

VEGAS FANDOM **WEEKLY**

Las Vegas Fandom's Sorta Weekly Newszine



VEGAS
FANDOM
WEEKLY

Inside Story

FANDOM Is Our Middle Name

Back when fanzines were all on paper, two years wasn't considered much time in the life of a fanzine. At the rate of two or three issues a year, the typical hardcopy fanzine might not change much. Fanhistorically, it was not uncommon for a fanzine by an established fan to finish with most of its charter contributors.

I've done 88 issues of *VFW*; 53 in Volume One and 35 in Volume Two. The first year totaled 584 pages and the second had 758. That's 1342 pages, without even factoring in that the word count of a desktopped fanzine is at least twice that of a hardcopy fanzine done with one of those good ol' pica typewriters. I've done nearly sixty *Katzenjammer* columns. I can say, authoritatively, that such frequency makes two years feel like a decade. If you don't think so, check out Chris Garcia, who has done even more issues than me over the same 24 months. He was a bright-eyed, fresh-faced kid when he started; now he is a grizzled old president of the N3F. That's what this pace does to you.

At this milestone, it seems reasonable to see how well this fanzine is living up to its stated mission, as embodied in its long, weird name, "Vegas Fandom Weekly."

Well, our middle name is "Fandom," and that's certainly remained the focus of *VFW*. I'd very much like to see more pieces about the doings of other fan centers. Since rich brown's death, I've felt that there hasn't been enough fanhistory as there should be in *VFW*, so I'd welcome anything along those lines. The zines pace has taken its toll on some contributors and I am hoping that a few others will step up and have a fling.

The fanzine is less about "Vegas" than it was, but Glitter City Fandom still has a big role in *VFW*. The focus has definitely widened to include all of Core Fandom with a circulation to match. I think if someone revived *SitNorm*, I might be tempted to change the balance, but it feels right for now.

While two-out-of-three ain't bad, there's no denying that the mission is weakest when it comes to redeeming the pledge of "Weekly" implied by the third word in the name. It was weekly and it isn't any more. I can wave the tattered flag with the *VFW* motto — Las Vegas Fandom's Sorta Weekly Newszine — but it can't hide the fact that issues are larger, but less frequent.

I think I have a solution. After careful examination of calendars, including the Mayan, it is obvious that the concept of seven days making a week is utterly arbitrary. Therefore, I am merely following in the footsteps of earlier calendar-makers when I redefine a week as a period of 14, 24-hour days. With this new calendar in place, I can confidently predict that *VFW* will appear at *least* weekly.

Whew. Problem solved! — Arnie

Vegas Fandom Weekly #89, Volume 3 Number 1, November 22, 2006, is written and produced by Arnie Katz (909 Eugene Cernan St., Las Vegas, NV 89145; Email: crossfire4@cox.net; phone: 702-648-5677).

Special Thanks to Roxanne Gibbs (many things), Bill Burns (posting), David Gordon (Mountaineering Consultant), Alan White (arty fella), Bill Mills (technical advisor) and Joyce Katz (proofreading and So Much More).

Art/Photo Credits: Ray Nelson (1), Steve Stiles (5), Don Miller (6B), Alan White (6T, 12T, 13), Bill Mills (12B), Ross Chamberlain (23, 32, all else by Bill Rotsler.

VFW is free by request — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at the SNAFFU site and at efanzines.com. No amateur anthologists were harmed during the production of this fanzine.

Member: fwa

Supporter: AFAL

Believer: United Fans of Vegas

The Crystal Ball Katzenjammer

In between sieges of book editing, I spent a lot of time this week wondering what I ought to do to mark the final 2005 issue of *Vegas Fandom Weekly*. I wanted to do something appropriate, something befitting the season.

I tried to draw on my pro experience and mentally inventoried the seasonal articles I've written for 35 year in the business press, video and computer gaming, the collecting field and pro wrestling.

That gave me a lot of ideas and even I was surprised at how many sounded ideal for my purpose. I won't tell you about all of them now, because I will undoubtedly tell you about them one at a time in the not-so-distant future, but you can take my word that it was a rich haul.

I contemplated my options and when I thought I'd pondered them long enough without reaching a conclusion, I did what I often do in such situations; I consulted The High Priestess.

"What do you think about an article of fan predictions as my end-of-year 'Katzenjammer' column?" When she looked at me benignly, I let out the breath I'd held since I'd asked Her the question.

Fortified with what amounted to Fandom's equivalent of a Papal Blessing, I plunged enthusiastically into the work. I focused the full power of my mental faculties, a potency rivaled only by my sexual virility, on what I now thought of as The Great Work.

In other words, I blew my nose to stall for time and then said to Joyce, "So, what kind of predictions would *you* make?" The publisher of a weekly fanzine must learn to get others to help with the heavy lifting or risk Nydahl's Disease, a sort of digital double hernia.

Her brows knit in occult concentration, as Joyce sought the infinite for an answer. Suddenly, her expression returned to its normal, beatific state. "Somewhere in an important place, something will happen to someone some time in the future," she intoned. The Oracle had spoken. Joyce fell back on the couch, overcome by her mighty effort.

"No, no, no," I protested. "I mean a *real* prediction," "There are no real predictions," she informed me. "No one can predict the future."

"I don't mean with psychic powers," I replied. "That would be ridiculous. Besides, I have to hoard my psychic powers to keep Las Vegas free of snow!"

"And you've done a good job," she acknowledged, "though you let down last year, and I don't want to see it happen again."

"How often has it snowed since we moved here?" I asked rhetorically. "It has snowed three times in 16 years! That's a batting average of over .800!" I would've called myself the Ted Williams of Psychic snow fighting, but I didn't think she'd recognize the Splendid Splinter's name.. "But I still need predictions," I persisted.

"You could predict that a fan will die in 2006," she answered, "If the fan dies, you're a seer. And if the fan doesn't die, everyone will be so happy that no one will say anything."

Her logic was irrefutable, but as I told her, I don't really want to run a Death Pool on my friends.

"Then why don't you do something like predict the TAFF winner?" she tried again.

I thought about it and realized that to do so would seem more like meddling than prognostication.

"What does that tell you?" Joyce asked.

"That I shouldn't try to do fannish predictions for the coming year."

She nodded approvingly. I knew I would get no more help on forecasting the future from her.

Since I am on my own, thrown upon my own resources as it were, let me offer one blockbuster prediction before the bottom of the page puts a period to this prognosticatory piece.

Somewhere in an important place, something will happen to someone some time in the future. — Arnie



Original Published
in
Vegas Fandom Weekly #59

We may go along, living our innocent lives, and be totally unaware that dreadful brutality may be mere seconds away — and it often comes from a completely unexpected direction.

Lightning strikes the wicked and the just, alike. I know this. Even though I'm one of the Totally Blameless, I have experienced life's problems. Therefore, I know that the innocent suffer along with the guilty.

So, in a larger sense, I was not surprised by what happened or even that it happened to me. I understand how such a truly shocking thing could befall *me*, even though I am practically a living saint.

What surprised me was the suddenness, the mercilessness, the utter lack of provocation. I mean, I say and do things all the time that have the potential to call forth *someone's* wrath, so I was not prepared for an attack when I was being relatively well-behaved.

And preparations is everything. The Great Houdini, who could get out of a straitjacket inside a milk can filled with water, was killed, because a young boy hit him in the stomach when he didn't have time to tense his muscles to absorb the blow.

It was in just such a state of defenselessness that I became a victim of brutality.

I was sitting in the dining room during the Las Vegas Fandom New Year's Eve Open House, talking about Old Time Radio with Billy Mills, when Luba Anderson, resplendent in her glittery New Year's Eve outfit, approached from the kitchen,

Just as she joined us, a fan swooped down on the delectable shrimp that James & Kathryn Daugherty made for the party. The fan paused in mid-feeding frenzy to remark, "What a lovely shrimp!"

I confess that in a moment of weakness, I succumbed to temptation. In my defense, I get so few straight lines since Ken Forman, Ben Wilson, Aileen Forman, Cathi Wilson, Tom Springer and Tammy Springer are no longer here to feed them to me and the New Generation is just acquiring this skill.

I looked at the diminutive Luba, a veritable vision, and said, "You're the loveliest shrimp."

"I've heard them all," she said, giving me a smoldering look. With me sitting down, we're the same height, so her gaze had more-than-usual effect.

"Now, Luba," I reminded, "I was just kidding. I mean, you look like my very own mother."

"Do you have a photo of your mom?" Merric Anderson asked, joining the conversation.

"That wouldn't do any good," I explained. "Luba doesn't look like her now. She looks like her when she was the same age as Luba is now."

Luba was smiling at me again by this point, so I figured I would evade repercussions from my "small" joke. It was going to be a good night.

And *that's* when it happened.

Suddenly, I felt the right side of my head explode. My whole skull vibrated from the impact of what I immediately diagnosed as a vicious backhand smash to the side of my head.

I'm not used to getting hit in the head. To be more precise, people stopped hitting me in the head after I got hit in the head with a bowling ball and a batted baseball — not in the same incident, I hasten to add.

Since the baseball blinded me in the left eye, my mother was understandably nervous about my right orb. As a result, she frequent told people not to hit me in the head. Whether or not this made any of those people think it was all right to hit me somewhere else is hard to tell, because my size discourages most casual impulses to pick a fight with me.

I'm certain that my mother gave this instruction to Joyce, so imagine my surprise when I turned to face my assailant, that it was the High Priestess Herself.

I appealed to the others, who confirmed my complete innocence. I would've felt more vindicated if my head wasn't still twanging.

The next day, I complained to my wife about the way she'd clobbered me. "My mother wouldn't like you any more if she knew," I admonished. I could see that her confidence in my mother's affection had grown so strong that my veiled threat cut no ice. Well, it had been worth a try.

"The worst thing is that you did it by surprise, from behind!" I told her.

"Oh, all right," she said, every word dripping with Insurgent condescension. "I promise the next time I hit you, I'll scream so you know it's coming."

Oh what perfidy is here revealed to the trained ear of the investigative journalist! She is already planning her next attack! Please, fans, save me from this Unjust Spousal Abuse! Send Joyce an email today! — Arnie

Original Published

in

Vegas Fandom Weekly #60

Why I Love Corflu *Katzenjammer*

In last week's installment of *Katzenjammer*, I wrote about the first fan convention I ever attended.

