

▲ FULL LENGTH ▲
ARTICLES

Number Two:
UP TO NOW

A history of fandom
as
Jack Speer
sees it.

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[Colophon from the original edition:]

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

Full Length Articles is ordinarily a purely FAPA magazine, but extra copies of this number will be made for distribution at the World Science Fiction Convention of 1939.

TABLE OF SUCCESSIVE TOPICS

The Beginnings; The First Staple War; The ISA-SFL Clash; The Heyday of Fantasy Magazine; The Decline and Fall of the Era.

New Fan Magazines, Fly-by-Night and Permanent; The Second Convention and the Shift of Power; The Second Fandom Finds Itself.

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The Situation in the West; The Order Begins to Crumble; The Decline and Fall of Wollheim; The Changing Tendency Among Fan Magazines; New Fandom's Struggle for Recognition; The Reaction Against Reaction.

PREFACE

A careful analysis of prefaces to histories and other books as well shows them to be occupied, almost without exception, in bemoaning the inaccuracies, limitations, and general worthlessness of the work being introduced. This will not be an exception.

This is a kind of cross between a set of memoirs and a history. I have tried to cover, at least thinly, all aspects of the purely fan field, but, as a glance at the table of topics will show, I am able to go much more into detail about those parts with which I am better acquainted. You might even become weary with the minuteness of detail in places. I extend my sympathies. I have tried, so far as possible, to make this history as objective as good history should be. I have been hard on my friends when they seemed on the shady side of the ledger, and have, I trust, never failed to give my enemies credit where due. Despite this, however, especially in accounts centering around June, 1938, the reader will do well to beware, for at that point I find myself unable to see Wollheim's actions as excusable, when, of course, they most probably are. On the other hand, since the object of this history is truth, rather than to make me popular, I have not leaned over backward with regard to my personal enemies.

In trying to cover everything at least thinly, I have relied upon unreliable memory, upon inferences from unauthoritative accounts, and in some cases, as in the origins of Michelism, upon pure guesswork—fairly good guessing I believe, however.

If I haven't already made it clear, let me say now that this doesn't pretend to be the final history of fandom—far, far from it. I only hope to make a connected beginning, perhaps to slam such a mass of misinformation at you that those who know will be bound to give the true accounts. When those accounts are in, when we have run a course of "vignettes of fan history" in the fanmags—then will be the time for the writing of a dependable history. The eventual historian or committee of historians will thus have a good groundwork for a better, fuller, and more accurate account than could possibly be supplied by any one fan, however experienced, working alone to write "the" history of fandom.

Since I have realized from the start that this couldn't be the history of fandom to stand for all time, I haven't made as great effort to check all points and fill in gaps as I might otherwise have—indeed, a large part of it has been put down from memory, in spare minutes at work. If it succeeds in conveying to new fans a composite picture of fandom, not too irreparably distorted, as one fan sees it, that's about all I have a right to hope for.

But I think the old-timers will find interest here, too, aside from the certain sport of picking out mistakes and omissions. Fwun thing, the truth about several matters is here generally revealed for the first time, since I can't put into history anything I know to be false.

I turn now to a more direct discussion of the subject-matter of the history—or memoirs, as you will.

It will be found to deal almost entirely with American fandom. There is no disrespect to the Tommies, Aussies, et al, in the fact that I have nevertheless called it a history of fandom rather than of American fandom. The latter title seemed that it might force me to leave out entirely all references to English fandom except where it was directly connected with an event in America, a limitation I didn't want.

This is a story, not a handbook, and emphasis is placed on the flow of events rather than the elements thereof. Fans in most cases have been briefly identified personally if at all, fan magazines have not been mentioned as much as their importance would warrant. And

professional s-f figures at the absolute minimum.

You will note the division of the history into periods. I acknowledge that the periods are much more strictly delineated than the actual conditions, but I have ample precedent in the writing of general history. And it seemed that it would be easier to recall the nature and context of the Schwartz-Wollheim feud if it were fitted neatly into a definite larger pattern, or of the Philadelphia Conference if emphasis were put on its place in a general trend of the times, and so on.

It might be well to here define my use of the terms "fandom" and "transition." A transition I conceive of as a period in which old structures are crumbling, new forces coming into being, and the entire nature of fandom in a state of flux. A "fandom" is a fairly stable stretch in which known elements work out to their conclusion thru interaction and development. I have thought of no transition before the first fandom, because it seemed to come in pretty much in the shape that would have been expected, without much doubt as to what its interests and activities would be. I may be wrong; I know practically nothing of the early years.

Without further ado, I conduct you to Page One.

THE BEGINNINGS

For this writer, mere guesses must suffice for the early contacts between fans. Many, probably, when editors no longer felt like carrying the discussion in the readers' columns, continued arguments over scientific matters in private correspondence, and some controversies on non-scientific points may very likely have also been continued privately after they had progressed too far for general interest. Or a particularly sparkling letter published might cause other readers to desire to write its author, aside from any particular points brot up. At any rate, many science fiction fans did contact each other, but for a time didn't realize that others were doing the same thing.

Forrest J Ackerman and alias Jack Darrow popularized the letter-every-month habit with regard to the professional magazines, and built up extensive correspondences. Then, according to McPhail, one year in the early thirties Forrest Ackerman took a trip east from his home in Californrynia, and visited many correspondence friends on the way. This helped unify the field.* Some local groups took to publishing official organs, which became the first fan magazines. The West Coast publication, *The Time Traveler*,** was the first to achieve general circulation. *Science Fiction Digest*, published at the other end of the country, must have gotten some mention in readers' columns, and built up a small circulation that was nevertheless nationwide, with some subscribers in England. This magazine eventually absorbed *The Time Traveler*, and shortly changed its name to *Fantasy Magazine*, to include facts pertaining to the weird fiction field. The issue after its second anniversary, *Fantasy Magazine* began dedicating issues to the Big Three of scientifiction, and to other special fields, including *Weird Tales*. Its first dedication was to the field-leading *Astounding Stories* of Street & Smith, and it received mention in *Brass Tacks*. When *Wonder's* time came, they did even more, seeing to it that every member of the SFL got a copy of that issue.

A bit earlier, taking cognizance of the existence of the fan world, Charlie Hornig, who turned out a few issues of the unsuccessful *Fantasy Fan*, and then teen-age managing editor of *Wonder Stories*, recommended to editor Gernsback the formation of a Science Fiction League. This was undertaken with enthusiasm, and being well featured by a commercial magazine of large circulation, attracted many scientifictionists to the fan field. At the same time a Swap Column and other features of interest to veteran "fans" were inaugurated. Later, the SFL Department began giving semi-annual Bachelor of Scientifiction tests which increased the interest of membership. It was the Golden Age of Fandom.

THE FIRST STAPLE WAR

In late 1934, Bob Tucker, a Brass Tacker of some standing, reported in *Brass Tacks* the formation of the spwsstfm (the initials were in capitals when used by him, but one of the first principles of the War was that warriors should not capitalize the name of the enemy, and this writer was on The Other Side)—the society for the prevention of wire staples in science fiction magazines.

* Ackerman's trip mentioned in the second paragraph is mythical. Forry says he made no such trip. (JS, 1994)

** *The Time Traveler* was not a West Coast publication. (JS, 1994)

At the head of the society was one dictator, Tucker. In later issues of Brass Tacks, the dictator reported new recruits of his society, and some months later duplicated his original announcement, in Wonder Stories' The Reader Speaks. One of the new recruits contributed two doughnuts to the society treasury, and was given a fool title, something like "high nincompoop." Another neophyte suggested rubber staples to replace the wire ones, and was also given an official title. One ironic sidelight in this war was that the next most prominent member of the spwsstfm was "ol' doc lowndes," royal pill roller for the dictator. Few knew that he actually was a medico of some sort, and none, certainly, suspected that one day he was to be the most liberal member of Wollheim's Michelist group.

And here Wollheim enters, in opposition to Tucker, Lowndes, and the other anti-staplers. We, he declaimed, have listened to this infamous proposition long enough. He therefore proclaimed the organization of the International and Allied Organizations for the Purpose of Upholding and Maintaining the use of Metallic Fasteners in Science Fiction (which he, mocking Tucker, initialed STF) Publications in the United States of America, Unlimited, and called for support from all red-blooded believers in the efficacy of metallic binders.

There followed a scramble for power and recruits. Espionage and counter-espionage were rife, and neither leader could know for certain that his most trusted lieutenant was not a spy. Membership in the IAOPUMUMSTFPUSA, Unltd, reached around twenty, and doubtless the spwsstfm was about the same. Titles were given to all, usually meaningless, the dictator stood alone at the head of his battallions, but Wollheim, as Grand High Cocolorum, had Kenneth Sterling (whether author of The Brain-Stealers of Mars, or another coincidentally having the same name, was never quite clear) as Exalted Grand Booleywag. There were two exceptions to the rule about titles. A recruit whom Wollheim suspected to be a spy was deprived of his, and young Speer was named Lord High Bradder, referring to his suggestion that magazines be bound with hand brads—paper fasteners, such as bind this publication.

Both armies issued official organs, tucker's d'journal, and Wollheim & Sterling's Polymorphannucleated Leucocyte. The PL was a scream, as was the membership certificate; doubtless d'journal was. too.

The War entered its penultimate stage, finding several episodes (chapters) of the anti-staplers in existence, and three or four Fortresses of Wollheim's men. It is said that when two Americans get together, they form a club. Two were all that were required to form a Fortress.

It was a crushing blow to the spwsstfm when the second issue of d'journal, upon being issued, was found stuck full of staples—sabotage, by spies! Tucker weakly quibbled about the difference between fan magazines, and science fiction magazines, at which his program was aimed, but his prestige was ruined. The New York Episode, in its entirety, went over to Wollheim.

An interesting commentary on the difference in the fan magazines of that day is that Fantasy Magazine scarcely mentioned the Staple War. Out in Oklahoma, McPhail wrote in his private magazine, Science Fiction News, that fans were growing tired of alphabetical societies. Several anti-alphabetical societies alphabetical societies were announced in Brass Tacks, and others expressed their weariness with it all in more dignified ways.

The war came to a sudden end. At the beginning of a Brass Tacks department toward mid-1935, Tremaine broke precedent by commenting on a letter to follow—the commentary in italics—saying some enigmatic things about the reader reading the letter slowly, to get the same feeling from it that he did. The letter was a report by someone of Tucker's home town or nearby,

stating that he was dead, and giving some of his last wishes. It shocked everyone. But professional publication moves slowly, and by the time that issue of *Astounding* was on the stands, Tremaine knew it was a fake, and, in private letters to interested fans, said he thought Tucker had known of the trick, and that he would publish nothing more with regard to the First Staple War. One of Wollheim's lieutenants talked with the dictator long distance. "The Staple War is definitely over," said Wollheim, "and we are working on something that will be lots more fun..."

THE ISA-SFL CLASH

Wollheim may have, to an extent, regretted his previous connections with foolishness when he launched into a serious and bitter indictment of *Wonder Stories*, in long letters to *The Reader Speaks*, concerning the quality of its pulp paper, type face, word count, and such other matters as the translation of stories from the German; he was anti-Nazi even then. But deeper causes for hate of Gernsback lay just under this.

A story by Wollheim, *The Man from Ariel*, was published by *Wonder* and never paid for. In working to get his due, Wollheim ran across many other young or beginning authors who had been similarly cheated. He published his findings in the last *Bulletin* of the TFG (succeeded by the *Phantagraph*).

