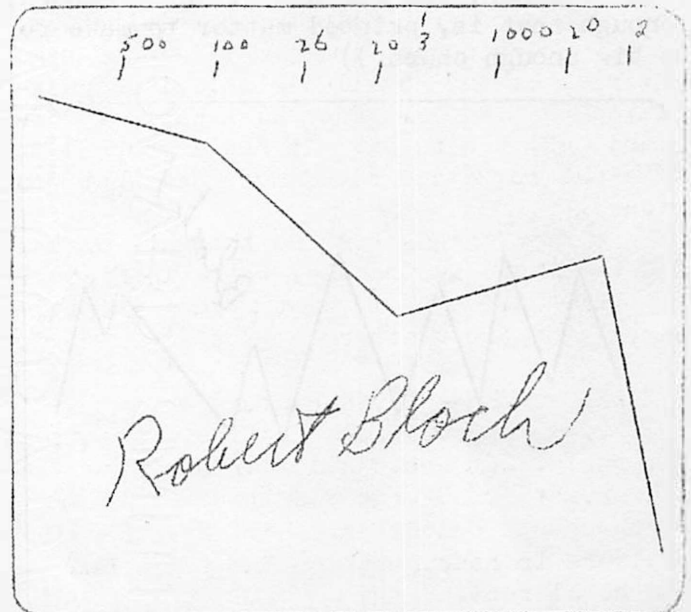
The average occupation of all fans seems to be selling or trading magazines.

Here is another interesting graph. It shows the percentage of illiteracy among 12,000 fantasy fans. It is somewhat surprising to find that out of 12,000 fantasy fans almost 9,000 could neither read nor write. Almost all of those who could not read or write were found to be illiterate. Believe it or not!

((Although Bob delivered this learned dissertation with a straight face, it was impossible to find an unsmiling face in the entire audience.

As far as I know, this little gem was whipped up in Bob's hotel room with not a thought having been given to it previously I wonder where he got the materials to do the charts?

More of this on the next page. Drawings are copied from the Bloch originals.))



4

Now here is another important chart.
(TURN GRAPH UPSIDE DOWN.)

This chart shows the number of fantasy fans who have never been mixed up in a feud. These figures are interesting but a little hard to see because they are written in invisible ink.

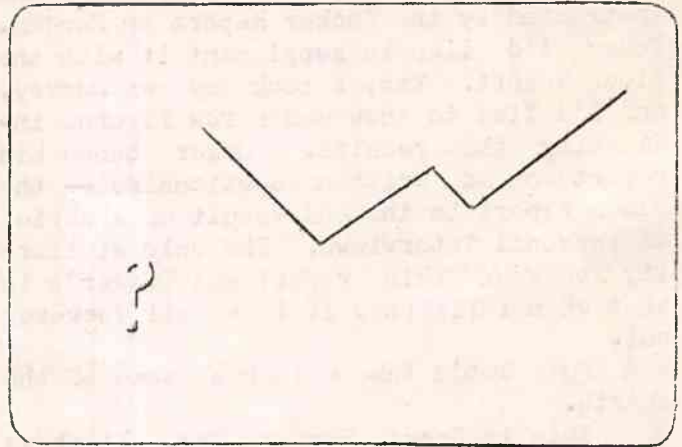
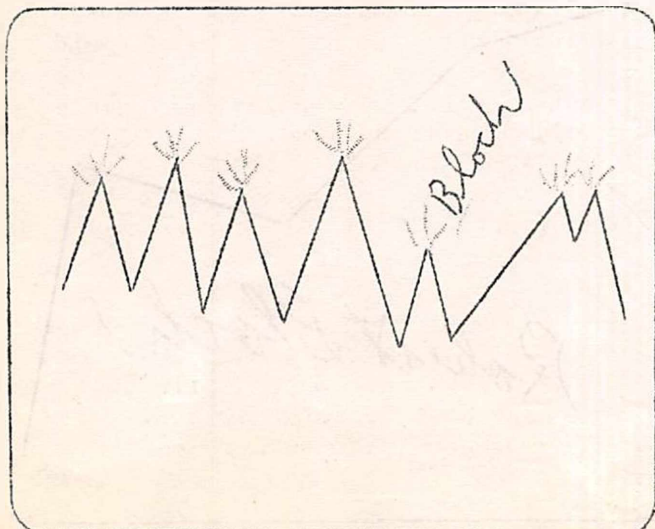
Our Investigator, whom we will call Mister X — although his real name is Mister Y — finally found one genuine honest to gosh fan who had never been in a feud. When questioned as to why this was so, the fan immediately got into a fight with our interviewer.