This time I want to tell you about my favorite convention, Corflu. Toronto has

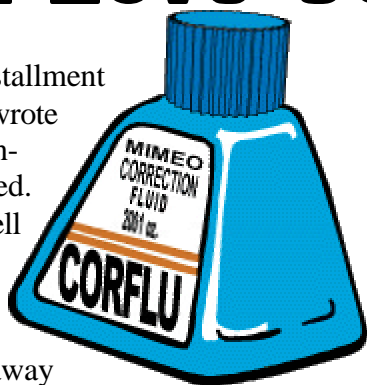
now gotten squared away for the '06 edition (May 5-7), and though finances will keep Joyce and I from being there, the recent news splash put Corflu very much in my mind.

Even before Joyce and I gaffiated in 1976, I had pretty much had it with large conventions. I hadn't been to one since Noreascon II in '71 and had no plans to break that string. When I returned, I did go to Magicon — which did a fabulous job of taking care of Core Fandom — primarily because Walt Willis asked us to be there in flatteringly strong terms.

The last sizable con I attended was the Westercon in Los Angeles two years ago. I went mostly because two of my best friends in Fandom, Ross Chamberlain and Robert Lichtman were both Guests of Honor. My next large convention will either be because other friends are being similarly honored — or I am. ("Have Mouth, Will Travel," reads the card of a fan...)

I always do my best to enjoy myself at cons and, as a result, I've never been to a convention at which I did not have fun. I go into them with a very low level of expectation, which puts me in a good frame of mind to savor the good moments and slide past the bad ones.

Honestly, there have been very few bad moments at the eight Corflus I've attended. Even the anti-party patrol at Corflu Nova proved a small, surmountable obstacle to a good time. Local Core



Fans like Dan & Lynn Stefan graciously opened their homes to Corflu visitors.

I find that, with Corflu, my pre-con preparations have less to do with cushioning disappointment than with preventing over-enthusiasm. I've come to enjoy Corflu so much that I have to guard against over-enthusiasm, which may be too emphatic (and therefore intrusive) to others. By starting the con in a beatific state of calm, I can usually prevent myself from becoming a character in a bad faan fiction story three days later.

Emotions run high for a lot of folks at Corflu. I have seen people cry when it's time to go — and not just well-known softies like rich brown and Joyce. This is reflected in the steady decline in the number of fans who leave during the Sunday ban-



quet at Corflu. It's a gut-wrenching way to leave the folks whom you may not see again for a year or two.

Corflu has become Core Fandom's worldcon. It's far and away my favorite convention and I would go there if I could only go to one convention in a year.

Lately I've been thinking, and not for the first time, about *why* Corflu means so much to me. (and, by extension, to others).

Original Published
in
Vegas Fandom Weekly #60

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It begins with the concept. Shay Barsabe, Allyn Cadogan, and Lucy Huntzinger came up with the idea for a “Fanzine Fan” convention in 1984 as an alternative to the large commercial conventions like the worldcon and all they represented.

I wasn’t there, so I don’t know if Corflu consciously reflects the same principles as the fabled Fanoclasts club on NYC in the 1960’s and early 1970’s. Looking back at both, though, makes the similarities obvious. Some of the important ways that Corflu, which is gradually developing into the Core Fandom Worldcon, differs from, the World Science Fiction Convention:

* **Corflu is non-Commercial.**

There is no real attempt to make a profit and most Corflus cheerfully go into the red. There’s no effort to sell ads in progress reports or program books or to set up a huckster room as a revenue stream. Most Corflus try to recoup some expenses with a Fanthology and/or a Corflu tee-shirt.

* **Corflu Is Non-Competitive.**

Corflu is consistently avoided any suggestion of site bidding. When two groups are interested, they talk it out and only one comes to Corflu prepared to ask for fans’ approval to host it the next year.

* **Corflu is egalitarian.** Corflu emphasizes this by choosing its Guest of Honor by lot. All members are on the same footing as fans.

* **Corflu has more of what used to bring fans to cons.** It’s small, friendly, down-to-earth with little of the star-trip pomposity that disfigures so many



Alan White designed this graphic for Corflu Blackjack, put on in 2003 by Ben Wilson and Ken Forman with Cathi Wilson and Aileen Forman.

cons.

* **Corflu has a sense of humor.** Sometimes large cons exude an air of pomposity and self-aggrandizement as petty strivers reach for titles and perks. There’s nothing like that with Corflu. That’s part of the reason that such a small crew is needed to set up and host one.

Philosophy is nice, in its place, but it can’t substitute for a great time. So let’s move from the theoretical to the empirical...

I feel the difference between Corflu and other conventions the minute I get there. It’s hard to tell the lobby at the worldcon hotel from the main hotel of, say,



the Consumer Electronics Show, except that people at the latter are better dressed.

All Known Fandom is so Balkanized and diverse these days that most of the folks you meet around the worldcon registration desk are apt to be strangers — and are likely to remain so due to almost no common ground.

By contrast, Corflu enfolds fans in a tribal atmosphere. I don't know everyone at Corflu, or adore everyone I know, but I feel a kinship

More about Corflu

This installment of *Katzenjammer* tells you a lot about how I feel about Corflu and why, but it may well not answer all your questions about the Core Fandom Worldcon. *Chatback* is one way to get questions answered, but there is also a fine site online devoted to the subject.

Corflu.org is a highly attractive and easy-to-use web site with lots of content about Corflu, past and present.

It's the best place to get full details concerning this year's edition — Corflu Toronto, May 5-7 — as well as the history and traditions.

Tracy Benton, who has worked on several Corflus, is also responsible for creating the Corflu.org site and keeping it filled with the latest information.



with them all. When I walk into a Corflu con suite or into the registration area, I feel surrounded by people who “get it,” who have some understanding of the subculture of Fandom (even if that understanding may not be exactly *my* understanding).

There are extremely few lurkers at Corflu; some of these good folks may not have pubbed their ish in three or four decades, but Core Fandom remains in their hearts. If they are at Corflu, it's because they want to share that Core Fandom gestalt.

I don't know whether Corflu will ever truly become Core Fandom's worldcon, but that really doesn't matter. Corflu is the con that is the worldcon to me.

And though Joyce and I won't be at Corflu in Montreal, Canada, this year, we'll look forward to our next opportunity to return.



Steve Stiles drew this wonderful illustration for the Corflu Valentine (Annapolis, MD., 2004) tee-shirt..

— Arnie

Katzenjammer The End of Vegas Fandom!

Deep within the recesses of a dilapidated convention hotel is a room not reachable from any public hallway on a floor at which the lurching elevator does not stop unless a special key is inserted into the control panel.

The elevator groaned under the weigh of the three fans who crowded into the narrow compartment. Two waited silently, motionlessly, as the third fitted the key into the lock and turned it.

The elevator rumbled and strained as it slowly rose to the upper floors. It stopped suddenly, heaving to the side in a way that nearly took the three fans off their feet.

The door slid open and they exited directly into a large, opulent conference room dominated by an ob-long walnut table that shone so brightly you could count the ceiling lights by their reflections.

They smiled at each other. It was good to be back at SMOF headquarters.

I feel the fannish impulses slipping away. I no longer care about fanzines or Corflu or even my oldest and dearest friends. No, I am a gafiation-in-progress, one with no reprieve and no possible return.

Right now, I feel I will miss Fandom, miss it terribly. Yet I know that the inexorable process has already begun that will take me deep into the Glades of Gafia, deep into a forgetting of Fandom.

My only hope is that I can tell you all about this, warn you all about the danger, before it engulfs you and snuffs out Fandom as we knew and loved it.

I see that I typed the previous sentence in the past tense. Gafia is gaining on me. I'll tell you about it.

I didn't realize what was happening when it began. I will always blame myself, though Joyce says there was truly no way to know. Anyway, it began nearly a year ago with the sudden departure of Woody Bernardi to Boston.

Not gafia, you may say, just a relocation. And that is exactly how it seemed at the time. We assumed that Woody would join every club in the Boston area, enlist on the Boskone con committee and maybe even do some fanzine publishing. I recall telling Joyce that I was waiting for the latest permutation of *Marquee/The Gay Blade*. I waited, but it never came.

For Woody did not become a hyper-active Boston fan. In fact, he soon found a more congenial environment in Boston's extensive gay community.

Then Joshua Andrews announced he was moving to Winnipeg, Alberta, Canada. He never did go, but his minimal fanac fell off to nothing. He might as well have been in the frozen North for all that we heard of him in Glitter City.

Then it was JoHn Hardin moving to Kingman, AZ, to work in his brother's plumbing business and Ruth Davidson taking her daughter to Yuba City in the aftermath of a marital storm. John DeChancie pulled up stakes and returned to Los Angeles and David Del Valle followed suit. When Bill and Laurie Kunkel began packing for a move to northern Michigan, it became obvious that Something Was Happening.

"You have the serum?" asked the man in the tight robe. He supposed it was meant to be loose and flowing. It was the fault of the manufacturer for not making a 7XL.

"Yes, our scientists, working under the cover of the NFFF have developed the Gafia Serum." said the SMOF to his right.

"And we are immune?" the leader's right wanted to know?

"Not immune.. Resistant," came the reply.

"What do we have to do?" asked the SMOF on the left. "One drop in a bheer or soft drink and the target is forcibly driven to the extremes of gafia."

"That's amazing, astounding, fantastic!" the leader chortled. He normally avoided even the hint of a sense of humor, but he thought this situation merited a modicum of jocularity. "How does it work?"

"It directly attacks the so-called 'Trufannish Impulses'! Those Core Fandom people won't stand a chance!"

"So there is no potential danger to us?" the leader reiterated. "We don't want to wipe out our lovely Fandom. Just remove those bigmouth troublemakers. They just don't fit in our business plan!"

"That's for sure!" agreed the SMOF on the right. "I won't say there's no danger, but the serum in its present form is not likely to bother any of us."

"We must test it before we use it to wipe Core Fandom from the face of the earth," said the SMOF to

Original Published
in
Vegas Fandom Weekly #71

the leader's left. He was known as a fan who always carried a cell phone and a walkie-talkie at conventions.

"Yes, we must have a test of its effectiveness before we target our prime objective."

"You mean..." asked the SMOG on the right.

"Yes, the con suites at the next Corflu!" the leader said, a note of triumph in his voice. "We'll get them all at once. Finish those loose-cannon literates once and for all!"

"And the test" the SMOF on the left asked eagerly.

"We will destroy Las Vegas Fandom with the serum!" said the Leader.

"Yes!" cried his two companions in unison.

"Why is everyone gafiating?" Joyce asked me worriedly over dinner one evening.

"I don't know, but this is for sure: Someone is gafiating the fans of Las Vegas," I had not realized it was true until I heard my own voice say the words. "If I'm right, we have only seen the start of this."

"People gafiate," she said, hoping to calm me. "We did for 15 years."