The TFG, which has not been mentioned hereinbefore, was a small organization of rather more weird fans, which, at the time of its change of name from International Science Fiction Guild (it originated as the Impossible Story Club) was headed by Wilson Shepherd of Oakman, Alabama. When Wollheim came in, and Shepherd and Wollheim Publishers formed, the center of power began, unconsciously, to shift to the north. The first Terrestrial Fantascience Guild *Bulletins* were hektographed publications; the last was a large-size mimeo affair. In many respects, the TFG was before its time.

Publication of the facts against *Wonder Stories* resulted in the expulsion of Wollheim and a number of compatriots from the SFL. The last heard of this angle of the case, he had been offered six months' probationary reinstatement, and said he would probably come back in, with his tongue in his cheek.

The XSFL was a name the expelled ones took. Most, or all of them were members of the International Cosmo-Science Club, which about this time changed its name to the International Scientific Association. And it was the New York Branch of this Association, supported by other ISA members, which thereupon took up the cudgel in support of its members, and became the rallying point for disaffected elements, rather than the TFG. The staff of *Fantasy Magazine*, also under attack by Wollheim, made common cause with Gernsback and Hornig against the ISA. The result was the climax of the Old Fandom.

This writer regrets that he is unable to give an account of the war that followed, having had nothing to do with it and having heard little of it until much later, when it was referred to rather than described. THE NYB-ISA sang songs of their battle against Gernsback; songs that might be adapted for modern singing. In some way they must have gained publicity for their charges against *Wonder Stories*, for to their work is ascribed some of the credit or responsibility for the fall of Gernsback's *Wonder* not many months after.

The NYB-ISA published *The International Observer*, a mimeographed magazine with a rather heavy sprinkling of science. The idea of the ISA in its later history was to harness science-fiction and science together, and the *Observer* straddled the fence between these two interests.

One day the NYB went off on a picnic and ended up in Philadelphia; the First Eastern Science Fiction Convention had crept up on them unawares. A good time was had by all, we are told, and they agreed that it was a great idea.

THE HEYDAY OF FANTASY MAGAZINE

For yet a while Fantasy Magazine ruled the field. In the later stage of the old period, various vagrant fan magazines began to crop up again, but none attempted to enter into competition with FM. Jim Blish' Planeteer, based on an old suggestion of Wollheim's to Street & Smith, put fiction first and Esperanto, etc, second. The Phantagraph went thru a number of changes of format under Shepherd & Wollheim, at first mainly club news and ultra-"fan" discussions, and later purely literary. The International Observer apparently was not considered to be in direct competition with Fantasy Magazine, its contents being mostly science and fan doings rather than news on the pros. Numerous individual publications, single issue and single-copy "pass arounds" were being done, but of course could not threaten FM's primacy. The boys were feeling around.

Even then, pseudonyms ran riot among the fans. The Greater New York Science Fiction League was said to be populated mainly with pseudonyms, half of which were Frederik Pohl. Willy the Wisp flitted around, always wherever Wollheim had been, reporting doings from a suspiciously Wollheimish point of view, as in the fight that resulted in George Gordon Clark's quitting the field.

The SFL continued, gaining new members every month, tho how interested most of the members were is problematical. Two or three B Stf tests were conducted, in all, the returns on the last one never being published. Superficially, all was serene.

Then things began to happen.

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ERA

Wonder has been sold! italicized FM's Science Fiction Eye.

In subscription, Wonder was doing rather badly, even compared to other pulps, and the depression had hit all of them pretty hard. (What depression?) But that is in the history of science fiction, and this is a history of fandom. Some of the life seemed to go out of the SFL toward the last, tho perhaps it is only my fancy. At any rate, with the disappearance of the parent magazine in early 1936, the SFL ceased to be, despite its imposing list of somebodies on the board of directors, which TWS at this writing still carries. The huge Chicago org of 50 or so authors, readers, and fans lost interest in itself. All over the country three-man chapters gave up the ghost; in England the young SFA took them over.

The sale of Wonder was almost the last big story FM carried. Conrad H Ruppert's Printing Service could no longer print the magazine, and the bunch in Everett, Pa, had done one or two issues. But FM was skipping months, and a long interval elapsed before the last one. They didn't know at the time that it was the last, altho they acknowledged the situation to be bad.

The rights to the name Fantasy Magazine were turned over to Willis Conover, and it was expected that it would be combined with the Science-Fantasy Correspondent of Corwin Stickney. But personal differences arose, and while the S-F C, later the Amateur Correspondent, filled out FM's subscriptions, Conover was out of the deal. Many people resented the transfer of their

subscriptions to the AC, since it catered largely to weird, as had Charles Hornig's Fantasy Fan, which was not considered competitive with FM during its brief life. Presently Stickney frankly stated that he did not aim at fans as such at all; that he intended his magazine primarily to aid young authors aiming at the pros, thinking that that was a larger group. There was a great deal of entirely unscientific advertising, and a stamp department for which dyed-in-the-wool fans cared not a whit. FM had had, toward the end, no more than 50 subscribers; the Correspondent probably had very few of its own. A printed magazine, it cost money to publish. At length, like FM, it appeared less frequently and finally ceased, but the title passed to no one else.

One reason for the decline in fan interest was the decline in the science-fiction field, on which fandom then depended closely. It was a long time after the last Wonder before Thrilling Wonder appeared. Astounding had reached its plateau under Tremaine, and Sloane's Amazing sank slowly into the depths. Naturally, interest in a fan field dependent upon these would decline.

Thus the First Fandom slipped away.

NEW FAN MAGAZINES, FLY-BY-NIGHT AND PERMANENT

The European Middle Ages were a period of transition, yet they had a distinctive civilization of their own, even tho it lasted in its full state only two or three centuries and carried in it the seeds of its early destruction. Similarly, the First Transition in fandom was a system that couldn't last, yet was quite distinctive while it did exist.

The Old Fandom was gone, but being a fan had been too much fun to be given up just like that merely because the professional magazines hit the downgrade. Old friends and enemies—those that remained—sought, perhaps unconsciously, a new set of interests under which they could continue their contacts.

There was yet one center of the fan world that seemed as strong as ever. The NYB-ISA was now acknowledged the leader of the fifty or so who remained with the hobby, and the ISA's International Observer rose to new heights, putting out one issue specially designed to appeal to science-fiction fans rather than scientists.

But the hegemony of the ISA did not discourage other attempts to take the place of Fantasy Magazine. Olon Wiggins' Science Fiction Fan ran three printed issues, all at a great financial loss to the editor and associate, and Wiggins was forced to conclude that there weren't enough interested fans left to support a printed magazine's high cost. Others discovered the same bitter truth. Hayward S Kirby's Science Fiction World flared and died. Daniel McPhail expanded his Science Fiction News, first published only for his own amusement, into a carbon-copied magazine for circulation in the Oklahoma Scientifiction Association and exchanges outside the state. He was later able to print it, and made a mighty effort for high circulation. Then he moved away from the printing shop. The Philadelphians put forth their effort, Fantasy Fiction Telegram. The Atom and the early Helios, both printed, belong to a slightly later time.

Shepherd and Wollheim's Phantagraph continued to mutate with every issue, passing thru a bewildering succession of formats. They also issued the hektoed Astonishing Stories and made a bid for commercial publishing with Fanciful Tales, from which Weird Tales has reprinted Lovecraft's The Nameless City (it is not infrequent for professional magazines to take stories that appeared first in the amateur publications). Then Wollheim broke with Shepherd, and took in another ISA New Yorker to form Michel-Wollheim Publications. From their printing press came the Phantagraph, mainly, by this time, for the amateur press associations Wollheim belonged to, and their mimeograph produced the Mijimags, the book of ghughu, and other goshawfuls. Ego-Pohl gave the world two issues of Mind of Man. Jim Blish of The Planeteer retired with the passing of the old days, and the title The Planeteer passed to new fan Taurasi. All attempts at printed magazines were failures.

Well. If you couldn't print them profitably, what was to be done? With the supreme Fantasy Magazine gone, every fan could aspire to be an editor, and most of them were. The mimeograph came into wide use, but the cost of the machine and stencils was too much for most fans.

Gradually hektographed publications began to point the way. Which came first after the TFG Bulletin the writer does not know. "A Taurasi Publication" appeared on many little hektoed efforts. The Science Fiction Fan, after a time, resumed via hektograph. But to the Science Fiction Collector should go the credit for elevating hektoed work to a presentable level. One day fans thruout the country got post cards announcing a new fan magazine to be published by a guy named Morris S Dollens, Jr. They didn't even know how to pronounce "Dollens" but some

bought. The first issues were mostly fiction, by the editor. But material began to come in from other sources, and the Collector expanded. Several times Dollens wavered between monthly and every-three-weekly issuance, conflicting statements even appearing in the same issue, pages of which were done at different times. The contents never did get very good, but somehow fans liked them.

In conjunction with Hayward Kirby, Dollens tried to organize the Fantasy Fiction League; its organ, Fantasy Fiction Digest, was a twin of the S-F Collector, and was mailed with it, sometimes combined with it. The organization was a failure, as were many others that “juveniles with Napoleonic complexes” attempted: The Phantasy Legion, the Science Fiction Advancement Association (last to go, tho it died in spirit early), the Fantasy Fans’ Fraternity, the Jules Verne Prize Club—many of these began in the old days, but reached their “peaks” in these years of flux. Most of them were never anything more than a name, a membership card (perhaps), and an official organ. Some excitement was added, where there were dues, in charges and counter-charges of financial crookedness.

Dollens also did illustrating for the hektoed Science Fiction Fan and other fan magazines. And then he had to drop out, apparently due to parental pressure because of the time his hobby occupied. Philadelphia’s Baltadonis took over his Collector after a lapse of some months.

THE SECOND CONVENTION AND THE SHIFT OF POWER

The Second Eastern States Science Fiction Convention was held in New York, under the auspices of the ISA. Philadelphia attended, and fans from New Jersey and elsewhere in the east brot the attendance up to around 40. It was here, legend says, that there was first suggested a World Science Fiction Convention, by Donald Wollheim.

Says Chief Lotsachatter McPhail, “Then in walk Julius Schwartz and shake hand and smoke peace pipe with Donald and his warriors who have been on war path for many moon.” The handshake ended the last lingering vestige of the old days. But at the same time, the Schwartz group gave way to Wollheim and Sykora as leaders of fandom.

But the days of the ISA were numbered. Sykora was interested in science as well as stf, and had a home laboratory of his own. The name of the group certainly sounded like a scientific club, but here it was, being run largely by and for science-fiction fans. Controversies as to what it was originally intended to be are too vague to go into here. At any rate, not long after, Sykora, getting ready to enter college, there to pursue a scientific course, felt that continuing as President of the ISA, the position he then held, would be an unjustifiable waste of time. In his letter of resignation he worked himself up to a highly emotional mood, and, indicting fans for their useless activities, branded them as egotists chiefly desiring to see their names in print, and too lazy to pursue scientific careers. Copies were sent to all ISA members.

Sykora had quite a following, and such a resignation exploded a bombshell in the club. Of the four offices, one was vacant, Sykora resigned another, a third was occupied by a gentleman who was in the hospital at just this time, and the fourth was held by Wollheim. From the other officer and from the NYB he got carte blanche support. Some discussion was carried on with ISA members outside New York. The exact proceedings are obscure, but no formal vote was taken, and Wollheim declared the club dissolved. This legal omission Sykora seized upon in an attempt to reorganize the club two years later.