6

Note the curve on this particular chart. That interesting figure in the middle represents the average intelligence of fans who write to the reader's columns of the pro magazines.

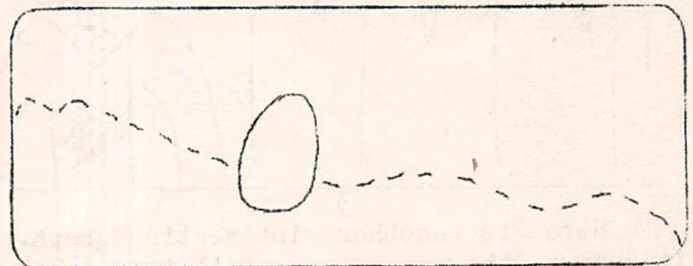
((Again, Bob has not given me enough, enough that is, printed matter to make for a big enough chart.))



5

Now here is a chart showing the comparative sizes of the various publishing houses which put out fantasy magazines. As you can see, all publishing houses are very much alike. Unfortunately, we cannot give you a chart showing just what kind of material these publishing houses put out, so you'll just have to use your imagination.

((This is a very interesting chart, and as such, I feel it warrants a fair amount of space. Since the charts take up as much space as the print beside them, I have to fill up this space!))



7

I have another group of charts showing the mean annual rainfall, the mean temperature and the mean editors I have met.

But for the purposes of this meeting there is only one more I'd like to show you. This is not really a chart at all. It is my own design for a torture rack for people who insist on making surveys.

Before I close, I'd like to mention one thing more — in making this survey I ran into a whole group of interesting figures. You'll find them all on display down the street at the burlesque show.

Thank you.

— OVER THE THINE IN '49 —

FANTASY ADVERTISER

"Reproduced below is the editorial from the first issue of FANTASY ADVERTISER. In it is expressed the aims and policy that began the publication, and which FANTASY ADVERTISER has hewn to for two and a half years. Read 'em. If you like what is said, the address is 1503 3/4 12th Ave., Los Angeles 6, Cal. ... Gus."

It is our alleged purpose to propogate fantasy and E D I T O R I A L science fiction fandom. It is hoped that Fantasy Advertiser will become an effective instrument in spreading the gospel of Fandomania through the medium of giving suitable publicity to our wares. Undoubtedly one of the main factors in fandom's small size in comparison to the numbers of science fiction readers, is the lack of cohesive force in propoganda and proper presentation of the services and interests that the group offers.

Fantasy Advertiser is going to be sent to every name and address of persons interested in scientifiction that I can find for at least three issues without an acknowledgement. After that, Fan Ads will be sent to all who answer any one of these three sufficiently to indicate interest in any phase of Fandomania that might be represented therein.

Since this is primarily an advertising fanzine, our editorial policy will consist mainly of acquiring as many good advertisements as possible. In support of this main object, we will run series of short articles of a rather primary nature aimed at explaining and outlining the fields and interests of fandom. Covering such items as the various organizations of fandom, the various principles involved in actually being a fan, histories, comment on current events in fandom, and other such articles of primary interest, it is hoped that Fantasy Advertiser will please the general public with these items of interest as well as performing a valuable service in the advertising field.

The contents of Fantasy Advertiser will consist of all advertisements peculiar to fandom: fanzine ads book sales, swaps, fan meetings, mag

sales, requests for fan magazine material, propoganda for any fan organization, want ads, book and magazine dealer ads, or any other type of ad that might be necessary as the contingency arises.

This magazine is being published for as near cost price as is possible. In fact, unless there is considerably better representation of fanzines, sales, et al, than there was for this issue, the publisher is going to be carrying the bulk of the cost himself, which contingency may force the publication out of business if such aspect continues for several issues. So we beg of you publishing and dealing fan, if you want to get the best out of your business, send us an advertisement. Fantasy Advertiser is going to be sent to the widest selection of fans that can be found insuring your advertisement the most general coverage that anyone could hope to receive.

Just remember, those of you who receive this, that one year's subscription (six issues) of Fantasy Advertiser is only half a buck. So if you people who get this issue, wish to continue to receive it, just drop a dime and your correct address in the mails today and KNOW what is for sale NOW.