"Yes, but look how many fans have disappeared from the Las Vegas fan scene in the last year," I argued. "Did you ever think Teresa would go on tour with her dulcimer?"

"I was glad that James Taylor went with her as her manager. He'll keep her safe in the dog eat dog soulless, money-grubbing world of show business."

"Yes," she said. "He's been to LASFS and everything."

"It's too many, too quickly," I said, pressing the issue.

"You may be right," she said dubiously. I know I've been spending a lot more time playing games on the Internet and less writing and publishing."

Then she said something that chilled me to the bone and drained the color from my sensitive fannish face. "Do you think someone else could host the Veggrants?"

"Joyce!" I said. I could hardly think of what to say. This was the last thing I expected. Yet, I could see some advantages to giving up the club...

I focused my mind on resisting this unwelcome idea. And yet...

"Where is he?" one SMOF said to the other. They were no longer at the left and right of the Leader, so it was harder for even them to know which was which. Sadly, they were not authorized to use actual names.

"He went to get batteries," said the SMOG who usually got to be at the Leader's right hand.

"Ah, batteries," said the other. "A fan never has enough batteries."

"There's something I want to talk to you about," said the SMOF who had brought the Gafia Serum to the meeting.

"What is it?"

"This test," he explained. "I want it to go... well."

"Naturally."

"But the Serum is not s cut-and-dried... it's not so absolute... it's —"

"You mean it might not work?" said his companion.

"The serum will do what I said it will," said the SMOF, huffily. "It's simply that it can't directly cause Gafia. It sets the person up to experience the feelings that lead to Gafia, but some of the stronger ones may need a — a —"

"Need a push in the right direction?" he colleague finished for him.

"Yes. Exactly. A push in the right direction to make the Gafiating effect kick in strongly enough to cause the break with Fandom."

"I see your concern, but I think there is a remedy."

"Yes?"

"I have friends. You have friends. Could we not get them to provide those needed nudges?"

"That's brilliant!" said the SMOG whose status would rise or crash on the basis of the Gafia Serum's success. "The serum will set them up — and then our nudges will push them right out of Fandom!"

They laughed.

Somewhere, a pair of unseen eyes widen in disbelief. The rumors were true. He hoped there was still time to save Core Fandom and wondered if it was already too late for Las Vegas.

He had two important calls to make.

Things began to accelerate...

James Willey and Mindy Hutchings announced they were going to concentrate on refurbishing the house they expect to live in together after marriage. It would be a two-year projects and, well, fandom didn't fit into the couple's plans for at least that long.

Their gafia had a domino effect on the few remaining VSFAns. Soon, no one even got together to watch old television shows and the shiny new constitution went unratified. The group's garish site continued to flash and twinkle hyperbolically, but there was no one to update it and, besides, there were fewer and fewer Las Vegas fans who cared to visit it.

Not that the SNAFFU site fared any better once its prime movers joined their fellow Vegas fans in gafia.

Roxanne Gibbs moved to a small town in Montana, said to have the purest air in North America. It is still not certain that even moving there will mean she won't have to retreat into a large plastic bubble. It seemed like the logical step after Michael Bernstein failed to return from a trip to Isreal, because he was drafted into the tank corps.

Merric Anderson met gafia far from southern Nevada. While installing a room security system at a Best Western in eastern Oregon, he found himself unexpectedly stranded in the remote outpost.

Unaware of Merric's vow to never write anything, the manager of the Best Western asked him for a written report of the job. He offered to give an oral report, but the manager, a Mr. Don Rogers, would not allow this small deviation from his Official Standard Procedure.

Merric is still there, as far as I know, living in the palatial Herbert Hoover suite of the Best Western, unwilling to comply and, therefore, unable to leave. He would be dead already if it wasn't for room service. Lubov joined him in his upholstered prison after the second weeks. They say she paints mostly woodsy scenes now.

Joelle Barnes' life changed when her panties were thrown onto the stage of a concert. She was in them, tossed to the performer's feet by an over-zealous fellow fan. She had cause to thank that still-unknown fellow enthusiast. The star took one look at her, felt the stirrings of love in her heart and the next day she became Joelle Manilow.

I guess he *wasn't* gay,

Alan and DeDee White now delight listeners on New York's WOR. Someone called them "The New Ed and Pegen Fitzgerald" and Bill Mills compared them to Tex and Jinx before he left for California to join the "Morning Zoo" mornings on an Orange County radio station. The station is talking about giving Roxie a call-in show about pets on Sunday at 7:00 AM.

"It's over," said Dick Lupoff. He unlimbered a great sigh. They had worked feverishly for days, worked against the clock to derail this insane plan.

"I can hardly believe all of this. It sounds like one of Arnie's faan fiction stories," Robert Lichtman observed. "Hmmm... I guess we won't be reading many of those in the future?"

"I thought they were immune to their own Bullshit," Dick Lupoff said. "Wha' happen?"

"They could've resisted the original serum, but not our reformulated version," Chris Garcia answered with some satisfaction. He had captured the National

Fantasy Fan Federation presidency, so necessary to emergencies like this. In effect, he had fallen on the grenade for the god of Fandom. "We carefully extracted one of the ingredients and substituted another."

"And this new ingredient — ?" Lichtman wondered.

"Yes, it's as effective against their vile machinations as the original Gafia Serum proved to be against us," Chris explained. "Turned out all we had to do was carefully extract the fan-political bullshit — I had to wear gloves and a face mask — and add some Sensa Yuma,."

"And they're gone?" Lupoff asked.

"Yes, they all went home about 15 minutes after Chris, dressed as a room service man, delivered the tub of ice filled with the doctored bheers."

"I think they're going to open an event planning business in Cody, WY," Robert added. "I think they'll enjoy that."

My story is almost over. That's good, because I'm sort of losing interest in writing it. I think you get the basic idea: Las Vegas fans gafiated in droves.

Even though it doesn't mean much to me at the moment, it's hard to forget SNAFFU's final meeting. One minute the last five SNAFFUties were talking about the novels of Ursula K LeGuin and the next they all stood up and dispersed into Borders bookstore's "Self-Help" and "Gun Sport" aisles.

None of them spoke a word. They just walked back into their Mundane lives.

Not that Vegrants fared better. Far from it. Attendance dwindled steadily, although Joyce and I at first tried to stem the tide with more varied activities.

We had a oneshot. I opened it and Joyce closed it.

We had a musical evening. No one sang and no one played except Joyce, and the neighbors' complaints soon put a stop to that.

When we realized that no one was coming to the house any more, we stopped sending out invitations.

I guess this is as good a time as any to announce that Joyce and I are moving to Baja California — sorry, but I'd prefer not to say exactly where — so that Joyce and I can devote ourselves to our new passion — metal diction. We've got his and hers metal detectors and we find it just fascinating to walk back and forth and see what might be buried in someone else's backyard (when they aren't home). — Arnold D. Katz

**Is THIS
the END
of Vegas Fandom???**

The Rebirth of Vegas Fandom!

"I miss them already," said Chris Garcia. "I still haven't gone to one of those Vegrants meetings and now they are gone."

"I'll miss Joyce," Robert Lichtman conceded.

"Yes, she was nice," agreed Dick Lupoff.

They shared a long sigh of regret. Together, the three of them had thwarted the insanely evil designs of a cabal that had wanted to wipe Core Fandom from the face of the Earth, expunge it with a Gafia Serum.

Though they had stopped the plan to taint the Corflu con suites with the foul potion, their victory had come too late to save Las Vegas Fandom. A preliminary test of the serum, nudged along by some nefarious intervention by the SMOFs, had wiped out Las Vegas to the last fan.

"There's got to be something we can do," said Dick.

"You tell me what," Chris replied, "and I'll do it.

"How about this," said Robert. "They did things to push a lot of those fans toward Gafia. It was a struggle, even with the serum. What if we pushed them in the opposite direction? Perhaps their innate fannishness would come out and reverse the gafia-tion process!

"Do you think it'd work?" Chris wanted to know.

"If it gets them back, it's worth a shot, don't you think?" Dick said.

"Do you really think we should meddle?" Robert asked.

"If we don't," said Chris, "the next few pages in this fanzine will be blank."

"Point taken," said Robert.

I'm embarrassed.

After the *Katzenjammer* in which I wrote about the mass gafia-tion of Las Vegas Fandom, which included mention of Joyce and my decision to gafia-te, I feel a little funny about being back in Fandom two weeks later. (It took me that long to actually publish the issue...)

Maybe I'm slipping or something. The first time

I gafia-ted, with no announcement whatsoever I must add, I stayed gone for about 14 years. This time, I didn't leave Fandom for 14 days. Anyway, you can expect *Vegas Fandom Weekly* to resume its more or less regular schedule. I hope you won't rag me too much about this; I just want to get back to fanac.

Still, I've got to share with you the strange circumstances that brought Joyce and me back to Fandom. In a way, it was even odder than the impulse to gafia-te.

Joyce and I were strolling down a beach in Baja California, sweeping out metal detectors back and forth across the trackless sand. Suddenly, both machines went nuts, beeping wildly to indicate a substantial concentration of metal and very close to the surface, too.

"Let's dig here," Joyce said as though the digging would be done by "we" rather than "me." Not that I argued. There was no way we were going to pass up something that set off the detectors like that.

So I took out the shovel and began to scoop up the sand. It wasn't that hard, especially since I didn't have to go down more than a few feet before the shovel hit metal. "There's something there," I called to Joyce as I tossed aside the shovel.

"So? So?" Joyce was eager to see the fruits of my labor.

"I got down on my knees and used my hands to work a small, dark green metal box free of the sand.

"Can you open it?" she encouraged mere seconds after I lifted the box out of the hole. "Can you?"

I didn't reply, just pulled open the metal lid. The



Original Published
in
Vegas Fandom Weekly #72

didn't work out, but I'm glad you're coming back. We've got something to show you."

"I'll tell you all about it when we see you, but it's a mysterious puzzle."

"Right after you get back, if you can."

"OK, see you tomorrow morning." Joyce hung up the phone and immediately launched into a recap. The Whites' show turned out to be an experiment in retro radio that didn't quite work and the station had already hired a "Morning Zoo" group from California to replace Alan and DeDee's relaxed chatter.

"Well, there's *something* there," Alan said as he examined the paper. "Can I try something? I don't think it'll ruin the message or whatever it is?"

"Might as well," said Joyce. "We haven't gotten anywhere on this before now."

Alan took a pencil and began to draw lines to connect the little bumps. He drew a few faint lines and then looked up at the rest of us. "This is going to be hard," he said. "I need more light." He walked to a large window and placed the sheet against it. He started to draw a new line, stopped short and broke into a big smile.