Financial settlements were made, there were shoddy incidents, and the end of the ISA was

anything but glorious. A final issue of the International Observer was devoted almost entirely to news of the dissolution, and arguments against Sykora. Down toward the end of Wollheim's general news column, he suggested that fans who were really interested join the rising Science Fiction Association, which had headquarters in England. A surprising number did so. Wollheim's prestige was on the rise.

Fantasy Magazine was gone and the ISA was gone. There was no longer any single organization or group which could claim the headship. There was a general concession of prestige to Wollheim personally, but aside from this, all central tendencies were gone.

THE SECOND FANDOM FINDS ITSELF

The field had been leveled to the ground; it was time for the emergence of a new order. If no new order did emerge, then fandom was finished.

As there had been a scramble to take Fantasy Magazine's place, so there was a scramble to take the ISA's place as leading fan organization. Several New York clubs made only partially successful attempts. Philadelphia always rides thru storms with the least change, and the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society was still functioning as stoutly as ever. They called the Third Convention. As the time for that gathering, October 30, 1937, drew near, there was talk of using it to form a federation of fantasy clubs, since many local groups, such as the Los Angeles SFA-SFL and the Oklahoma Scientifiction Association, as well as specialized horizontal guilds, were doing or had shown capability of doing well in spite of the collapse of the headship.

Thrilling Wonder's place in the professional field had been found, and things there had steadied down. The SFL was continued, and there was somewhat more incentive to form local groups when they could be part of the larger SFL and their meetings reported in TWS.

The new Science Fiction Fan was beginning to be recognized as the leading fan magazine. A multitude of minor publications continued to appear, and more were being projected all the time. The cheap hektograph was definitely the medium.

So much for the means. What was to be the end? What were fans to talk about? Most of them were tired of discussing stories; some very active fans no longer bought and read the science-fiction magazines regularly. The fan magazines at this time were filled mainly with news of—themselves. A typical column of gossip would report that A had given B the rights to his magazine's name, that C would illustrate the allegedly October issue of D's magazine, that E and F were going to New York to see G before the Convention, that H had broken his association with I, and would publish their magazine alone, on the hekto instead of mimeo.

The nearest thing to a contemporary recognition of the change that had occurred was Sam Moskowitz' "This Changing Tendency Among Fan Magazines," in which he called attention to their growing independence and asserted that all professional magazines might go out of existence and fandom would continue on its way.

Fans had found a new center of interest: themselves and their own activities.

ONE ANALYSIS OF WOLLHEIM

We have seen much of Mr. Wollheim up to now in this work. We will see much more. It can almost be said that the story of the Second Fandom is the story of Wollheim.

A true analysis of his character would be very valuable, but unfortunately one facet of his nature is to make everyone who knows him either his ally or his enemy, and there are few neutrals. This writer is not one.

Donald Allan Wollheim, known variously as DAW, daw, the W, and “the No. 1 rat of fandom” read science fiction almost from the first days of Amazing, and before that, like many scientifictionists, had perused Burroughs, Haggard, Verne, and Wells. He is thus well grounded in science fiction, tho he could not be said to be by any means unique in this. He is one of the older generation of fans, who turned 21 years in the First Fandom or before. He has frequently shown a contempt for those chronologically younger than he, and makes much of “immature” viewpoints, tho he himself, in his political beliefs, is more like a youth of college age. He entered fandom at its very beginning, and has seen it all the way thru.

In nationality, he is a German Jew. He has lived all his life in New York, and tho he has traveled around quite a bit, in point of fact knows little of anything but New York City and New York City thoughts; and those he sees from the viewpoint of his personal situation.

His physical appearance lends itself readily to caricature. Azygous, a mysterious writer of mid-1938 who turned out to be Wollheim’s friend Dick Wilson, described him as “gentlman with teeth.” Baltadonis, Philadelphia’s premier artist, turned out several hilarious and insulting cartoons emphasizing his protruding teeth and weak chin. A person who disliked him could easily be cruel, and this drove him to return deeper hatred.

There can be little doubt that he rates high in intelligence, but his nature is such that it is frequently misdirected. He showed good ability at judging the effects of use of certain tactics, and was a master of bitter rhetoric, at piling up evidence.

At first he had no extreme political views. Like most people in America, he disliked Fascism and Nazism, and probably distrusted Communism as well. Thru his associations with John B Michel, however, and later with Frederik Pohl, he came in contact with the extreme Red views of these two, took to attending Young Communist meetings and reading their literature; so that finally, tho in July 1936 he was hoorahing Landon for the Republican presidential nomination, by November he had embraced Communism.

One important element in his beliefs is that “when something is black it is not white.” This implied, unconscious division of the world into two kinds of things, with no in-betweens, led him to hasty judgment, which, once reached, he fiercely defended: willingness to fight at the drop of a hat; and maximum opposition to anything he opposed at all. He resembled E. Haldeman-Julius in this respect, that when he hated something, he turned loose at it with all guns.

He was seldom without several fights on his hands. It is reported that he claimed to get fun from running fans out of the fan field. His methods of attack, moreover, tended to build up hatred rather than break it down. On a few occasions he made up with old enemies, but these cases were never admissions that he had been wrong. Of course, like everyone else, he was justified in his own mind in the things he did, and fought for what he believed right.

Wollheim is a person of high ability whose nature and environmental influences tend to embroil him in fights, without sufficient consideration, and he plunges into them with everything he has.

THE NATURE OF WOLLHEIM'S DICTATORSHIP

So much for the man. What did he do?

New fans will find that Wollheim was frequently referred to as a dictator. How much of a dictator was he, and how did he do it?

It must, at once, be noted that his control was by no means absolute. Not everything that he opposed, during his ascendancy, failed; not everything that he supported succeeded; not every fan he tried to drive out of the field allowed himself to be driven out. But the American Fantasy Association, an attempt at an American counterpart of the SFA, which was largely British, received no support from Wollheim, and failed, tho had he thrown his weight behind it it might have easily succeeded. The founders—Wiggins, Taurasi, and Louis Kuslan—were at that time more or less friends of Wollheim, and he did nothing to oppose their effort, but he ignored it entirely. And so it goes.

When Wollheim said anything, everyone sat up and listened, whether they liked him and it or not. Consequently, his attacks on fans and institutions were more effective than similar efforts of others. And such was his ability in this line, that he could make his victim feel like an outcast even tho the latter refused to get out.

The W drew around him a circle of fans who, in their own right, would have been counted as leaders in the field, but, in the clique, were overshadowed by Wollheim. He became the symbol for what the group did, and received credit and blame for things that were really the idea and/or work of his friends. These compatriots—Michel, Frederik Pohl, and Lowndes were the most prominent—were frequently referred to as “Wollheim stooges,” with Michel as “prize stooge.” Possibly picking it up from a remark of Speer’s, they called themselves the *Quadrumvirate*, and also spoke of themselves in general terms of “we” and “our group.” Whether they actually were stooges, slaves to Wollheim’s beck and call, and carrying out his orders, is doubtful. The group managed to keep a united front against dissension in all consequential matters, and this led many to believe that they represented one man’s will. It is most likely that Wollheim was arbiter, overruled only by an overwhelming majority of his satellites and lesser lights, but that, due to a common outlook, divergent views among them were rare.

Besides the principal lieutenants mentioned above, there was a more or less indeterminate group of minor fans who were seriously considered “stooges” of Wollheim: principally, in 1938, Young Communists.

With this group, then, and his own powers and prestige, Wollheim exerted a great deal of influence in the fan world, but to say that he was dictator is to misapprehend the conditions.

THE FOUNDING OF THE FAPA

The stage is set; the *dramatis personae* are known to you. If the story were now dramatically perfect, the curtain would go up on the Third Eastern Science Fiction Convention.

But another element, full of significance and typical of the Second Fandom, had already been introduced.

Among the myriad organizations that dotted the later months of the period of the First Transition, the Fantasy Amateur Press Association did not stand out. Some kind of a fraternity for editors; Dan McPhail had had some such idea. Well, if you’re the joining kind, go ahead and see what it’s about.

Once a member of the National, United, and other Amateur Press Associations, it was inevitable that a fan should think of adapting the idea for s-f fan use, as it was tailor-made for the hobby. The idea was simple and unusual: Publishers published when and what they desired, and paid the expenses of their own publications, making the required number of copies, which were sent to the official mailing office. In return, each member, at intervals, got a packet containing a copy of each of the efforts that had been sent the mailing bureau since the previous mailing.

Wollheim early began dawdling with the idea of a science fiction amateur press association, but only on urging from Bill Miller, Michel and others did he move toward its accomplishment. Getting started was the big task, but Wollheim, more than any other fan, was in a position to get it going in a hurry. Nevertheless, he found the going very difficult. Persuading fans to join up, pay the 50¢ dues, and then go to the expense of making up 50 copies of a magazine, for an infant organization, was like persuading them to a tooth-pulling.

Natheless, by hook and by crook and brute strength Wollheim rallied enough material to put out a fair-sized mailing; much of it, of course, Michel-Wollheim special publications, broadsides for new members, and left-over copies of magazines, such as the *Mijimag*s, previously for sale.

The first mailing, going to prospects as well as members, brot in a goodly flood of applications, raising the rolls to over twenty. Another large block held back only until it was made clear that they did not have to publish anything for the FAPA—any fan activity during the preceding year qualified a person for membership.

Thereafter applications continued in a more or less steady stream until, by mid-1938, the full quota of 50 was filled, and further applicants began to be put on the waiting list, to be given places as members might vacate them.

The FAPA mailings were important because they removed from editors the obligation to turn out something that subscribers would pay for. Tho many publishers made sincere efforts to turn out magazines as good, on a small scale, as the subscription fan magazines, the actual compulsion was absent, and an editor, if he wished to brave adverse comment, could devote his entire magazine to attacks on other fans, sociological declamations, purely personal opinions of hardly any interest to anyone, or very rotten amateur science fiction.

MICHELISM AND THE THIRD CONVENTION

Ethiopia was conquered; civil war was raging in Spain between Right and Left; Japan pressed its invasion of China. Particularly in Communist groups thruout the country, anti-Fascists were saving “Why can’t we do something? Isn’t there some way we can fight for what we believe in?” And that urge was subconsciously afflicting Michel, Wollheim, Pohl, Lowndes, Gillespie, and other Red fans as strongly as it hit their comrades who knew not science-fiction.

As fans, they were used to diverting their energies into their hobby, and it was in the fan field that they found an outlet to their desire to fight for their convictions. Here they were, all science fiction fans as well as Young Communists. There was Rothman in Philadelphia, a fan with socialist leanings. In England *Novae Terrae*, SFA organ, carried world-conscious articles every issue. McPhail and Speer, out in Oklahoma, had been exchanging the *Insurgent Epistle* and the *Loyalist Lion*. Fans were interested in such things; here was a group of intelligent young men who needed only to be shown the Communist program to become its advocates and defenders against fascism. Not until this idea was clearly established in their minds did they call upon past

experience for their arguments—the alleged Gernsback delusion that the purpose of science-fiction was to create scientists—which the collapse of the ISA disproved—when actually it had only resulted in creating dreamers, idealists—whose dreams turned to economic and political problems.

These thoughts they discussed among themselves, but scarcely a whisper of them leaked out before they were ready to release them. Wollheim had asked for time, at the Philadelphia Convention, to read a speech written by Michel, who, owing to a speech impediment, would not have been able to deliver it effectively. But the fact that Daw read the speech, and then, alone, defended it, led many fans to suspect that the article was more Wollheim's work than he would admit, and that the movement was termed "Michelism" only because "Wollheimism" would have sounded like self-praise.