— SUPPORT THE SEVENTH —

Donald Wollheim passed along some very interesting information about the forthcoming issues of the Avon Fantasy Reader. He expressed his regret that more pro editors had not seen fit to make the trip.

The rest of the evening was occupied by a round-table discussion. This aspect of the program was looked after by someone else, and no one seems to have any positive recollection of just what happened. However, it seems that Chan Davis, Fred Hurter, Milt Rothman and Norm Stanley were up on the platform conducting a discussion that covered many of the points provoked by George O's. speech of the preceding evening. They talked about the exploration of the planets being a logical advance in the search for "Liebestraum" and Montreal's Tim Buck threw things into an uproar with a very learned quotation about the price of Shmoon on far Centauri, or something similar. ((Sorry, Tim!))

Then off into the night. We trotted from Jim William's room up to see EEE and moved into a poker game. The boys very nicely took me under their wing at Philly, and, according to a letter from EEE, they will continue in Cincy. Little do they know that they are nursing a viper. I can't figure out all the people that were in at one time or another, but the number was considerable.

Along about midnight the phone rang. It was a reporter from Canadian Press wanting information for a morning release. I toddled off downstairs to enlighten his benighted soul and was promptly corralled (After the interview, of course.) by Fred Hurter, Chan Davis and Tim Buck. We moved on to Fred's room in the Royal York and started a red-hot bridge game with Chan and Tim opposing Fred and I. Along about four we called it quits. Fred and I stayed up the rest of the night to count our spoils.

Then comes Monday. It's astounding (small "a") the way that old Monday comes along. Almost always it comes right on the heels of Sunday. Well, I had to go to work on Monday but I took the afternoon off to see the Convention to its conclusion.

On pages 18-21 you will find the respected mouthings of the ever-green Dr. Keller. Any of you that were there will

realize that I can't hope to duplicate Joe Kennedy's introduction, so let it suffice to say that both the introduction and the speech were well worth hearing.

There. I was wondering what happened to the first part of Sunday night. We spent it in the smoke-filled confines of Earl Korshak's room. Before I arrived, the boys had talked by telephone to Charlie Tanner and he had agreed to act as chairman in '49. Please, let it not be said that it was "dirty politics" that sent the next convention there. It was a very sane and democratic method of deciding the place for '49. We asked all interested parties to the room and discussed the advantages and drawbacks of each prospective site. The final choice was heartily endorsed by all concerned. The meeting saved a great deal of trouble later. The first thirty memberships were spoken for that first night. Somebody gave me a pen and I wrote down the names. Starting, of course, with EEE, we continued down to numbers 25-30 which were reserved for the Canadian contingent. ((I'll be there for sure.))

Upon rereading the preceding paragraph, I see that I have given the impression that yours truly had a major part in the electioneering. Not wishing to fly false colors, let it be said that boys like Earl, Ed Counts, Rusty, Don Ford, and others were responsible for the decision.

Sam Moskowitz talked long and violently on the subject of commercialism in fan conventions. There is no need for further comment. I have already spoken my piece on pages 51-52.

The Financial Report was read and the mid-afternoon intermission was announced. During the break, a committee of seven, Sam Moskowitz, Earl Korshak, Milt Rothman, James Hevelin, EEEvans, John Millard and myself discussed the disposal of the profits. It was decided to give the usual fifty dollars to the next convention. If there was any surplus it was to go to the local club. There wasn't much left over.

On a motion by Dr. Barrett, seconded, in a body, by the MSFS and again by EE Evans, Cincinnati was selected the site of the '49 gathering. The only bickering evident, was caused by Will Sykora carrying on a private New York feud. It is not of general interest.

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SPACEWARP subscribers were the first in fandom to read about the events in Toronto!

Why don't YOU subscribe to Fandom's Top Monthly, so that you too will be in on future world scoops like this?

SPACEWARP 12 issues for one buck 3 months for two bits 1 thick copy for one thin dime	ARTHUR H. RAPP 2120 Bay Street Saginaw, Michigan, USA
--	--

((Sorry, no more copies of the July WARP left — you should have become a subscriber sooner!))

When you spend a DOLLAR to get your membership to the CInvention Committee, you get your DOLLAR'S worth — and more!