"I've got an idea," he said. "Darken the room." We soon had the room dark enough to use for photo developing. "Have you got a flashlight?" he asked me. When I said I didn't know where it was, he told DeDee to take the shade off the desk lamp. As she did this, Alan took a painting off the wall – not one of his -- to clear a space.

He turned on the lamp and held the paper in front of it. The lamp projected a diagram done in little pin-points of light onto the bare wall.

"What happens when they figure out the paper?" Chris asked Dick Lupoff.

"They'll have to figure out what it maps," said Dick. "It shouldn't take them too long."

"And then?" Robert wanted to know.

"It could go several ways, but it's tough to know which one they'll choose," Chris said. "We'll just have to watch and hope for the best."

"Maybe we need to give them an additional clue," offered Dick. "One of us could play Deep Throat and just give them the answers."

"It may come to that," Chris said, "but letting them find their own way is likely to be more effective – and less work for us."

"Good point, Meyer," said Robert.

"What does this look like to you?" I asked the

others. No sense denying the fact that my vision would be less than useless in deciphering the luminous diagram on the wall.

"It could be a cabin," said DeDee. "It's more or less square and most of the space is in that one large rectangle."

"I don't think so," said James. "It could be a free-standing structure, but with windows only on one wall, it's probably part of a larger building."

"Like a strip mall?" asked Alan.

"Maybe, though it doesn't look like the design for the inside of a store," James replied.

"What does it say in the lower right corner?" I asked. It looked like a blur to me, to tell the truth, but maybe one of the keener pair of eyes could make something out of it.

"It's two words," said DeDee. "It's really a word and a number."

"What are they?" I said.

"'Union' and '1812'," DeDee read aloud.





Arnie rests from his Herculean effort to rescue his Vagrant pals.

"Did anything unify in 1812?" Teresa asked.

"We had a war with Britain," I said. "I don't think there even *were* unions in 1812," I said.

"Maybe it's not a year," Tee suggested.

"Union 1812!" Joyce shouted. "Union 1812!"

"What about it?"

"Don't you remember?" Joyce scolded. "That was the And Smoking Suite at Corflu Vegas! Whatever it is we are looking for is hidden somewhere in that room."

"And how are we going to get into that room to search?" James posed. "I'm not going to dress up as a chambermaid, no matter how nicely you ask."

"That's a little too *I Love Lucy* for me," I said.

"Have you got a better idea?" Tee said.

"Well, yes, I do," I said with some satisfaction.

"Merric Anderson installed the security system in the Union Plaza. He can surely get us into the room for a quick search."

"Let's get him," said Alan, enthusiastically.

That's when we remembered that Merric was trapped in a hotel room of a Best Western in eastern Oregon.

"I'll go to Oregon," said James.

"Are you sure you want to get involved?" Joyce asked. "This is our mystery and, frankly, I think it's going to be something less than the Lost Dutchman Mine."

"Tee and I talked it over and we... Well, we've started feeling fannish again."

"We want to see what happens," Teresa seconded. "I'd rather play for my friends."

"How do you plan to bring back Merric?" Alan asked James.

"I'm not sure," James replied. "I thought I'd go up there, look at the situation and figure out what to do."

"I'd hate for you to make the trip for nothing," said Joyce, "Maybe we ought to think up something here, before you go."

"Now, as I understand it, Merric and Lubov are trapped in Oregon, because Merric refused to write a summary report of his work for the Best Western. The manager won't let him leave until he does the report and he just says he won't write anything.

"I have an idea," Teresa said. "Why don't we get Bill Mills to go up there and record Merric's report? Merric can email the file to the motel owner and they'll let him leave."

"That's a great idea," I said, "but how are we going to get Bill to leave his radio job in SoCal?" Bill had gone to a radio station where he was part of one of those "Morning Zoo: radio shows. He and Roxanne might even miss their Las Vegas friends, but it didn't seem likely that they would come back.

"I'll give Bill a call," said Joyce.

"Can you believe it? They got Bill and Roxie to go to Oregon!" marveled Dick.

"Well, his radio job was up" said Chris. "The 'Morning Zoo' got hired to work in New York City after the station fired Alan and DeDee White. He and Roxanne didn't want to move to New York."

"I felt bad about that," said Robert, "but it was the only way we were going to get them out of New York and back to Las Vegas."

"They would probably have gotten canned anyway," Dick noted. "I mean, 'Slasher Film Week' may have been just a bit too much for the geriatric audience they inherited from Ed and Pegeen Fitzgerald."

"Did they get Merric and Lubov out of that Best Western?" Robert asked.

"It was easier than publishing a weekly fanzine," said Chris. "Bill called the Andersons' room and Merric told him about the job. Bill sent the MP3 to the owner of the Best Western and Mr. Rogers signed a release and endorsed the check."

So Joyce talked to Bill and, sure enough, he and Roxie decided to meet us in Oregon and see what we could do to liberate Merric and Lubov.

Bill got Merric to record an oral report and the incident resolved itself. I think they evening we all spent together in Oregon reawakened a lot of memories and feelings. Bill and Roxanne went back to southern California to wind up things and get back to



Teresa Cochran and James Taylor sit and ponder the Great Mysteries

metal was a little corroded, but one good tug was enough.

"What's in it?" she asked.

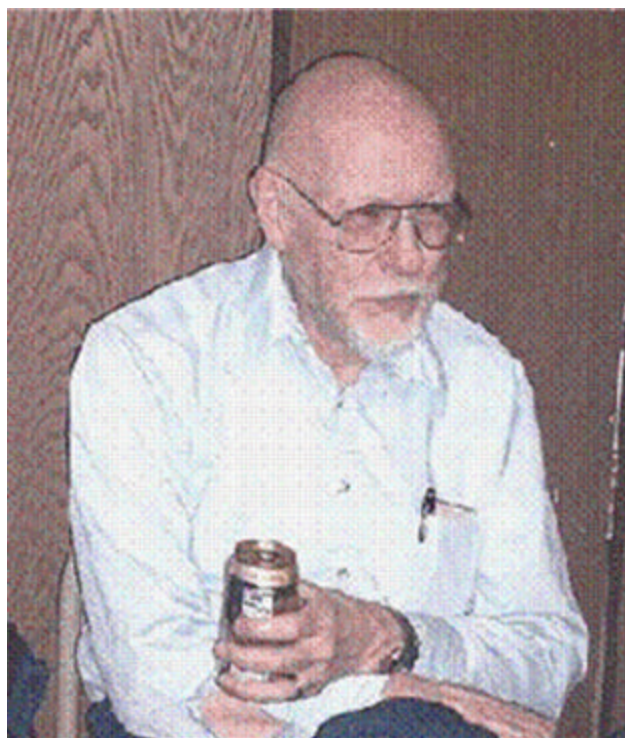
"There's nothing but a piece of paper," I said as I passed it to her. Joyce ran her finger over the blank sheet. She held it up to the light.

"It's not blank," she pronounced.

"Not blank?"

"You can feel the little bumps with your fingers," she said. "It's something in Braille!"

"So far so good," said Robert Lichtman. "They have the box."



Ross Chamberlain has Total Immunity from Gafia.

*"It's a start, anyway," agreed Dick Lupoff
"Yes, but there's so much more to do," Chris Garcia reminded his two comrades. "Arnie and Joyce are back in Las Vegas and ready to fan, but there's much more to do."*

"We'd better get to it," said Robert. The other two nodded their agreement.

"What do you think it is?" I asked Joyce when we'd gotten back to the room.

"Someone must have thought it was pretty valuable, since they buried it," she observed.

"So we better take it to someone we can trust," I said. "We need someone who will tell us what it really says and won't try to beat us out of any treasure or whatever."

"Teresa," said Joyce.

"We'll have to find her," I said.

"That's going to take some time at the computer," Joyce said. "We'd better get back to the Launch Pad."

I agreed immediately, while noting that it was the first time Joyce had referred to our home as "the Launch pad" since our recent gafiaion.

We spent the short flight to Las Vegas discussing plans for future fanzines. The more we talked about it, the more fannish I began to feel. More and more, my gafia began to seem unreal, artificial – like a childhood illness dimly remembered.

Some checking on the Internet easily located Teresa, who was giving dulcimer concerts at community colleges throughout Nevada. She was supposed to be performing at the Princess at State Line.

"That's in driving distance," said Joyce.

"OK, let's go," I replied.

After an uneventful drive to Jean, NV, we reached the Princess Hotel-Casino. We aren't huge gamblers so we got a bargain-priced room, ordered room service and watched wrestling on TV until it was late enough for Teresa to arrive at the hotel for her gig.

Sure enough, when we went to the lounge, she was backstage. The guard took our names and soon returned to usher us into small dressing room where Teresa and her manager James Taylor awaited us.

We exchanged happy greetings with James and Teresa. She had to go on stage, so we took seats in the audience with a promise to meet immediately after the performance.

Tee played and sang with her usual skill and energy, a fine folk music set. The audience was some-

thing else. They all text-messed constantly, many couples were using Tee's music as background for more intense activities and people milled in the aisles as they called out to friends with their outdoor voices..

"Tough crowd," I said as we sat around one of those big Metro pizzas.

"I thought they were pretty good compared to the one we had three weeks ago," James said. "I don't think any of them were playing radios and no one threw anything at Tee."

"I love to play," Teresa said, "but I don't like all the traveling – and the audiences aren't very good."

That's when, after swearing them to secrecy, Joyce and I told them about the green metal box and the mysterious sheet of paper it contained.

Teresa agreed to examine the paper. I placed it in her hand. We all watched as she ran her practiced fingers over it. "I Well, I can tell you one thing about it," she said after she'd fiddled with the paper for a while, turning it this way and that. "It's not Braille."

"It-it's not?" I said, my mind frozen by surprise.

"Absolutely not," she reiterated. "There's no Braille writing on this paper."

"Can you tell anything about it?" Joyce said, grasping at straws. "Is there anything?"

"I think there's something, but it's not in Braille," she decreed with finality.

We lingered over the pizza and then went back to the Launch Pad. We continued to talk about the mysterious sheet and what it might mean.

"We're at a stalemate," Joyce pronounced.

"It's going to take a fresh approach to this thing," I agreed.

"Maybe someone with a finely-tuned sense of spatial relationships," James suggested. "If there's no Braille, maybe there's some other kind of pattern."

"So, someone with good pattern recognition skills," said Joyce.

"And maybe someone who likes mysteries and puzzles," Teresa added.

"This is easier than I expected," said Robert Lichtman. "Arnie and Joyce are doing a lot of the work for us."

"I think it's all those computer adventure games," said Chris Garcia.