The gathering was utterly unprepared for it all. There was a long and rather rambling discourse upon Fascist aggression, the purpose of science-fiction, and other unclear things, concluding with a resolution which, had it been read first, might have enabled the listeners to follow the speech. The resolution proposed to put the Convention on record as favoring a scientific-socialist world state, and opposing military ideologies and "barbarism" in all its forms. It was so worded that rejecting it would be difficult, as placing the rejecters in an unfavorable light—but—accept it? What had it to do with stf? Still, standing alone, few people would find much fault with it.

But a very great number found fault with such a subject being introduced into a gathering of science-fiction fans. Unprepared as they were, no very intelligent opposition was put up, but personal enemies of the Wollheim, such as Sykora, led an arguing opposition which tangled the debate down till it was wrangling about possibilities of a World State.

Finally, a vote was taken. Of those who voted, twelve opposed the resolution. Eight, who had previously been lined up to vote for it, did so ("O noble eight! O thoughtless twelve!" quoth Wollheim later). Many of those present, including most of the adults, did not vote.

From a historical viewpoint, this resolution threw whatever else happened at the Convention into the shade, in its lasting effects, but, as we shall see, one other important result grew out of the gathering—the Wollheim-Moskowitz feud.

LATER DEVELOPMENT OF MICHELISM

The period of secrecy for the Michelists was over; now they discharged all their accumulated broadsides thru every available channel, and for months they had the argument to themselves. In accounts of the Convention, in the SFFan and the SFCollector (this was before Baltadonis and Wollheim became enemies), Wollheim took a great deal of space to praise the new movement.

In an ill-starred article for *Novae Terrae*, Wollheim committed the program to advocacy of support for the Communist International.

Unfortunate for them, too, was the formation of the Committee for the Political Advancement of Science Fiction, which, it appears, never got to be officially going. Two issues of their publication, the *Science Fiction Advance* ("vance") were published, full of angles on and repetition of their ideology. The CPASF was composed of the New York group of Young Communist Leaguers, plus Richard Wilson for reporter, as editor of the weekly *Science-Fiction News Letter*. The fact that the other members were Young Communists all, their flagrant

advocacy of Communism, and Wollheim's *Novae Terrae* article convinced the great majority of fans that the object of the movement was to Communistize fandom. The initials CPASF were interpreted "Communist Party's Agitators in Scienti-Fandom," and Baltadonis cartoons thus depicted them—very unflatteringly.

Nonetheless, during these months the Michelists made a few half-conversions. Most unexpected of these was Wollheim's rapprochement with Ackerman. Some kind of a feud had long existed between them, apparently over nothing more serious than Ackerman's advocacy of the international language Esperanto, and his bent toward playing with words, as in puns and scientific combinations. Ackerman, like Rothman and others, had socialist leanings, and was willing to be a fellow-traveler with the Michelists and extend them aid.

The leading English readily accepted the appellation of Michelists, tho they were far from advocating the Communist program, and their pages were laid open to Michelism.

Despite all this, the movement couldn't seem to get going, and by Spring, 1938, opposition began to take form. Speer, tho perhaps as socialistically inclined as any, elected to defend Fascism in some of its aspects and, gradually becoming better acquainted with Communism and Communist strategy, adopted harrying tactics in his FAPA publications, correspondence, and elsewhere. In the Los Angeles publication, *Imagination!*, Frederick Shroyer haphazardly denied the allegations of the Michelists, and for a few issues a hot exchange of articles took place between him and Wollheim, others joining in. Rothman, tho friendly with the Michelists, preferred to raise objections to many of their statements, and occupied a no-man's-land all his own.

Then the second type of opposition became more vocal, with articles denouncing the introduction of "politics" into "stf," published in magazines of Taurasi, Moskowitz, &c.

We can now trace the various points of departure from the slender line of Michelist reasoning. In the first place, several fans refused to take them seriously. There is so much of mimic seriousness, insincere feuds, in fandom, that they looked upon Michelism as an invention for the purpose of keeping Wollheim in the public eye. Second, the largest group, perhaps half of fandom at that time, questioned the assumption that fandom must needs have any other purpose than the amusement derived from it. Those who did not fully accept this nevertheless had their assurance weakened, and encountering more flaws further along the Michelist line, dropped the more readily. Another not inconsiderable bloc granted that fandom might have an object beyond that, but claimed that it was success in the professional field by and bye, self-expression, or the encouraging of fans to pursue scientific careers or perhaps just to teach them more science, in sugar-coated form, than the average man knew. Even among those who accepted the view that science fiction must help create a better world, there were many who did not subscribe to the declaration that the only justification for the activities of fandom was working for a scientific-socialist world state. And of those that did, some so disliked the Michelist methods and Wollheim personally that they refused to cooperate. Many who believed in Michelist ideals rejected the hope that fandom could do anything toward furthering them.

At times the Michelists seemed to be saying that their only object was to awaken interest in things sociological. Wollheim made a belated effort to relax the restrictions somewhat when, in an article in the deluxe SFA quarterly, *Tomorrow*, he stated that the lines had been extended to those fans who worked for progress in any form—Esperanto, peace movements, etc, even tho they were not advanced enough to accept Communism as yet. But the damage had been done, and by the fall, 1938, it was felt that Michelism, tho it had left a permanent mark upon fandom,

was a thing of the past, and had failed to attain its objectives. The old guard of the Michelists, refusing to admit defeat, continued to plug away.

IPO

Less important than the FAPA, but still significant of the Second Fandom, was the Oklahoma Institute of Private Opinion, which set out to find how fans felt on various questions of the day.

As the name indicates, it was a take-off from the American Institute of Public Opinion (the Gallup Poll). The idea grew out of Speer's curiosity about the average age of fans, and he had given it considerable thought when he remarked to Wiggins, his principal correspondent at the time, "Why doesn't someone start an International Institute of Private Opinion to find out what fans think on such matters?" Wiggins failed to react, but next letter Speer included a depiction of the make-up of a card in such a questionnaire. OFW replied that he would back him to the limit if he should wish to try this trick.

The ballots were to be mailed out with SFFan, but at this point Wiggins made the first of his bewildering series of changes of address; as the first questions were to concern the possibility of a fantasy federation, and the Third Convention loomed near, Speer purchased hekto and pencil, ran off some dim cards, included stamps for return stuck in slits in the cards (a trick tested with Wilson), and sent them out to around thirty scientifictionists, bringing the number up to 40 thru personal correspondence. Thereafter all cards were mailed with SFF (save a month or two when SFF's circulation went below 40), and the number of cards sent was held at 40 except on one or two occasions, when 41 slipped by.

Naturally, returns on the first poll were rather small, many thinking it a practical joke, but the results were printed in SFFan and a new batch of cards distributed; and with choice of better questions as a result of fans' votes on what to ask, the popularity of the poll increased, the number of replies rising from around 15 at first to around 30 toward the last (there were twelve polls in all, extending over a period of nearly two years). Speer attempted to get cards especially to those in the habit of answering, but Wiggins gave little cooperation along that line.

In the first poll, sent out by himself, Speer had sought to obtain a balance between top-flight fans, run of the mill, and borderliners, but when the poll went under SFF this was no longer possible; the geographical breakdowns, based on postmarks, proved fairly significant. With the decline of the SFFan in the esteem of the non-Wollheimists, the group covered became less truly representative, and returns on several questions less trustworthy.

Several of the results on questions stand out. The ratings of favorite fan magazines, and favorite professional magazines, tho of no permanent interest, were enjoyed at the time, and showed SFFan leading the fan magazines, and Astounding way out ahead of the other pro's. On the first poll asking that the three "top" fans be named, Wollheim's position was shown by his gaining first place with well over twice the points of his nearest rival, and all down the line, ratings showed the general opinion of fans at the time with regard to leading fans. The question all were waiting for was Michelism, but as this was to be presented at the same time as the religious question, Speer found it advisable for several reasons to delay a good many months before presenting them, and by the time they were asked, the Michelist vote was infinitesimal. The age of fans was found to cluster around 18 years; in nationality, German blood held a plurality, with Italian, Jewish, and Russian far down the line, contrary to what the fans' names

might lead one to expect; Anglo-Saxon was strong. Not very successful attempts were made to get definitions of “science fiction” and “real fans.” Leading fan writers and artists were named.

The last four polls, certain earlier questions were re-asked to determine the shifts of opinion, but the change in SFF’s constituency relative to fandom as a whole rendered them of questionable value. Wollheim continued as “top” fan by a narrow margin.

Along the same lines as the IPO were questions of the Novae Terrae Panel of Critics, which ran several questionnaires of about 20 questions each, Other similar institutions that can hardly be called imitations were the PSFS inquisition into the best stf author of 1938, and surveys by the weeklies SFNL and Le Vombiteur re favorite fantasy films, and best-remembered stf tales.

ghughu AND FOOFOO

This world-shaking conflict must be looked upon as a Second Fandom counterpart of the First Staple War; indeed, ghughu is probably the thing Wollheim began working on at the conclusion of that war. (Some of the fighters apply the Staple War rules regarding capitalization of the opposition’s name—ghughu:FooFoo for this writer.)

ghughu was a burlesque on religion, the combination “gh” being frequently applied in such words as ghod and demighod, gholy ghraile, etc, the cult worships ghughu, who, they claim, is wollheim. FooFooists maintain that the real ghughu is a beetle-bodied monster living on the planet vulcan, and Wollheim but his tool. Their organization is essentially ecclesiastical, with high priest john b michel at its head, and the general title for lower members archbishop for their respective cities. Where more than one is in the same city, other titles come into play, such as archdeacon infernal of all ghu, ghuardian of the gholy graile, saint, etc.

FooFoo had Its Origin in the Use of That Syllable by The Prophet Bill Holman, in His comic page, “Smokey Stover” and His daily cartoons for newspapers thruout the country. Schoolchildren took to making up foo proverbs (“foo” is also a common noun) of their own, and the West Coast punsters were not exempt. Mary Corrine Gray, known as Pogo, established the Order of FooFoo with herself as Hi Priestess and Ackerman her Right-Hand Man. The idea having independently occurred to Speer, Ackerman put him in touch with Pogo, and he was forthwith dubbed Royal General of FooFoo and also referred to as the Left-Hand Man. Later, a Midl-Man was appointed, also Handi-Maiden and Handi-Man to the Hi Priestess. Later titles conferred by the Royal General in the Hi Priestess’ name, and eventually confirmed by a printed permanent membership card signed and countersigned, were such as Grand Vizier, Chief Scientist, Poetess Laureate, and enigmatic ones like Proselytus Prime, Sideralis Beta, Vanday Oon, etc.

As can be seen, the titles are more those of a military monarchy than of a church, and FooFoo is more a Burlesque on ghu rather than a Burlesque on that which ghudom mimics.

No more than did the staple organizations, did either of these groups gain a great number of acknowledged members (tho ghudom claims that all who have ever heard of ghughu are thenceforth purple-souled and saved despite themselves, and Foomen claim for their rank and file all who speak foo proverbs), but since, unlike the staplists, they have never come to a showdown, the division promises to be more or less a permanent tradition in fandom. It cuts across other allegiances, and is never taken seriously, Many people regard it as simply silly.