Like fools, about twenty odd people crowded the King Edward dining room for "a little snack" before the buffet. Well, after a fruit cocktail, turkey entree, and coffee, we were in no shape to do justice to the convention meal. The wonderful spread was the treat of Earl Korshak. The rumor has been going the rounds that he was just spending his winnings from the poker game of the night before. Well, the tab came to much more than his winnings! It was a magnificent gesture and on behalf of myself and the rest I would like to publicly thank Earl. I was sitting at a table with Earl Leeth, Dam and Pam, 4sj and EEEvans. I learned a lot about fandom that I had never before suspected. Even in their most casual conversation the pair from LA passed along many useful and interesting items.

Seems that somebody else also bought me a meal. Ah yes. Thanks for that wonderful steak dinner EEE!

Back to the studios for the buffet. Although the attendance was not quite as good as was expected, 86 turned up. A great many had to go home early in the afternoon and so missed the buffet. The food was very good — on a par with all the service that the Studios gave us.

Fan entertainment. There is so much to this that I don't know whether we can get it all in. At this point I am debating about reprinting the two newspaper articles. It is October 11th and there is already material for sixty pages. (Only forty-three are mimeed so far.) If they are in, you know that we decided it was worth holding the mag for them.

The first act of the evening featured those noted comedians, Weslie Long and Hoy Ping Pong. With George acting as narrator and Wilson supplying the sound effects, they gave an extremely amusing recitation of the two farcial articles that appeared in the local papers. When Bob was asked to make a sound like a doctor, some wag in the audience brought the house down with, "Quack." Stand up and take a bow, Millard.

On pages 53-54 appear the impromptu meanderings of one Robert Bloch. As far as I know, he had not done any preparation previous to Saturday night. I still don't see how he did it.

Before the audience had recovered from the Bloch Report, a strange being

wandered onto the stage and began to take things from a brief-case, all the while muttering something about "Thing-things." Don't know how Norm Stanley got his "Theory of Thing-things" way up in front on page 18, but there it is.

There is very little one can say about any of these phases of the entertainment. You just had to be there to appreciate them. It is not for me to spoil them by attempting either to eulogize or criticize.

Don't know whether it was Arturo or Milt at the piano, but whoever it was did a damn fine job on several classical pieces. The boys who were at Philly last year clamored so hard for "Ritual Fire Dance" that Rothman finally played it to keep them quiet. Milt hasn't lost a thing during the year.

Out from the wings flashed the mighty space-opera cast, wrecked on that, the only stage at Rai Purdy's. It was just as well that no space-opera authors were present to here that little parody. Perhaps, if they hadn't been laughing themselves sick, they might have sued for libel. For "Gaylord's Other Rocket Ship" see pages 39-40.

Bob Tucker asked for and received a few minutes of stage time to make a presentation to George O. Smith. Wilson presented Weslie with a very nice diploma covering his ancestry, tippling habits etc.

I would like to be able to take a page just to thank George O. Smith for all that he did for the Torcon. On Saturday night, we said to George, "We haven't got any fan entertainment. How's about you fixing something?" Then we promptly forgot it until Monday night. Although the space-opera and the clippings were outside ideas, everything else was planned and arranged by George. It is impossible to put into words the amount of work that he did for us, or the amount of thanks that is due him. Every opportunity that I have had in this mag, there has been a short "thank you" to George and this spot is no exception. Thanks, George, and I hope to see you in Cincy.

The Chairman made a few closing remarks, for which see the editorial. Dr. Barrett called the three of us, John, Beak and I, to the platform and led the as-

semblage in three cheers for the sponsors of the Torcon. In a very moving ending, Chan Davis played "Auld Lang Syne" and the audience joined in the singing of this song of good fellowship.

This just about wraps up this section of the TR. Unless this does not fill a page evenly, there will be no more of this chit-chat. That was some sentence, or is it possible that you don't recognize a two timing double negative?

The rest of this page will be filled with advertising. We hope that you like our policy of keeping all advertising in the back half of the mag.

So long, and thanks for sticking with me this far.

— 30 —

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You'll want to delve in the shelves of Smith's "Acres of Books" one of the largest second-hand book stores in the middle west, the place where Ed Counts recently got a copy of "The Outsider" for only a little over the original publisher's price.

And you'll want to renew the acquaintances and friendships which you made in Toronto and Philadelphia and Los Angeles, or, if you've never before attended a convention, you'll want to have the thrill of meeting authors and artists and fans of whom you have heard ever since you first started reading fantasy.

And so — start planning now, start saving now. And if you have a dollar that's lying around loose, stick it in an envelope and join the CONVENTION COMMITTEE.

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