"What do you mean?" asked Dick Lupoff. "I think anyone would find the kind of clues we left."

"No, it's the mind-set of the computer adventure game writer," Chris explained. "They turn every job into a multi-part chain of sub-tasks."

"That's what Arnie and Joyce are doing," Robert acknowledged.

"We still can't drag in everybody," said Dick. "There are just too many of them."

"I don't think that will be necessary," said Chris.

"Why not?" said his two cohorts.

"I think they only targeted the major Las Vegas fans," Chris said. "If they could gaffiate the most active fans, they figured they could get the rest to disperse."

"That has happened in some other local fandoms," Robert recalled. "It even happened in Las Vegas in the mid-1960s. When Dwain Kaiser moved to southern California, the rest of Las Vegas Fandom melted away."

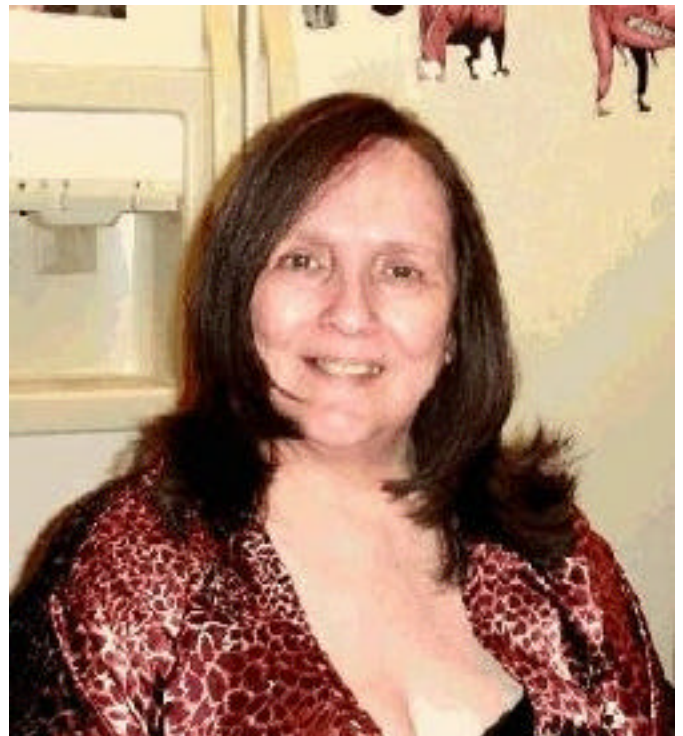
"I've got him on the phone," Joyce said to the rest of us. We listened intently to her side of the conversation as she turned her attention to the person at the other end of the line. "It's good to hear your voice, Alan," she said.

"Yes, we're fine, but we miss you and DeDee."

"How is the radio show?"

"Oh, that's too bad. It turned out no one wanted a new Ed and Pegeen Fitzgerald? That does seem like a possibility."

"You're coming back to Vegas? I'm sorry things



Joyce Katz looks happy about her de-gaffiation,

Vegas, where Bill was already planning to return to his true love – audio books.

Merric and Luba came back to Las Vegas with the rest of us, much relieved to be out of cramped quarters and back to their recently acquired house.

We went to the Union Plaza and, with Merric working the lock smoothly, got into room 1812. Merric positioned himself next to the door, watching and listening for anyone's approach. James and I searched the room with particular attention to the bathroom, where the mysterious diagram had an "x."

Sure enough, James found an air-tight plastic bag in the flush tank of the commode.

"We better get out of here," I said, wiping excess water off the outside of the package.

"We've done anyway," said Merric and the three of us filed back into the half-lit hallway.

We gathered around the Launchpad's big, oblong dining room table and watched Joyce unwrap the package with the studied care of a spinster trying to preserve the wrapping paper.

She pulled another box, green like the first one we'd found, but smaller and flatter.

"What's inside?" I asked, unnecessarily. Joyce was already prizing it open using her fingernails to separate the lid from the base.

"It's full of buttons," I said.

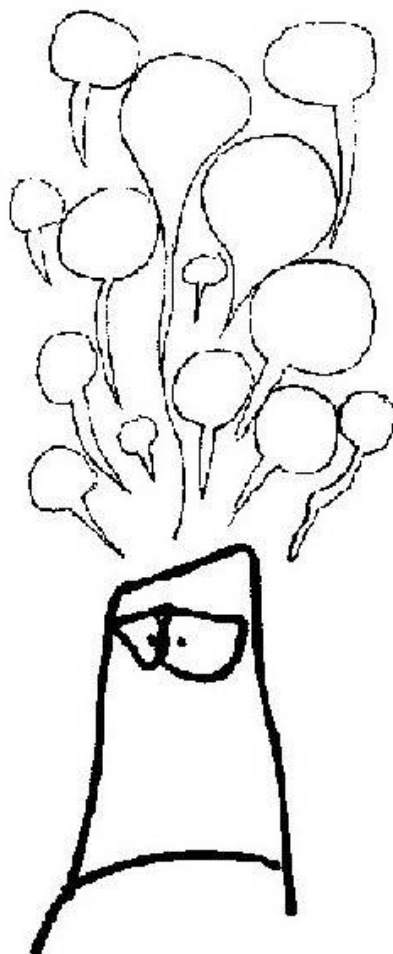
"Buttons? All the things we collect and we find buttons?" Joyce said with some bitterness. "Maybe they'll be valuable to someone else."

"You may not want to sell these," James Taylor said as he held up a handful of buttons and badges.

"That's the NYCon 3 'big eye' yellow badge," Joyce exclaimed. "Arnie and I met at that convention!"

"Ohmyghod," I said as my eye lit on a "Folly" button. Ken Forman had made up a bunch for me when that fanzine was at its zenith. "Look at this stuff."

"Not exactly a treasure," said Joyce. "Sorry to put



everyone through this for so little."

Everyone protested that they didn't mind. We started sifting through the buttons, swapping stories about the conventions and fans they brought to mind.

"Truth to tell, it has been great to be with everyone again," Teresa Cochran suggested. Echoes of assent came from everyone around the table.

"We should get together again soon," DeDee White said.

"How about the first and third Saturday's of the month at 7:30?" Joyce proposed.

"We could call it Las Ve-grants," I said.

"That has a good ring," said Bill Mills.

So we agreed to have a Ve-grants meeting on the third Saturday, which happened to be the very next night. Joyce sent out the notices as she had so many times before.

The White's, the Mill-s'es, the Anderson's, the Katz's,

James Taylor and Teresa Cochran were all in the living room, watching the door when the clock struck "7:30."

Just as De Dee was wondering aloud if anyone would actually come, we all heard a knock at the door.

"Come in!" we chorused. The handle jiggled, the door swung open and in walked Ross Chamberlain.

"Back from gafia, eh Ross?" I said.

"Gafia? No, I don't think so," he said dubiously.

"I felt a twinge of gafia a few weeks ago, but I brushed it off. I missed a meeting, but I'm on time for this one, right?"

We assured him he was definitely in the right place at the right time.

We were all in the right place.

And there you have it. Locals are still drifting back. Even though everyone hasn't yet returned, it's only a matter of time before Vegas Fandom is at full strength again.

Nothing, not even gafia, can stop the Trufans of Glitter City.

— Arnie

They Shall Return! Katzenjammer

In 1919 and 1920, millions of Americans died of the same disease. The Influenza epidemic struck so hard that many public establishments closed, because it was too dangerous for people to be in the same space with too many strangers.

Today, millions of people still get the disease, but damn few experience anything more than a week or two of miserable symptoms. We don't have to sit at least one seat away from the nearest person in the movie theater, which also makes it much easier to grope in the dark.

This is the classic life history of a disease. It starts as epidemic, progresses to pandemic and then becomes chronic at a lower level of intensity. It happened with Influenza.

And now, I believe, it has happened with Gafia. Time was, Gafia was the certain fate of every fan (with the possible exception of Forrest J Ackerman, who vowed to die with his fingers on the letters "s-t-f.")

Gafia was a gradual process during the period in which the disease was epidemic in Fandom. Neofans came in one door, stayed for a variable number of years, and then drifted out the exit.

Then, in 1964, Gafia suddenly became a pandemic. Bill Donaho's attack on Walter Breen, embodied in *The Great Breen Boondoggle*, hit Fandom like the meteor that struck in Antarctica and killed off the dinosaurs. Donaho's campaign against Breen had roughly the same affect on Fanzine Fandom: genzines folded and fans Gafiated.

Fandom changed so abruptly that it created an



Forrest J Ackerman spoke at the World Horror Con 2003.

unprecedented break in fanhistory. Everything before the Boondoggle has an antediluvian quality. Fans like Dean Grennell, Elmer Perdue and Bob Leman, outstanding writers and publishers, are little known to those who entered Fandom after the mid-1960's.

It was well known and understood, in the 1930-1960 period, that sooner or later the desire to Get Away might arise, even before that desire had a proper name. ("Gafia" used to mean immersing oneself in Fandom and "getting away from," Mundania.)

Back in those days, there was an absolute and chilling finality about Gafia. It didn't mean putting Fandom on the back burner during exams and a trip to the Lake of the Woods; when Gafia struck, it was total and permanent.

I'll never forget one of the many nights I spent at rich brown's New York apartment that he then shared with Mike McInerney, reading fanzines and asking question. After reading the heart-rending

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Original Published
in
Vegas Fandom Weekly #71

Ex-Inchmery Fan Diary, I asked him about the author Vincent Clarke. “You won’t see *him* again,” rich assured me.

He gave me that answer a number of times and it certainly seemed true in every case. Once a fan entered what Walt Willis and Bob Shaw so poetically called “the Glades of Gafia” in *The Enchanted Duplicator* he was Gone for Good. All fans could do is mourn the Gafiates in the manner of Orthodox Jews sitting *shivah* for excommunicated family members.

The reasons for Gafiation were many and varied, but some motifs cropped up again and again. Some of the most notable are:

- A major life change, such as college, a move to a new city, marriage and service in the armed forces were just some of the life milestones that often resulted in the person stepping away from Fandom. Such major disruptions often cause a re-ordering of priorities, especially in the young people who once predominated in Fandom. What seemed so important in high school can quickly become just a happy memory of youth.
- Feuding can sour a fan on the hobby. Small feuds gafiate fans in ones and twos, while large donnybrooks such as the Breen Boondoggle and the Bergeron Wars send droves fleeing toward the exits.
- Personal disappointment may also lead to Gafia. Every fan enters the Microcosm with hopes,



Rich brown (Dr. Gafia) as he looked several gafiations ago.

desires and preconceptions. Reality doesn’t always satisfy our expectations or deliver what it seemed to promise and the same is true of Fandom. An unhappy love affair, a lost con bid, an unsuccessful fanzine or simple lack of egoboo can all be enough to undermine that Trufannish Spirit.