Mention might be made here of other mock organizations which appeared from time to time. There were the Vombi, an unofficial group, who went around saving, “It’s utterly

Vombish,” and explaining the root “vomb” in such ways as, “If that chair you’re sitting in turned into a stack of Bar-O at 15¢ for two cans, that would be Vombish.” There was the Loyal and Benevolent Protective Order of Wollheim Stooges, which apparently had as its aim the discrediting of use of the term “stooge” by pretending that it was all absolutely true; their ranks were theoretically open to all who had ever disagreed with Will Sykora. Robert G. Thompson, DTm, tried to form a Temponautical Society and was opposed by the Anti-Temponautical Society; both proposed publications but it seems that neither ever saw print (“temponautical” means “time-traveling”), And Bob Tucker achieved some early success with WAFFF!, the meaning of the initials of which is known only to members, who must qualify with a proof that the world is flat.

THE ATHEISM ISSUE

Especially in view of our examination of ghughu, it is high time we looked at the fan attitude on religion. Many theistic fans joined ghughu without knowing what it was, and tho they subsequently repudiated it, their souls were said to still be dyed a deep purple.

When the November, 1937, Cosmic Tales carried, as what was to be the last of Wollheim’s Phantaflexion columns, an article later reprinted in the first Science Fiction Advance as “Science Fiction and Religion,” it seemed that another bombshell had been dropped into fandom from the hand of the genial W. Some months later appeared “Anent Atheism and Stf” in Imagination!, which debated the possibly question-begging proposition that scientifictionists were scientifictionists because they were atheists, rather than atheists because they were scientifictionists, as Wollheim argued. “Among Our Mems” in the same publication (“Madge”), frequently had the information, “Atheist.” sandwiched into some obscure place. It became customary for new correspondents to inquire each others’ religious stands, or to state them without inquiry, as a natural part of getting acquainted.

In the old days of the first and second periods of professional science fiction, the readers’ columns had frequently blazed in debates on atheism, but not since fandom began had the question come up as being in any way connected with the hobby.

Curiously, it never became a red-hot issue. McPhail broke with Wollheim over the reprint of the article in Vance, where he read it for the first time, but the general sentiment seemed to be to avoid religious controversies before fandom as a whole, as being unpleasant and getting nowhere. Then, too, the issue was in part smothered by the greater Michelist controversy—there is a limit, even for the rabid fan, to the number of things he can get steamed up about at any one time.

But perhaps the most important reason for the flat-falling of the atheism issue was lack of interest—lack of opposition! Wollheim, an avowed agnostic, made a gesture toward obtaining religious support for Michelism, paralleling the simultaneous program of the Communists, but did not follow it up, other than to enjoin against purely destructive criticism of church beliefs. The only prominent fans known to acknowledge church beliefs were Catholic Baltadonis and Episcopalian McPhail, tho doubtless there were others. When the IPO got around to putting the question, agnosticism and kindred showed a definite, tho not overwhelming majority, with many of those on the other side of the line doubtful, tongue-in-cheek, or indifferent.

The most vociferous anti-religionist was Frederick Shroyer of Los A, who authored “Anent Atheism & Stf.” A “particularly effective piece of god-busting” was rejected by the LASFL board of censors as “too hot,” but some copies were run off, and snatched up as collectors’ items.

In defense of religion little showed up. Who all brot the pressure on Cosmic Tales to discontinue the Phantaflexion is a mystery. Chester Fein, just then appearing on the horizon, attacked Wollheim bitterly, and the W came back with a defense. Many fans were more or less on the fence. Other than this, there was practically nothing of the religious side till McPhail wrote the progressive platform.

There wasn't enough opposition to give any thrill from attacking the churchmen. So atheism was taken pretty much for granted, and fandom rocketed merrily on its way. But there is no guarantee that the controversy may not blaze forth again,

THE FIRST MONTHS OF 1938

Being now apprised of the more important and distinctive institutions of the Second Fandom, we can pick up the thread of our story.

The Third Convention had been in October, and was followed, thruout November and December, with accounts of same. Under one of his pen names, to which was added his real handle, Moskowitz wrote an account for the SFFan. The explosion that followed raised Sam to the top of the anti-Wollheimists because he was the greatest object of vituperation. Wollheim was originally sore because Moskowitz, in contrast with his own accounts, gave little space to the Michelist speech and argument, but he found the account spotted with the inaccuracies always attendant upon haphazard eyewitness accounts, and in some cases pointed to actually true accounts of incidents which he had a false impression of. In his column Fanfarade in SET, noted for attacks on fans, he opened another "hymn of hate" campaign with the blanket allegation that it was the sorriest piece of reporting he'd seen in years, and all too characteristic of that type of fan who "will not think." In the absence of specific corrections, Moskowitz defied him to find anything "unaccurate" in the article. Wollheim obliged with a large-size mimeographed supplement, mailed with SFF, which went into great detail. Moskowitz replied with a similar-sized hektoed supplement (both of these also went out thru the FAPA) in his sloppiest style, denying he had been wrong concerning most of the cases, as checked with other witnesses, and making light of the remainder. The points of disagreement were indeed trivial, and many readers lost sight of their pertinence upon the original disagreement, personal attacks between the combatants having obscured the issue. There came the first wave of resentment against such feuds. Wiggins closed SFF to the argument, and Lowndes published The Vagrant for the FAPA, devoted entirely to a pseudo-impartial reconsideration of the whole matter. At this juncture Speer threw himself into the fight, versus Lowndes, but the original disagreement was lost sight of before long among the masses of new subjects for bitterness.

By the spring of 1938 nearly everyone saw which way the wind was blowing. There would be fights that summer, and more fights. Consequently, the early months saw a great deal of jockeying for position and allies, and inter-fan correspondence reached new heights of volume and fervor. Adding to this was the plank in the CPASF program calling for the greatest possible amount of personal contacts with fans, thru correspondence, for promotion of their ideology. Not all the activities of the early months were of a bitter nature, of course. Fan magazines continued to pop up in that way they have, most new ones now in the FAPA. Wiggins announced Who's Who in Fandom, to sell for 20¢. Such departments as Among Our Mems, As Others See Us, and Meet the Boys were popular in a fandom where the chief interest was other fans, and he felt that such a work would be well received. He set the goal too high, however, demanding 50

biographies and 50 pledges of purchase, and the project dragged on for months without this being reached.

With the FAPA functioning, with a good membership, an election was held around the year's end for officers to fill out the terms of those appointed by Michel and Wollheim, the original FAPA. There was not much excitement: Wollheim was a cinch to keep the presidency; there was little choice between Michel (incumbent) and Pohl for Editor—Pohl got it—and if Balty wanted the Secretaryship, he could keep it. For vice-president, incumbent McPhail ran against Philadelphia's Madle, and early returns released by Wollheim indicated Madle in the lead, but McPhail came in ahead at the finish line, Madle seemed to detect some inconsistencies in the counting of the ballots.

Upon his return to the fan field, Sykora had established the Scientific Cinema Club, with the aim of making a scientifiction movie, as the ISA had projected. The Wollheim-Michel group made their way into the club, and Sykora refused to stay in when they were accepted. The group collapsed amidst much petty bickering. The Queens SFL, centering around Wilson and Taurasi and including Sykora, accepted Pohl, Wollheim, and Michel, and others of their clique, an action which paved the way for a much more important schism later in the year.

In Oklahoma, with Speer and McPhail living in the same town, there were hints of OSA revival and golden hopes of a conference of fans from all the southwestern states. The Tri-Cities SFL of Texas, headed by newly active fan Dale Hart, lasted a year, with some successes and a rather large membership.

JUNE, 1938

The month of June in this year set a record for vital fan activities that had never been equaled before and probably will not be for a long time to come. It was not the end of the Second Fandom, but it was the climax.

Early in the month came the second half of the Third FAPA Mailing, almost simultaneously with the Newark Convention. Later, the FAPA election ballots were mailed out. Toward the middle of the month the Second British Convention was held. And to end the month came the Fourth Mailing.

The Third Mailing was sent out in two sections which amounted, except legally, to two separate mailings, and a longer time elapsed between them than between the second half and the Fourth Mailing. Mailing 3B marked the end of the first period of the FAPA, when it struggled for existence. There were many fine little magazines, and in general the half-mailing was of great literary interest, but contained much less controversial material than was to follow.

THE CONVENTIONS

The Newark Convention, officially the First National Science Fiction (or Fantasy) Convention, and called the Fourth Eastern by its enemies, was the first not sponsored by an organization, tho Sykora and Moskowitz said something about Sykora's Committee for ISA Reorganization and Moskowitz' Unofficial Society for the Aid of Fan Magazines in Need of Material (subject of trouble with DAW, who wanted a Manuscript Bureau for the FAPA). Put on entirely by Sykora and Sam, it was a surprise to all. Advertising of the event doesn't seem to have been unusual. There were poster announcements placed in a few libraries and around, and

perhaps an announcement or two in the professional magazines before it came off, but previous conventions seem to have had nearly equal publicity. Evidently, it was that the time was ripe for a really big affair. New Yorkers particularly were skeptical of the optimistic preparations for an anticipated attendance of over a hundred; previous conventions had not gone above 40.

Wollheim attacked its handling (Michelistic speeches would be barred) in a pre-Convention Fanfarade column, and Wilson, in the News-Letter, was generous with slurs at its hopes, the beginning of the Wilson-Moskowitz enmity; perhaps the most reasonless feud of the period.

Despite all this, the real fans, of course, came, and so did the professional s-f editors of the area—and a veritable cloud of non-fan scientifictionists who seemed to just “happen” in. The attendance, none from outside the eastern states, grossed around 125 at its height.

This, however, was the chief and nearly the only success of the affair. The usual talks and promises by the pro editors are not to be counted as losses, but were much the same as at preceding conventions, with perhaps stronger promises of support for fan magazines etc which were half a year in being fulfilled—but that is another story.

The banquet fell flat due to miscalculation of the number to attend—there just weren't enough eats to go around. The amusements were partly successful, partly not, and some entertainments prepared to be presented were not given. Owing to Baltadonis' illness and inability to attend, Philadelphia's secret entertainment (presumably their s-f puppet show) had to be postponed until their annual Conference.

The Convention adjourned with the problem of the World S-F Convention even more unsolved than before. The committee appointed at the last Philadelphia Convention had done nothing in the interim, so Sykora, substituting as chairman when Moskowitz found he couldn't handle the chair, appointed a new temporary committee, which was in turn to choose a smaller permanent one. Fans ignorant of parliamentary law, etc, thought Sykora had no right to appoint the committee. A petition protesting the appointment was successful in securing signatures even of some anti-Wollheimists.

The most unusual feature of the Convention was the flood of special Convention publications, which were sold by the Convention committee. All publishers, both those present and non-attendees, got full sets of the Convention magazines; in this way the Convention was participated in by fans unable to be there, Ackerman, Farsaci, Marconette, and Speer and McPhail jointly, having published, and not able to attend. Wollheim pointed out that all of the publishers of Convention publications were members of the FAPA. Exception was Nils Frome, Canadian, whose magazine arrived too late. Oklahoma's was also late, but only by a hair. Besides the publications handled by the committee the CPASF handed out Internationale song sheets, exhortations to protest Thrilling Wonder's discharge of a CIO printer, and similar material, which, it developed, practically ruined the CPASF's prestige: CPASF is only Michelistic organization; CPASF is Communist: therefore, Michelism is Communism.

Despite its successes, there seemed to be something lacking from the convention—probably, unity, altho fans enjoy certain kinds of feuds. In marked contrast was the Second British Convention of the SFA (the first had been called a Conference). There was no question such as the World Convention hanging over this assemblage, and there were no bitterly opposed factions such as marred the Newark affair. Little attention was paid to professional s-f, tho Fearn's talk in this direction aroused considerable interest. There was some discussion of SFA business, and the new Constitution was officially adopted (Los Angeles SFL-SFA cabled OK). But most of the speeches concerned the sociological interest of British fandom. These were for

the time devoted to the almost-completed task of waking Britons to social and governmental problems solution of which was necessary in the search for Utopia. In the following months, when they took up the question of what these awakened fans were to do in furtherance of their Utopias, there was a lowering of spirit and a surge of pessimism.

But at time of the Convention, the talks hit a very optimistic note. Fans were characterized as Seekers of Tomorrow, and some discussions, abstract enough not to bear heavily on the contemporary situation, discussed the attitude that should be taken. The British Convention indicated that among the somewhat more adult fans of the tight little isle the sociologically inclined had won, and were in control of British fandom.

THE FAPA CAMPAIGN

Madle, Speer, and Baltadonis had been in correspondence for some time over the formation of an opposition party in the FAPA, with the result that the Mailing Manager was sent a leaflet announcing their candidacies for the various offices, calling attention to some infractions of the Constitution of the Association that Wollheim's administration had been guilty of, and suggesting that voters see what the Other Side could do in the saddle.

Wollheim, apparently, found himself in a hole as time for the first annual elections drew near. Due to the constitutional provision that no person could hold the same office twice in five years, it would be impossible for him to be reelected president. He would, therefore, run for Official Editor and Mailing Manager, and had little fear that he would beat Madle for the office. Doc Lowndes had a fair chance at vice-president, against a cloud of younger, mainly New York, fans. For the position of president, however, Wollheim found himself without a single candidate who could win. Michel, as the person he was closest in contact with, was the one he would like to have represent him in the president's chair, but Michel not only was not prominent as an individual outside New York (all his activities having been in conjunction with the overshadowing Wollheim), but was somewhat unpopular as the supposed author of the Michelist movement, as attested by the mid-term elections. Against Baltadonis, who stood second or third in prominence in fandom, he would have little chance of being elected president, in the normal course of events.

In the Philadelphia group's innocent attempt to inject into the FAPA the light politics that enlivened other amateur press groups, Wollheim imagined an attempt to get control and close the FAPA to all but straight fan and stf material. With that hyper-suspicion common to Leftists, he envisioned an attempt to exercise censorship over the mailings, putting an end to Michelistic discussions therein. And he feared that if Speer were successful in gaining the vice-presidency, which was the "supreme court," this censorship would be upheld. Baltadonis up to this time had not come out openly against Wollheim, but the W knew him to be opposed to the CPASFers, and foresaw that the break would become important.

Michelism now meant everything to him. This Madle-Baltadonis-Speer group must be defeated at all costs. So he turned loose with every piece of artillery at his command.

Baltadonis is well known for his slowness about answering mail. Wollheim, some months before, had made a complaint about this in a private letter to McPhail, but saw no sufficient reason for bringing it before the entire Association. Just preceding the time of the Newark Convention, Baltadonis had been too ill to attend to his work as well as usual, and had not delegated the duty to anyone else. And, to complete the picture, according to the postmarks

Michel would fail to mail letters until days or a week after they were written. All this contributed to poor connections between the Secretary-Treasurer's office at Philadelphia and the mailing bureau in New York. Wollheim, probably exaggerating, said the New York end was bankrupt from non-receipt of reimbursements from the treasury. This, and a general charge that he had "just" discovered an attempt on the part of the Philadelphia party to sabotage the FAPA, was put into a mimeographed "Open Letter." An example of its convincing air is "Baltadonis takes his time about notifying us of new members, but in the meantime we take the kicks."

The second half of the Third Mailing had just been sent out; there was little material on hand for a new mailing except some Michelist sheets. But the Constitution required that the ballots go out three weeks before July 1, This deadline had already been passed when Wollheim decided to send the ballots out by themselves instead of with a mailing. But with them went the Open Letter.

Besides charges against Baltadonis, his chief opponent, Wollheim accused Madle of sabotaging the FAPA outside its pages—apparently referring to an anonymous article, which Madle disclaimed writing, in Moskowitz' magazine *Helios*, burlesquing Wollheim's column *Fanfarade*, and attacking him personally, including his conduct of the half-term FAPA election. Sam Moskowitz was the third candidate for president, having been reported by Taurasi as desiring to run, tho he actually had no intention of opposing his friend Baltadonis. Worrying little about Moskowitz, Wollheim dismissed him with the accusation of participating in the Madle crime by publishing the article. The fourth candidate for president, Olon F Wiggins, was a friend of Wollheim, and had made such an infinitesimal showing in the mid-term elections that he was passed over in silence.

Tho the Open Letter was devoted primarily to attacks on Baltadonis, almost all the Michel-Wollheim election material in the Fourth Mailing, and there was plenty of it, was taken up with accusing Speer of being a Fascist. Speer had on several occasions defended the acts of the Fascist nations, and opposed Communism, but had repeatedly said his support of the Fascist nations was only partial, and, far from desiring a fascist America, he supported the rather socialistic program of the Democratic New Deal. Whether they could have missed this, both in publications and in correspondence between Speer and themselves, the Michelists took no note of it in their FAPA campaign, referring to him as an "avowed" Fascist (he had facetiously taken the middle initial "F," which was interpreted as meaning "Fascist"), and drew bloody pictures of an enemy of Democracy in FAPA office (altho, to safeguard themselves from sentiment against Michelism, they had said in the Open Letter that politics should play no part in the election). The contradictory nature and emphasis of the Open Letter and the Mailing material is probably due to a difference in the time they were written but just how is not clear.

The election campaign thus consisted almost entirely of attacks on one's opponents rather than recitation of one's own qualifications. On the positive side, Michel pledged continuance of Wollheim's type of administration, including free press, no censorship, and constitutional government. Philadelphia promised harmony.

THE CRUCIAL PERIOD

The Comet group was stunned by this barrage. What in the world? they wondered. What's got into Don? All this talk about censorship—has one of the others really advocated such a thing? Sabotage the FAPA? What sense would there be in us doing that? Holy cow!

They made some ineffectual attempts to remedy the trouble. Moskowitz headed off as many votes as he could toward Baltadonis, at the same time that Sykora hastily issued an unauthorized mimeographed sheet in support of Sam, and, to a lesser extent, of Madle. A few cards were dropped by the Cometters to individuals who possibly wouldn't know what was happening. But, due partly to being mailed later than the date set by the Constitution, there had been on the ballots a request that they be returned immediately. Most of them were in before the Fourth Mailing went out, carrying Comet's pitiful little announcement, and the masses of incumbents' literature. After the results of the vote were announced, the SFFan appeared with a Fanfarade written before the election, and intended to appear before, which continued the attacks on FAPA anti-Wollheimists.

There was little that Speer, Baltadonis, and Madle could do to change the results of their opponents' actions, and they didn't do all that they could have. For the most part, they simply sat and waited and chewed their fingernails.

McPhail appeared to Speer in Oklahoma City, plunging him into deepest gloom with the statement that he had voted against the Philadelphia ticket, despite his endorsement of Baltadonis for president before the fight got so hot. Not even all the PSFS would vote the straight ticket. Every little indication was seized upon as perhaps showing how the broader current was running. Baltadonis, before the votes were counted, started a check-up to see if the count was honest, but not enough FAPAers were willing to tell how they voted to make this effective.

Regardless of what the returns might be, Speer moved to line up opinion against the methods of the Wollheim group, asking some of his correspondents if they would support a petition of protest, provided the petition didn't call for a new election. Receiving uniformly favorable answers, he drew up such a petition, based on his own observations and information from the Philly group and Dick Wilson, but his moving to Washington/DC delayed circulation thereof.

A week after July 1 when they were supposed to be counted, the ballots began to be counted and checked by various members of the counting committee, to determine the final vote, some counts having been made and standings made known before all the votes were in. Michel came out with more votes than Baltadonis and Moskowitz combined. Due to disgust at both sides, some five votes had gone to Wiggins. Wollheim had twice as many as Madle. Lowndes shaded into the vice-presidency over Speer and Wilson, who tied for second place. Taurasi was practically undisputed for the Secretary-Treasurer's job, carried that easily. It had been a complete victory for the Michelists.

THE UNDERTOW

But it was a Pyrrhic victory, for of that day was come a kingdom's ruin.

The general run of the FAPA does not seem to have become angered, at first, over the unfairness of Wollheim's last-minute accusations in the election, the sending out of the Open Letter with the ballots, but after some four weeks had passed, definite feeling against the administration set in. No one wanted another election, but it was felt that the tactics had been unfair. Perhaps the circulation of Speer's petition, setting forth in definite form the various transgressions, had something to do with solidifying feeling, tho it was not finally published in the official organ till the next spring. A general growing dislike of the Wollheim "dictatorship" was probably a more important cause.

But there were more concrete things behind the detraction from Wollheim's prestige, perhaps the most important of which was the break-up of the second Greater New York SFL chapter, new name for the Queens SFL. There was preliminary trouble when the Red group, with sympathizers among the Queens fans, such as Wilson, wanted to send a science fiction delegate to the Youth Congress, As the resolution provided that all members must contribute toward his expenses. Taurasi, as chairman, refused to allow a vote on it as being unconstitutional. He was impeached (charges brought), but before the next meeting, when the trial was to be held, support for the Wollheim men fell away, and the matter was dropped.

When the Wollheim clique came into the QSFL, it put Sykora in an awkward position, for, in the case of the Cinema Club, he had refused to be in the same club with them. While he didn't actually resign from the QSFL/GNYSFL, he attended few meetings, and his dues fell into arrears. Wollheim and Pohl moved that he be expelled for non-payment of dues and nonattendance, but it seems there was constitutional provision that the accused must be present in cases of expulsion. Taurasi, as chairman, refused to allow the show to go on, and was again impeached, and this time removed from the chairmanship, tho by the rules of the Science Fiction League, he retained the Directorship, as the member with the lowest-numbered SFL certificate of the lot. He chose, however, to resign completely, and exerted some influence on other Queens members, not including Wilson. Sykora took the matter to Thrilling Wonder Stories, sponsor of the SFL, who decided to dissolve the chapter and grant new charters only on condition Sykora and Wollheim should never be in the same group.

Thus broke Taurasi with Wollheim, and it was more important than Wollheim had imagined. Taurasi, in the Transition, had, with Thompson and Gillespie, formed United Publications. When Gillespie left for more vital things, Taurasi-Thompson Publications quickly turned into Cosmic Publications, with Moskowitz, Kuslan, and several Borough of Queens fans joining. Then Cosmic reached out even further, and even had some connections with Green Jester Publications of the Leeds, England, SFL. But their crowning victory was Wiggins' Galactic Publications, including the field-leading Science Fiction Fan. Taurasi, for his part, had established Fantasy-News, which forged ahead of the other weekly, Wilson's, in circulation. So when Wollheim antagonized Taurasi, it was the signal for a very large number of fans to turn cold toward the W.

Speer was not in Washington long, making side-visits to Conover, Gillespie, and others, before he arranged for a trip to Philadelphia, which coincided with Wilson's vacation sojourn there. Wilson, long considered in the Wollheim orbit, at this gathering with the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society stated himself as siding with them on Michelism, FAPA politics, and other issues. Tho nothing very concrete came of this, it indicated another weakening of the Wollheim group's grip on fandom, and all the PSFS and Wilson added their names to the Petition of Reprimand, the list of signers of which presently grew to include more than half the total FAPA membership, including many strict neutrals, such as McPhail, Swisher, and Farsaci.