- Creativity burn-out can signal the onset of Gafia in some fans. It’s the fan version of writer’s block, though it may reach into all phases of someone’s fanac. Some fans have hung around for years after they misplaced their ability to contribute anything, but those who build their fanlife based on their ability to write, draw or edit may feel empty when they cannot do so. Gafia looks like a way to make the pain stop.
- Doing or saying something monumentally embarrassing or downright stupid may cause Gafia, but only in rare cases. The fans most apt to perpetrate such gaffes are also the most likely to be oblivious to the fact that they have disgraced themselves. It is a rare fugghead, indeed, who knows that he or she is one.

In 1976, Gafia struck my happy fannish home. For reasons that I have repeatedly chewed over in print, conversation and my own mind, Joyce and I succumbed to Gafia. Over night, two people who had fanned for a combined 23 years became ex-fans.

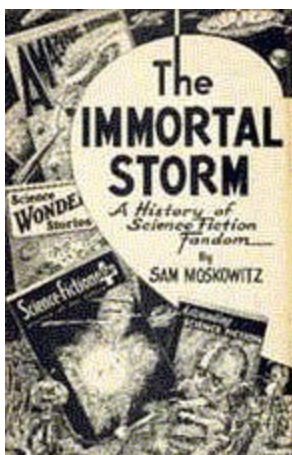
We flew high and far away from Fandom, carved colorful professional careers and moved across the country from Brooklyn to Las Vegas.

I knew the pattern.

I knew the prognosis.

I knew they’d never hear from me (or Joyce) again.

And yet, in 1989, Fandom reached out one slender tentacle, one tendril, and just as suddenly as we Gafiated, we were actifans again! Within six months of my first re-connection with Fandom, I



was producing the monthly *Folly*, revving up Las Vegas Fandom and attending Corflu in LA.

Truthfully, I was damned impressed with the extraordinary fact of my own return. No less a fanhistorian than Harry Warner assured me that no fan had ever been away so long and then returned to produce such a quantity of fanac.

It took a little while to discover that he was wrong. Not only had Vincent Clarke, that guy I was never going to hear from again, came back stronger than ever, but so had Art Widner and Robert Lichtman. While the Sage hadn't been absent quite as long as I had, Widner had returned to Fandom after approximately 35 years and Clarke after more than 20.

Although I was more involved with new fans than returnees in the 1990's, I couldn't help noticing that Gafiates were quietly resuming their positions in Fandom. I'd see a once-familiar name reappear, feel a rush of happiness and go back to whatever I was doing.

The trickle became a torrent after the turn of the millennium when the Internet began to make Core Fandom a lot more accessible to former participants. From David Burton to Earl Kemp, from John Purcell to Dick Lupoff, more and more former fans are returning to the fold. Not all of them have become highly active, but a surprising number have started fanning at or above their former peak.

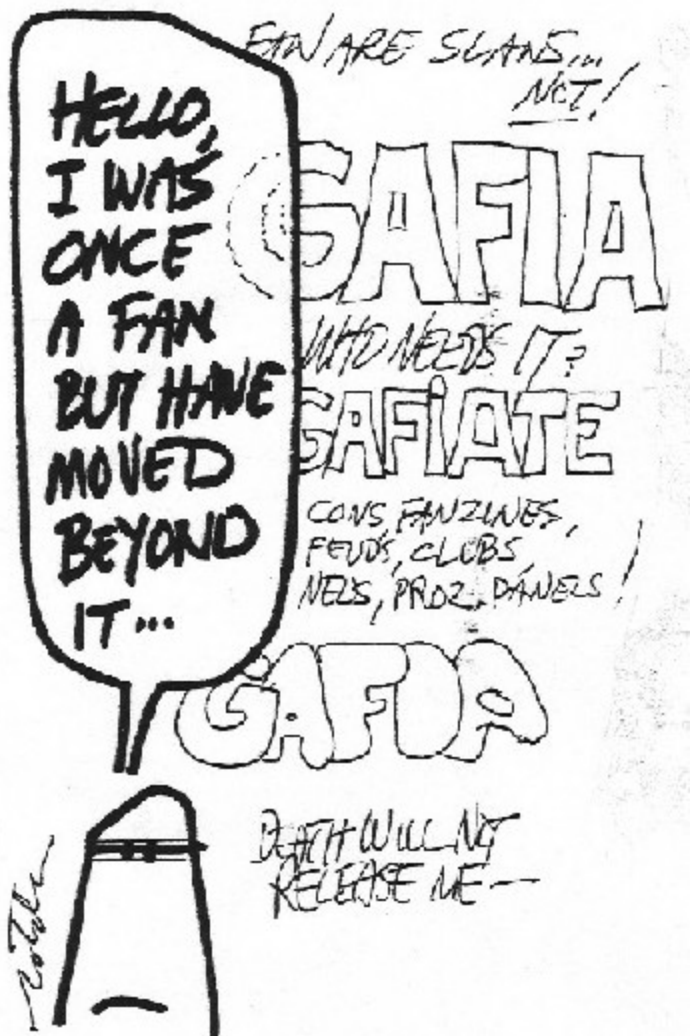
Once we said that Gafia was permanent. The conventional wisdom was: No one comes back.

Now, in 2006, it's impossible to escape the diametrically opposite conclusion:

Everybody Comes Back.

The long, final sleep of Gafia has become a catnap.

Clearly, Gafia has gone from epidemic to pandemic (the Boondoggle and the Bergeron Wars triggered many gafiations) to a milder form of the disease that everyone has but which is lethal to few or none. I've heard newer fans call a week out with a cold "Gafia," which is a strong indication



that this once-fatal disease is but a shadow of its former self.

Why do people come back to Fandom?

There'll be a lot of theories, so here are some possible factors to stir the pot:

- **Nostalgia.** Looking back, a lot of folks see their days in Fandom as among their best youthful memories.
- **Longing for old friends.** An active fan usually makes a lot of fannish friends. Gafia tends to disrupt those relationships and many would probably like to have some or all of them back again.

- **Increase in spare time.** Many older fans who return have seen their children grow up and/or may be in a less exciting phase of their careers. Suddenly, there's more time for fun – and Fandom has always rated well in that department.
- **Rebellion against conformity.** Living a happy life in Mundania generally means some adjustments for Core Fandomites. Sometimes, it's nice to chuck the masks and mannerisms and just be yourself.
- **Creative impulses.** One of the great things about fan-literary activity is that it gives people a rare opportunity to do it all their way. After 20 or 30 years of being a cog in some gigantic creative endeavor, it's tremendously liberating to do your own fanzine, website or write just what you want for someone's else's zine or site.
- **Electronic Fandom.** Computers and the Internet have turned Core Fandom into an extremely economical hobby. People looking towards retirement can hardly miss the fact that it's very inexpensive to be a fan these days.

Whatever the reasons, the ultimate result is the same: Everyone comes back.

In fact, this trend is intensifying. More former fans returned to activity in 2005 than in the five previous years combined and 2006 is already well on its way to a new record.

And I can see the future just as clearly as if it was printed right there in the Bible Code....

As the ex-Gafiates returned in ever greater numbers, the phenomenon became impossible to ignore. Talk raged on the web sites, in the fanzines and via the listservs that mushrooms to accommodate Core Fandom's swelling population. Everyone had a theory; some of Fandom's Deep Thinkers had two or three of them.

Cities like San Francisco, home to many Gafiated and semi-Gafiated fans, fairly percolated

with renewed fannish life. It nearly overwhelmed those BArea fans who hadn't Gafiated – or who had returned before the mass de-Gafiations.

The population explosion made it a brand new fan community. Suddenly, there were more fanzines coming out of the BArea than most fans had time to read and a lot of them weren't published by Chris Garcia, odd as that may seem.

Richard A. Lupoff and Robert Lichtman met clandestinely at a Carl's Junior in San Rafael to discuss the phenomenon.

"Pat starting a biweekly fanzine is about the last thing I expected," Dick told Robert.

"I just locced the third issue," Robert replied. "Nice fanzine."

"Of course it is!" said Dick. "It's just a surprise after all these years."

"You're surprised?" Robert replied. "After years of happily ignoring Fandom and its manifestations, Carol has founded an apa, started a local fan club and I'm sure you noticed her column in Pat's fanzine."

"And the one in *Vegas Fandom Weekly* is pretty impressive, too," Dick added.

"Well, at least we've proven it," said Robert.

"Proven what, Robert?" asked Dick.

"We've proven that individual weight gain is not the best way to make Core Fandom bigger!"

"Yes," said Dick, "and while we were talking,



I sold a book about it, so it's all good."

Close observation and analysis of the recently de-Gafiated revealed some illuminating consistencies. For one thing, the more involved the person had been during their first tour of Fandom, the more likely it was for them to come back and the higher level of activity they were apt to pursue after their return.

Yet it was really just a matter of degree. Some returned sooner, others returned later. Some became publishing giants, while others contributed as listserv posters and letterhacks.

The common denominator remained: They All Came Back.

And then will come the day when every former fan, every man and woman who had been active in Fanzine Fandom or its modern descendant Core Fandom, had returned to the hobby.

Problems like Fandom's aging demographic and fears about perpetuation of this branch of the hobby will vanish as if they'd never existed. It will be like a Dick Pelletier article about the future, except that it will really happen.

Those who need to look for a dark cloud in front of every silver lining will have to be satisfied with fretting over whether there are too *many* fans. These negativists may whine that there are too many fanzines to read them all, too many fannish web sites to visit, too many cool little fannish cons to attend, too many informal invitational fan clubs to join.

The worst grumps might even be willing to let their displeasure lead them into Gafia – except that no one will ever truly Gafiate any more.

Mostly though, fans will look at the changed landscape of Core Fandom with awe and delight. FAPA will have a waitlist of 40 and be getting ready to raise membership to an even 100 to accommodate the demand.

Corflu Thirty Is Not the End will set up for 150 fans and draw 300 and fanzine editors will have a field day sorting through all the contributions sent to them by revived fans.

And when every fan has returned from the Glades of Gafia, Fandom will hold its collective breath, waiting for whatever might come next.

It will be the end of an ordinary day. Tired and somewhat depleted from a long day of vital

endeavor, you come through the door and greet your spouse. "What's new in Fandom?" you will ask.

"We got a fanzine," says your Significant Other.

"Great, I'll look at it later," you respond.

"You might want to look at it now," your help-mate suggests.

"Why?" you inquire.

"Well, it's *Hyphen*."