THE SITUATION IN THE WEST

In the Los Angeles SFL-SFA was previewed the coming struggle among fans as a whole, like a Spanish Civil War of ideas as to the object of fandom.

After Shroyer and Wollheim and the various accessories had exchanged a blast or two each way, the arguments broke down mainly into repetition and restatement, as those things will, and a howl was raised, not only among the subscribers, but also within the LASFL. The situation there was a peculiar one, as the leading fans of the group, Forrest J Ackerman and Myrtle R Douglas ("Morojo"), were inclined toward sociological discussions of a Michelistic nature, whereas the majority of the whole membership was opposed to such things. The result was a disunity of feeling not present in other fan groups, but the LASFL spirit was too strong for it to be at any time threatened with dissolution.

At any rate, the anti-controversialists presently got the upper hand, and established a board of censors to keep controversial material out of Imagination! There seems to be some confusion, however, as to their actual instructions in the matter, for Ackerman told Wollheim that well-written Michelist writings would not be barred, and the board of censors included T Bruce Yerke, who is scarcely one to desire a lid on controversy.

And of course, Madge's most important feature, Voice of the Imagi-Nation, was pretty much laid open to any kind of discussions among the readers.

Charlie Hornig, one-time ed of Wonder Stories, guest-edited an issue of the madgazine, putting into it all his ideas for improvement. The result was at first a divided opinion, but presently there was a very definite vote for a return to the Madge of simplifd spelng, Ackermanese, scientificombinations, and a Voice of the Imagi-Nation running letters in the sequence received, with editorial comments parenthesized. The effect of Hornig's fiasco was to endear the old Madge in the hearts of many fans who had formerly been very critical of her.

Very shortly after her return to her old dress, however, Madge went into a state of suspended animation. Forrie the J, who had a disproportionately large part in the work connected with publication, became employed with the Government and no longer had time to work on the magazine, and the others couldn't carry on without him. Later Ackerman is supposed to have lost his job, but there was no attempt to revive Imagination!

After Madge's demise—or suspension of animation, if you will—Los Angeles published as much material, probably, as a monthly Imagination! would have carried, but, because each group publishes the kind of material it desires, and much of it is not charged for, further clash over what should and shouldn't be published was avoided.

Then came Technocracy. When the facts about it began to be circulated, it was received with astounding enthusiasm by Angelenos from all camps, and shortly they set out to campaign fandom for the coming of the Technate,

THE ORDER BEGINS TO CRUMBLE

At the same time that Speer's petition was helping build up sentiment against Wollheim, it was by no means making him more popular. People were getting tired of this constant wrangling.

The next Mailing of the FAPA carried voluminous refutation by the Philadelphians and allies of the charges against them, and, mailed in a separate envelope, several 1¢, 1d, and 5¢

printed pamphlets on matters sociological, by the CPASF, the Leeds SFL, and Speer. FAPA members rose up in wrath when they saw the postage that had been expended on this envelope, out of the FAPA treasury, on material which many thot out of place in the FAPA.

But perhaps the most curious development was that Wollheim and Michel made no further attempts to defend their charges (and have not, to this writing), and, instead, made an unsuccessful play for support from those who desired an end to controversy. Speer and the Cometeers were all primed for some fine sarcasms aimed at such method of evading the burden of proof of the election accusations, but found themselves utterly alone. Their former allies, the Flushing-Newark axis, were leading the center group that desired an end to controversy. The Wollheim clique refused to fight. Independents, Dale Hart excepted, felt much as did the Cosmics. Under urging from their friends, the defeated ones agreed to reduce, but not entirely do away with, their replies to Wollheim and Michel's inferences ("Their hands are not clean," etc). But circumstances unforeseen intervened to prevent even this.

Meanwhile, the whole political situation in the FAPA was changing. McPhail was reported attempting to form a Center Party with Wiggins, which it was thot might hold the balance of power between the two extreme groups. Wiggins, for some reason, held back, not desirous of setting up anything in opposition to Wollheim, and the plan fell thru. When the 1939 elections appeared on the horizon, however, McPhail joined with Taurasi and Marconette in forming the National Progressives, an anti-controversialist, nationalistic group, which was thrown into a turmoil by application for admission by Wollheim's group, on the Progressives' terms. Other definite parties were there none; of little two-man combines, some.

Tho not yet acting upon his observations, Speer foresaw that a new kind of fandom was coming into being. His prophecies won a contest conducted by the Madgicians, and received some notoriety. Their essence was that there would be a tremendous influx of new fans (afterwards termed "the barbarian invasion") as a result of the cooperation of the professional magazine editors, whose (the barbarians') influence would be felt after the World Convention in 1939, making fandom a more dignified place, with a less spontaneous air, and a relaxing of controversy. He was wrong in his placing of the time, for before the end of 1938, the Second Fandom had passed into the Second Transition, which this history treats as continuing to the time of the World Convention.

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF WOLLHEIM

We have already seen the sentiment setting in against Wollheim, and, separately, against the kind of fandom in which he held dominance. Despite this, however, he was still in control of three of the four FAPA offices, writing for the yet-leading fan magazine of the time, and still acknowledged as the most important fan by a majority of his contemporaries.

When Rothman planned the 1938 Philadelphia Conference, he had hoped to include a discussion on the purpose of science-fiction, by two rivals in the professional field, and Wollheim and Sykora. Wollheim, on the plaint that three of the speakers were to be anti-Michelist, declined the invitation. As a result, the Philadelphia Conference assembled one bright autumn day (while the garbage men were on strike) without Wollheim or any of his first-line lieutenants. There were several present who might have sided with him had he been there, but, under the existing circumstances, went along with the majority, who despised or ignored him. The discussion was carried thru without anyone to represent the Michelist views on the purpose

of science-fiction, and at the buffet supper afterwards all present drank the toast, "Gentlemen, down with Wollheim."

To the amazement of all, the coup de grace was administered by Wollheim himself. In a long paragraph of various news items in the NL, reporter Pohl announced, QUADRUMVIRATE QUIT. The reason given was rather hazy. Wollheim had become disgusted with fandom, discouraged at the results of his efforts to give it a real meaning, and was therefore ceasing his activities in the FAPA, his regular writings and publishing, tho he would continue to issue occasionals and take part in the meetings of the Futurian Society of New York, which was the Wollheim half of the GNYSFL. Pohl, Michel, and Lowndes were quitting with him.

Months later, more detailed explanations were given. Wollheim, in the Science Fiction Fan, told how fans had refused to face his arguments, and instead of answering them, had attacked him. To be longer classed with such a group were a discredit.

Lowndes, in his FAPA magazine, explained that he quit as vice-president because he could not have been an impartial judge in disputes, and as long as his group remained in office, the minority who had opposed them would fill the mailings with vilification, charges, etc.

Wollheim formally resigned; Lowndes took his place and appointed Wiggins vice-president; Lowndes then resigned, with the others, and Wiggins appointed a new slate of officers, following Wollheim's suggestions, Marconette as vice-president and Rothman as Official Editor. For once, the clique had carried out things in good legal form.

But the sins of the fathers descended upon Wiggins. Wollheim had made to break with him for publishing a certain long article by Moskowitz. Wiggins closed the pages of the SFFan to Moskowitz and any other writers who would be engaged in disputation of Wollheim's views, in the interest of peace, and Wollheim returned. Cosmic Publications thereupon expelled Wiggins. Around year's end Wiggins also expressed a disgust with fandom and intention to get out, but nothing came of this. Wiggins was now definitely in the Wollheim orbit, and favoring Michelism. He even went beyond them in upholding the Wollheim-dominated committee's right to put on the World Convention when they had already abdicated. In a short time, Wiggins became easily the best-hated man in fandom.

THE CHANGING TENDENCY AMONG FAN MAGAZINES

The first newcomers were Harry Warner, Jr, and Jim Avery. All during the Second Fandom, of course, there had been a few new ones drifting in all the time, but the almost total lack of contact between the fan world and the professional magazines with their wider circulation made such neophytes few. Dale Hart definitely belongs to the Second Fandom, But, tho they were almost "old timers" by the time the full rush of new fans arrived, Warner and Avery belonged to the new day. They appeared rather without warning, dropping postcards to various fans, soliciting material for their proposed hektographed magazine, Spaceways. Warner was to do the typing, in Hagerstown, Md, and Avery the hektoing, in Skowhegan, Me. It was, ultimately, to the good of Spaceways that the hekto broke down and Warner was forced to purchase a mimeograph. In the more distinguished mimeo format, Spaceways was immediately in the top rank.

Under the influence of support from the pro magazines for fandom, and a wider appeal in fan magazine material, many new names began to show up in reports of the meetings of the new Queens SFL (phenomenally successful reincarnation of the Taurasi branch of the GNY fission),

credited for items in *Nell*, in readers' departments of fan magazines, and elsewhere, though but a comparative few of these have become "active" fans at this writing. There were several feminines among the newcomers. In the past, girl fans had usually been sisters or cousins of the male fans, and these neophytes, largely in Queens, were not exceptions. One amusing exception to this rule was Peggy Gillespie, who, it finally leaked out, was not Jack Gillespie's sister, but the family cat, with Dick Wilson and amateur astronomer Abe Oshinsky doing the ghost-writing.

Besides the new fans, quite a few of the men prominent in the First Fandom reappeared, some, such as Ray Palmer, as successes in the pro field (at the same time that many newer fans were scoring successes as authors), others, like Bob Tucker, as active fans. Bob had a letter published in *Brass Tacks*, and apparently was immediately deluged with letters asking him to return to fandom. He did so, lining up especially with Warner, Avery, and Wiggins, and began turning out reams of humorous and unhumorous publications. Some of these returns of the oldsters began as early as the Newark Convention, but few became as active again as Tucker.

The boys were getting older, too. Early in 1938 fans had been vastly surprised to hear of the birth of Wiggins' second daughter. Bob Tucker had a family. Ackerman proudly announced he'd come of voting age and registered as a Socialist. Leslie Perri, illustratrix for Pohl's *Mind of Man* and Lowndes' *Le Vombiteur*, etc, and Fred Pohl began to be mentioned as possibly fandom's first matrimonial match; altho some married couples had afterwards begun work in the fan field together, such as the R D Swishers, whose S-F Check-List undertook to list all fanmags actually published or even proposed.

And at the same time that some old-timers were returning, certain of the prominent men of the Second Fandom were forced to reduce their activities. The results of Ackerman's employment have already been mentioned. Osheroff was forced to completely discontinue his, probably due to parental pressure, and Taurasi took over his *Fantasy Scout* as one of the myriad supplements to *Fantasy News*. Wollheim's retirement has been dealt with. Speer, on a Thanksgiving trip to visit Kuslan in Connecticut and return via *Nell*'s first birthday party (she passed away half a year later, and Wilson began issuing *Escape*), ran his car into a telephone pole, and the resulting financial burden, parental pressure, and loss of typewriter in the shuffle forced him to cut his activities to a minimum. Baltadonis, attending college, had practically no time for fan activities any more. Ted Carnell, high-ranking British fan, announced that after the 1939 British Convention he would have to give up most of his fan activity—reason: newly married. Claire P Beck, the gloomy hermit of Lakeport, Calif, hitchhiked to New York to visit, where he fell in with Michel's crowd; after his return he announced an end to the *SFCritic*, and lapsed.

The change was reflected in the fan magazines. *Spaceways* was the trailblazer, as its pages were filled with gossip about forthcoming science-fiction, short science stories by both amateurs and professional writers, and almost no "fan" material such as characterized the Second Fandom. Its editorial policy of no controversial material on politics, religion, etc (jeered at by the submerged liberals), was quickly picked up by new and nascent fan magazines throughout the country. *Fantascience Digest*, Madle at the helm, rising to the fore with the *SFCollector*'s virtual disappearance, went into mimeographed format and took *Fantasy Magazine* as its ideal. Bob Tucker, a member of Cosmic Publications now, issued a yearbook listing all stf stories in the stf mags and *Argosy* during 1938. *Imagination!*'s mimeographed format was widely copied, but by magazines of an entirely different type in interest. Gossip about collector's items, pro-mag line-up, author interviews, observations on the flood of new professional s-f magazines that gave such an

impetus to the change in fandom, were the order of the day, and discussion about sociological systems, religion, etc, rigorously tabooed in most of the leading fan magazines.

The old-line fans now justified their claims to the title of "science fiction" fans by showing that they had not forgotten what they had once known about it, nor lost contact. There was almost a feeling of relief as they turned to something they could be sure they were good in. Practically no one attempted to buck the tide completely; even the SFFan began featuring more articles on stf books, etc, to pad out the material written mostly by the Quadrumvirate, which consisted of monotonous repetitions of the Michelist theory thinly veiled as biographies and exchanges of compliments.

"The official organ of the mutual admiration society of Wollheim and Company" the new British school described the SFFan. For in Britain, too, a new race had arisen. Disgusted with the lack of appreciation given *Novae Terrae* by lethargic Britishers and Americans, Hanson had finally given it up, and by the time of the 1939 British Convention, the SFA monthly organ was *Satellite*, a humorous magazine modeled along American lines by the new English fans.

Even that stronghold of subversive propaganda, the FAPA, came thoroly under the dominance of the new order. Controversial material dwindled to fractional proportions; strong literary efforts were put forward, the Swisher Check-List, Miske's *CHAOS*, Speer's Sustaining program, Michel's *Futurart*, LA's *Sweetness and Light*, and so far, far into the night. A definite date for mailings was established under Rothman, till he moved to Washington/DC to work.

NEW FANDOM'S STRUGGLE FOR RECOGNITION

Another powerful factor in the influx of new fans and the spreading of tranquility over fandom was the necessity to work together for and take part in the World Science-Fiction Convention.

It will be recalled that the 1937 Convention in Philadelphia appointed a committee in which the Wollheim clique was predominant to handle this affair. Owing to this committee's lack of activity and the unpopularity of Wollheim with many fans, arrangements were made at the Sykora-dominated Newark conclave for a new committee. The successful circulation of the petition of protest, signed by so many of his friends, convinced Sykora that he had acted wrongly in that case, but rather than yield to the Wollheim committee, he and Moskowitz, plus Taurasi, again took the law into their own hands and formed New Fandom, an organization whose primary purpose and *raison d'être* was the sponsoring of the World Convention as a gigantic affair.

In this they ran counter to the desires of Olon F Wiggins, who felt that none but dyed-in-the-wool fans, whom he counted at one time as numbering about fifty, should be admitted. Wiggins feared that accepting help from the professional magazines would result in fandom's losing its independence. He was almost the only one who held such opinions, however, and the general attitude was: Wiggins? That old nut? He's the guy that sold out to Wollheim.

New Fandom was a heterogeneous Frankenstein's creation, the core of which was the Science Fiction Advancement Association, an unimportant hold-over from the First Transition. To this Moskowitz added his manuscript bureau and other odds and ends possessed by the Triumvirs, such as the magazine *Helios*, were announced as formally going into the pot to make New Fandom. All subscribers to *Helios* were temporarily members of New Fandom, but a dollar dues was required for full membership. All members of the SFAA, including Don Wollheim,

found themselves, by the magic of former president Raymond van Houten, New Fandomites. The name was derived from Moskowitz' observation that a new order was coming into being in fandom, and he hoped that someday this would be the long-sought organization whose boundaries should coincide with fandom's.

Its administration was most peculiar, as the members had no check on the acts of its leaders, except the possibility that they might turn from the organization and renounce its leadership. This check, while effective in larger matters, couldn't work to prevent the employing of tactics in minor affairs that the majority of its members didn't like, or the making of such blanket statements as that New Fandom opposes all isms. The only office was the appointive one of Secretary and General Manager, held by Moskowitz. He, Taurasi, and Sykora, and to a lesser degree the rest of the QSFL and van Houten, controlled the organization's destinies.

Naturally, with such a genesis and such a nature, the club was wide open to attack, and only the earlier discrediting of the Wollheim group saved New Fandom from an early extinction. At the Philadelphia Conference of September, 1938, much dubiousness was expressed over the success of this "benevolent dictatorship" (Moskowitz had used the term "democratic dictatorship," comparing it to a professional magazine, which must respect the wishes of the readers, though they have no direct control over its management).

The absence of the Moskowitz-hating group from the Conference, however, caused those present to give a rather passive acquiescence to New Fandom's assumption of leadership. Speer proposed a motion which did no more than recognize New Fandom's primacy, and it was passed the way most motions are passed at friendly, half-informal gatherings, without opposition, though many didn't vote for it.

The wording of the resolution was so clumsy and hazy that it was quickly forgotten, and news reports from the Taurasi-Moskowitz group magnified it into a blanket approval of anything New Fandom might do. At the same time, word went around that, in some way, New Fandom had gotten the support of fandom behind it.

That was all that fandom was waiting for. No one wanted to join a club that had every chance of folding up, but once it was told that it was going to be successful, the conditions requisite for its success took form. At the same time that the 100% fans were giving it their support, the professional magazines began to put forward their promised support for the WSFC, publishing letters and announcements for fans and scientifictionists desiring to attend to get in touch with Moskowitz. Also, soon after, appeared the first issue of the official magazine, New Fandom, whose freedom from the usual Taurasi-Moskowitz errors of language, and general excellence of make-up and content, won grudging admiration even from Sam's foe, Wilson.

Thus the new heads of the fan world came into their own, Heart and soul of this new group was Taurasi's weekly Fantasy-News. The magazinewspaper had been begun simply to fill out unexpired subscriptions to Taurasi-Thompson's Cosmic Tales when it was turned over to the Kuslans, but Fanny's success had been so phenomenal that it quickly took the lead over Nell in general opinion, appearing mimeographed long before the latter did (the era of hektographed magazines was passing), at a lower price, and usually with more pages. The content was designed to appeal to borderline fans who were interested more in the reading of science fiction than in the deep-dyed fan activities. Frequently more than half of the content was written by Moskowitz. In all cases the King's English was murdered, to such an extent in many cases that meaning was not clear, and the viewpoint was narrow, but Startling Stories reviewed, with nothing but praise, Fantasy-News, every month—a thing done for no other fan magazine. Apparently, there was a

working agreement with Weisinger for bringing fandom back into the fold.

Just when the revolution occurred cannot be definitely determined. Up to the FAPA election, the Wollheim group had been the acknowledged heads of the fan world, despite their minority in many matters. Sometime between the close of the FAPA campaign and the Philadelphia Conference, the absolute viewpoint changed, and Wollheim and Wiggins were the “rebels” instead of those who opposed them. The W’s attacks at last built up an overwhelming opposition to him, which “assumed” itself into power, once united.

By the spring of 1939, Wiggins was practically the only hold-out. When Wilson and Moskowitz ended their feud, the former expressed, none too enthusiastically, his backing of New Fandom’s leadership of the Convention. Wollheim, Michel, and Pohl acquiesced while growling puns like “New Fan-dump” and “New fan-dumb,” and Lowndes said that in many ways he favored New Fandom’s integration of the fan world, if for no other reason than that it would more quickly bring fans to the end of the trail of their present activities, so they would have to turn to Michelism (and indeed, many very active fans began to desire to reduce their activity and lead normal lives). Ackerman, somewhat tongue-in-cheekily, joined New Fandom. There was even a move, which didn’t get very far, to re-merge the Queens SFL and the Futurian Society of New York, the Wilson-Wollheim-Kornbluth NY faction.

Early in June, the long-delayed OSA Powwow was held, and two-thirds of those present expressed the intention of attending the WSFC (Louis Clark, Oklahoman in Washington/DC also was expecting to go, and Miles McPhail, cousin of the Mc). Dan McPhail, tho financially able, wasn’t able to leave his job, the same thing that held back Tucker, Avery, & many more. Others present at the Powwow were Jack Speer, on vacation from DC, and Walter Sullivan, sometime of Queens, plus such astral beings as the Invisible Man, Injun Joe, Lawrence Paschall, Walter Jackson, and John A Bristol.

THE REACTION AGAINST REACTION

From much of the foregoing, it may be justly supposed that the retirement of many fans, including the Wollheim clique, was not as complete as had been at first thot—and intended. Indeed, one member of the Quadrumvirate, Lowndes, after resigning his FAPA offices became even more active, with the publication of a hektographed weekly of opinion, comment, poetry, and whatnot, termed *Le Vombiteur*, or, following the vogue for pet names, *Levy*.

In late May, Wilson, Wollheim, and Michel toured the East in the first-named’s car, Maine, Canada, Chicago, and Washington their periphery, visiting fans all along the way. Gillespie and Pohl planned a hitchhike to Washington to visit Rothman, for whom Pohl had been selling stories to the pro’s, and Jack Speer, Pohl’s rival for FAPA vice-president.

In this campaign, Rothman and Taurasi stood opposed for president, and both made mistakes which resulted in ballots being sent out to inactive members as well as active, tho prohibited by constitutional amendment, and the Mailing was long delayed in being sent out. A good, old-fashioned mess resulted.

Meanwhile, Pohl was busy trying to build up an alternative organization to New Fandom, in the Futurian Federation of the World, but even his comrades knew not whether to take the effort seriously, so queer did some aspects of it seem.

But Pohl got some support, and the significant thing is that it included loyal New Fandomites Warner and Avery. In other directions, too, there were signs of pullings away from

the Moskowitz clique. Bob Tucker, though a member of Cosmic Publications and New Fandom, established for use of himself, Avery, and some other North Centralites a Vulcan Manuscript Bureau, in competition to New Fandom's, before all their publications were combined into the omnibus magazine, Nova. Besides the Futurian Federation support, Avers and Miske and others had other dealings with the members of the Wollheim group, but there seemed little possibility that that clique would head the new opposition building up against the ultra-classicists of New Fandom.

Only for a brief period in the fall had Cosmic been in the Center—now they were definitely one extreme, and between them and the old Quadrumvirate at the other was a broad, hazy center group, fading out on both sides from those who had only one or two bones to pick with Moskowitz, as Bob Madle, to those, like Dick Wilson, who varied from the Wollheim line only in a few matters. Nevertheless, into this category come a good many of the new fans, tho of course the majority have gone under the leadership of Newark-Queens.

Another exception to the prevailing trend was the rising popularity of fan fiction—fiction in which the principal characters are fans—either synthetic, type characters, or actual personages. Cosmic Tales, under Kuslan, was foremost in this; and “Mickey” also calls to mind another exception to the main current. Tho the leading fan magazines were practically all of the “Fantasy Magazine” type, in the second level were many of the 1938, “fanny” kind.

All of which indicates that the reaction will not be permitted to go to such great extremes—The Third Fandom will not be 1935 all over again,

Washington/DC

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