"Great!" you say. "Is it the one I bought from Robert Lichtman – or is this the one we got in that eBay auction?"

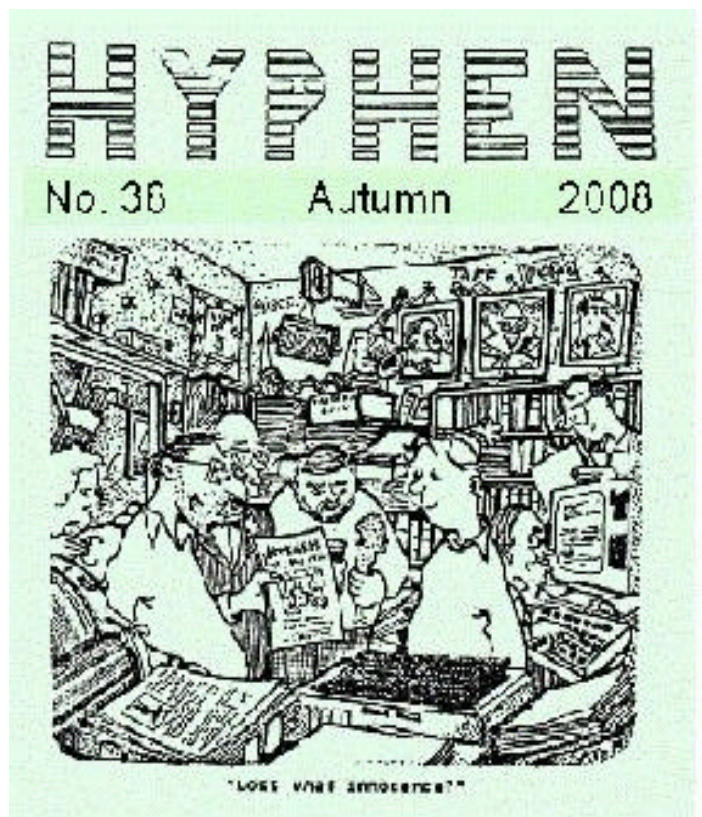
"It's a new issue," comes the simple and stunning reply.

"A new issue?"

"Yes," says your Better Half. "I didn't realize it at first, because I was also looking through the envelop of artwork that Rotsler sent – he said it was in case you were starting to run low – and the letter from Burbee."

They all comes back.
Everybody.

— Arnie



Them Daze Annishes of Olde

An Annish! Wow!

And I'm in it! Double Wow!

Fact is, the very concept of an annish hadn't so much as crossed my mind for the past forty or fifty years. But the Vannish swept me up out of my easy chair. I heard eerie music, everything went into soft focus, and I realized that a flashback was about to occur.

Once again I was about to relive the events of long-ago, so come with me now to those thrilling days of yesteryear and listen to the Million Year Old Fan reminisce about the days of soaring fern forests and roaring fan-feuds. Come with me back to the days of the early 1950's. Longer ago than that, in fact.

I guess I was raised on fantasy. Fantasy in the older, broad sense, when that word was used to include science fiction and horror stories. Some of my earliest memories are of my favorite Aunt Marion telling tales of the Water Babies. These were tiny, fairy-like creatures who lived on lily-pads. I thought my aunt Marion had invented these beings and extemporized their adventures. Decades later I learned that they were the creation of Charles Kingsley (1819-1875), an English clergyman who wrote a fantasy novel about them to teach children good morals.

My aunt must have read the book as a child, or had it read to her, and retained the fantasy aspect while rejecting the Reverend Kingsley's high-tone morality. In fact, my aunt was the family fire-cracker. She did things like smoke cigarettes and put henna in her hair. *Hotcha!*

Aunt Marion was also inordinately fond of a radio show called *The Witch's Tale*. This series ran from 1931 to 1938. It was hosted by the old witch, Nancy, and her wise black cat, Satan. Each week Nancy would introduce a scary story. *The Witch's Tale* was one of the earliest continuing audio drama series, and certainly the first one devoted to the genre of the fantastic.

I had never heard the radio show, but Aunt Marion had apparently memorized entire episodes, and she would re-create them for me, performing

all the roles in different voices. She was really something.

In the same era I did hear a lot of great stuff on the radio, including *The Shadow*, *Lights Out*, *Suspense*, and *Inner Sanctum*. Thanks to the last named show, a whole generation of kids grew up terrified of any door-hinge that needed oil. My early movie experiences included *Snow White*, *Pinocchio*, *Dumbo*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Mr. Bug Goes to Town*, and *Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman* – as well as the Rathbone-Bruce version of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Great Dictator*, and *Citizen Kane*. Go figure. My attachment to the comics is well documented, whether it was Flash Gordon in the Sunday paper or Captain Marvel in *Whiz Comics*.

Obviously, by the time I reached high school I was primed and ready for the pulps (then enjoying their last hurrah) and the SF digests (just about ready to swamp my neighborhood newsstand). I read *Galaxy* and *Other Worlds* and *F&SF* from their first issues, as well as *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, *Startling*, *Amazing*, and anything else I could get my hands on. I discovered that many of these magazines carried fanzine review columns or fan news reports. I read in *Other Worlds* that some students at Miami University were starting a science fiction club. That was a first as far as I knew, and I decided right then to enroll at Miami when the time came.

I sent off my sticky dimes and quarters to famous people like Lee Hoffman for *Quandry*, Gregg Calkins for *Oopsla!*, and Walter A. Willis for *Hyphen*. Or was it *Slant*? Even so, I was particularly fascinated by a small-format double fanzine, printed up-and-back fashion like an Ace Double (and this was before there even were Ace Doubles). The titles were *Cosmag* and *Science Fiction Digest* (one of several magazines to use

Original Published
in
Vegas Fandom Weekly #55

that name) and the editors, if I remember right, were Jerry Page and Jerry Burge.

Wow, I thought these things were great. I decided that I had to publish one of my own. To do it, I talked my father into buying me a Smith-Corona portable typewriter for Christmas, 1951. I still had no mimeograph or hectograph, nor access to one, but I was determined. I went out and bought a package of carbon paper and soon I was producing my first fanzine, *SF52*. By whacking the keys on the Smith-Corona as hard as I could, I was able to make four copies at a time. I typed each issue twice all the way through, and managed a total press run of eight copies.

Ah, them wuz the days!

Came September, 1952, and I was on a train from my home city of New York to Miami, Florida. I had applied to the university there, been accepted, and was ready to start my college career. I made my way from the railroad station to the campus, checked in, got a dorm room, registered for my classes, attended freshman orientation lectures, and started searching for a directory of campus organizations. There were religious groups, study groups for various majors, fraternities and sororities galore, and special interest organizations like the Glee Club, Chess Club, Stamp and Coin Society. There were free movie nights and there were great football games at the Orange Bowl. There were mixers where I could go to meet gurruls.

But no sign of the science fiction club.

I researched the subject and discovered that the news item in *Other Worlds* referred to a club being formed at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. I was at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. I had missed my target by a couple of thousand miles.

But I did make my way into not one but two science fiction clubs while I was an undergrad. One was mainly a postal or paper organization called the Peninsula Science Fiction Society or P2S. This was

started by two fans in northern Florida. Their names, I think, were John Mussels and Ralph Butcher. Or Ralph Mussels and John Butcher. Whatever. We had a pretty nice clubzine called *Sigma Octantis*. I was so excited about the club that I joined three times. Once I was Richard Lupoff, once I was Frank Arthur Kerr, and once I was James Otho Kerr.

Mussels and Butcher were puzzled to receive three membership applications from the same street address, but using one name or another I explained that this was an apartment house. I (Lupoff) lived there with my family. The Kerrs were twin brothers and friends of mine who lived in another apartment. Nobody seemed to notice that the brothers' names, using first and middle initials, became "Fakerr" and "Jokerr."

Eventually there actually was a science fiction club at my college. I was one of the founders. If that other Miami could have its MUSFS, then our Miami could have its UMSFS. It didn't work very well, though. As I recall there were only about half a dozen members. Most were male, although I seem to recall there being one female member.

Here was the trouble:

One of our members must have been a born bureaucrat. He was obsessed with the process of writing a constitution and by-laws, electing officers, collecting dues, and petitioning the university for official recognition so we could qualify for a free meeting room instead of having to congregate in a corner of the Student Union.

Another member was an engineering student and only wanted to read the "science fact" articles in *As-tounding* and talk about rocket fuel formulas and orbital trajectory computations.

Then there was the self-identified psychology major. He explained to us that it was a well-known fact that all science fiction fans were crazy. He was not a fan himself, of course; he didn't even read science fic-





tion. He had joined the club in order to observe and study us weird specimens.

It was a disaster.

Hey, I have no idea how long the club lasted. It may still exist, I wouldn't know. Did they ever get their constitution and by-laws written? Did the engineering guy go on to a career with NASA? Did the psych major learn anything at all?

I got my degree in January, 1956. By April I was in the Army. It was actually a pretty easy life. I fell into a job as an instructor at The Adjutant General's School and spent the next two years honing my skills as a writer and teacher.

Not bad. I did miss my fan connections, though, until a couple of University of California students named Ron Ellik and Terry Carr started a newszine called *Fanac*. I was a charter subscriber and I really, really loved reading *Fanac* every week. It was a weekly, wunnit? Or bi-weekly. Whichever.

I also corresponded with a number of fans, one of whom managed to pull off the stupidest stunt I've ever heard of. The guy nearly landed me in a Federal prison. I won't tell you about that today,

I'm running on too long already. Remind me some other time, willya?

After I'd been at The Adjutant General's School for a while – it was located near Indianapolis, Indiana -- I heard of a club called the Indiana Science Fiction Association and I joined that and started spending Friday evenings off-post, attending ISFA with Robert and Juanita Coulson, Eugene and Beverly deWeeses, Lew Forbes, Lee Anne Tremper, Joe Sanders, and the person with the best fan name ever, Ray Beam, and his wife Suzy.

Both Coulsons wound up writing SF or fantasy novels, and both deWeeses did the same. Joe Sanders became a major academic and eventually President of the Science Fiction Research Association, a remarkably high percentage of "fans-turned-pro," especially for a club as small as this was.

The President of ISFA was a theology student named Ed McNulty. He was already serving when I joined the club, and after a while his term expired and he asked us to elect his successor. But nobody wanted to be President.

Not that the duties were onerous. There were none. Still, nobody wanted the job. But Ed was so insistent that we finally gave in and elected our new President, Ed's dog, a little Pomeranian named Toni.

Toni was a sweet dog. The Indiana winters can be pretty severe, and people often arrived at meetings (generally at the Coulsons' house) with heavy boots on. They would take 'em off and let them dry out and warm up during the course of the meeting. Juanita would cook up a huge pot of spaghetti and everybody would pitch in. We even talked about science fiction, too.

By the end of the meeting everybody was generally in a good mood. People would start bundling up in heavy sweaters and coats and looking around for their winter boots. By this time on a cold Indiana night you could generally find President Toni McNulty sound asleep, snuggled in the bottom of somebody's boot.

Oh, them wuz the days all right, Arnie, them shore as heck wuz the daze.,

— Dick Lupoff

American Myths **Them Days**

Okay, I was way off base. There I was merrily debunking something that I call The Archie Andrews Myth. This is the idea that high school days are a merry round of parties, dates, dances, football rallies, jalopy rides, and milkshakes. Hogwash, sez I, or sed I, that's a false memory cooked up by comic books and low-budget movies and TV sitcoms. The years between ages fourteen and eighteen are sheer hell on earth.

That's what I said, my friends, but along comes the admirable Chris Garcia to say it is not a myth, his high school years really were a merry round of fun and mirth. I think it was Chris, anyway. And I believe him. I don't think he's delusional, for heaven's sake.

On the other hand, the superior man, Robert Lichtman, agrees with my assessment of that phase of life as Hades High and says that he couldn't wait to get his diploma and get out of that scene.

Well, I guess I was over-generalizing. It's Hades High for some of us and Riverdale High for others.

My own case, I will say, was an extreme one. For a number of reasons that don't bear too much on the case, my older brother and I found ourselves plunked into a boarding school at a fairly tender age. Tenderer for Yours Truly than for my brother, Jerry, as he was three years older than I. Not only was this a boarding school, it was a military school. And a Christian military school at that.

I don't really think that our father hated us (our mother, alas, was deceased) but he could hardly have done us worse if he'd tried. I won't go into details about life at the institution that I sometimes call the Borderwall Military Academy (not its actual name). Instead, let's put it this way: Every movie or television drama you've ever seen portraying the nasty life of the kids at that kind of school is telling you the truth. Except the truth is worse.

Jerry actually got along very well at Borderwall. He was good looking, athletic (all-state football and baseball), and socially adept. He rose through the ranks to become a cadet captain or major or colonel or something, I really don't remember. As for me, I was kind

of geeky with glasses and braces, intellectual rather than athletic, and introverted. I just didn't care about shining my shoes and making my bed so tight a quarter would bounce off the blanket. I was more interested in reading books. Hey, I was a science fiction fan before I even knew I was a science fiction fan!

Continued on next page



Original Published
in
Vegas Fandom Weekly #67

Some of the kids took their phony play-rank seriously. They got quite carried away with a smidgeon of authority. They would throw their weight around, turn you in for the slightest infraction, which could be as small as having a smudge on your brass belt buckle or being thirty seconds late for formation. It's the old, "power corrupts" principle. Others had better sense, or maybe more innate decency.

One of the good guys, as I remember, was a fellow named Bill Carlson. He was a couple of years ahead of me, closer to my brother's age than to mine, and was one of those cadet officers. They actually wore old-style Sam Browne belts (look it up) and carried polished sabers on parade!

How in the world I survived that school is something of a miracle, but somehow I did. Damn, how I wish I'd had a normal adolescence, lived at home with my family, attended a public high school, had girl friends and – well, the Archie Andrews Myth says it all, doesn't it? I always thought Jerry was having a great time at that school. He certainly looked it. It was decades later that we finally talked about our experiences there, and I learned that he despised the institution as much as I did. I guess he was just better at protective coloration.

Survive it I did, though, and went off to college. I deliberately selected an institution that had a reputation as a "playboy school," the University of Miami. Spent the next four years, essentially, rehabilitating myself from the damage done to me at Borderwall.

As I've mentioned before – stop me if you're sick of hearing this – these were the 1950's. The Cold War was going full bore and military service for able-bodied young males was considered the norm. I know that some of my contemporaries in the science fiction community went to unusual extremes either to avoid military service altogether or to get a quick discharge if they hadn't managed to escape the draft. I don't condemn anyone who did this, but as for me, I took the Red Menace seriously (maybe I was a fool, maybe not) and when my turn came, I went.

Heck, two years in the Army did me no harm, and



Teri Harrison, a 2002 *Playboy* Playmate, shares the patriotism and the surname of two of America's Presidents.

in fact contributed to my ongoing self-rehabilitation program. So there I was, assigned to the faculty of the Adjutant General's School near Indianapolis, Indiana. One sunny Midwestern afternoon I happened to be headed to the Post Exchange to do some personal shopping. The PX was located in a charming old brick building. You entered by climbing a short outdoor staircase.

As I approached the doors they opened and a soldier emerged. We both stopped in our tracks. He looked at me. I looked at him. We recognized each other. He was an old Borderwall acquaintance, none other than Bill Carlson. He took in my uniform. I took in his uniform. He wore sergeant's chevrons on his sleeve. I wore lieutenant's bars on my shoulders.

After a frozen moment, Sergeant Carlson offered a snappy salute.

Lieutenant Lupoff returned same. Then I shook his hand. "Bill Carlson," I said, "how are you?"

"Uh, just fine, uh – Sir."

"Well, it's good to see you again. Borderwall was a long time ago, wasn't it?"

"Uh, thank you, Sir. Yes, it was, wasn't it? And, uh, what's your brother Jerry doing these days?"

"He's in the Navy. He's chief communications officer on a destroyer in the Mediterranean."

I gotta tell you, if that sergeant had been one of the s.o.b.'s I'd encountered at military school, I would have rubbed his nose in it but good. But he was Bill Carlson, he was a really decent guy. I said, "It's been great seeing you again, Bill."

We exchanged salutes once more, and our paths never crossed again. The Army was a big place in them daze.

Well, now it's the Twenty-First Century and the world is a very different place. My own kids were never called for military service, and now my older grandkids are getting to be of military age. If that thug in the White House tries to reinstate the draft, I'll tell 'em to head for the Canadian border, pronto. Hell, I'll treat 'em to a ticket.

-- Dick Lupoff

TruConfessions Faan Fiction

Father Arnie J. Katz, of the First National Church of Burbee, Las Vegas, sighed. Taking confession was one of his least favourite pastoral activities, but the Bishop insisted. Over the years, he'd heard just about everything. From the steady stream of teenaged media fen confessing "impure thoughts" about Seven of Nine (standard penance: six Hail Majels). Through to that most heinous of fannish sins, TAFF fund malfeasance. The door of the confession cubicle clicked open, and a fresh penitent entered.

"Bless me Father, for I have serconned."

"Serconned, you say, my child. How did this happen?"

"I was reading a science fiction book, Father." Arnie's nostrils flared slightly. Reading a science fiction book, whilst not actually a sin in itself for the Church of Trufandom, could easily lead to more serious things. A bit like getting to second base in the mundane world. "What happened then, my child?"

"I-I wrote a letter, Father. About the book, I mean. A sercon letter. I sent it to a sercon fanzeen editor."

"Has he published it?"

"N-not yet, Father."

"You wrote a letter about science fiction. That's nothing to be ashamed of. Do you have your copy of the gospel according to Francis Laney Tower on you?"

"Yes Father."

"Turn to page 16, verse 5, and read me what it says."

"The subject matter is immaterial. He can even be talking about science-fiction if he does a good enough job, has something original to say."

"Even Science Fiction," repeated the prelate, kindly. "As long as you wrote fannishly, the fact that it was a sercon subject does not make it a sin in the Church of Trufandom. You did write fannishly, my child?"

"I – I try to, Father. Always."

"Who did you write the letter to?"

"B-Bruce Gillespie, Father. A Prince of Sercon."

"Bruce Gillespie? What are you worried about, my child? Whilst Bruce Gillespie is indeed a Prince of Sercon, is he not also numbered among the saints in the Church of Trufandom?"

"Yes, Father."

"Remember your catechism, child. Why is Bruce Gillespie numbered among the saints in the Church of Trufandom?"

"In that year," quoted the neo-fan, shakily both from an unsteady mind and an uncertain memory, "Bruce Gillespie first recognised and named the High Priestess of Fandom..."

"...Named the High Priestess of Fandom," repeated Arnie, almost as in prayer. "My child, what are you worried about? You wrote a fannish letter to a saint in the Church of Trufandom. A little pre-sumptions for a neo-fan, maybe, but I find no sin."

"But Father..."

Arnie felt an avuncular smile cross his face in the darkness of the confession chamber. "But, my child, if it will ease your guilt, I will give you penance. I require you to write a faan fiction article for the parish weekly newsletter. Does that ease your troubled mind?"

Original Published in Vegas Fandom Weekly #57

"Yes, Father."

So I did. — Peter Sullivan

Now & Again Fandom

*(Looks like I need to change "Now and Again" to: "Try and Stop Me!" I'm **really** dangerous, now: My volunteer work is over! VFW – fandom in general! – watch out!)*

Now, as long as I've been around, you'd think I'd be an expert on it.

Guess again! Yeah, I was a fan in the late '40s, early fifties. I was quite active in Fifth Fandom. But – I'm not analytical. For that matter, I'm not even that observant. When I'm active, I'm guilty of tunnel vision; I see where I'm going, and that's about it.

–Oh, now, not exactly.

When I was doing cf., my vision (at first) was fairly broad. I wanted to spread my circle of friends, and get Well Known.

Then came the Willis Campaign, and you know the story from there. And then came gafiation.

So I'm not like Ted White or rich brown, who have pretty well hung in there right on thru. In fact, except for occasional letters with rich brown, and a visit with him and other NY fans whilst I was with Met, I have over a thirty year gap in my fanac. Coulda been longer, but for Lynn Haven fan, Tim Riley, who ran me down, stirred me up,

and got me going again.

Kinda.

It was in the mid '80s when he called and introduced himself and asked if I'd be willing to give him an interview so he could write it up for his fanzine.

Egoboo reared its head, and I agreed.

We met one weekend at the Met office, where we would have peace and quiet, and we talked. And talked. And I began, as time passed, to get back into fandom. In 1988, I attended Tropiccon where Walt Willis was special Guest of Honor. With Madeleine. And Lee Hoffman! How could I not go!

But, now, about fandom and how I see it.

Back in the 40s and 50s, there was just – fandom! There were too few of us to split, regardless of how we felt. Yeah, some did fanzines, some didn't – but all were fans. I think it all started with Star Trek. Yeah, we were still all fans, and many/most of us were eager to see Star Trek, the first serious sf on TV, succeed.

Then con attendance was wanted, so stuff went around mentioning Star Trek and conventions and then Trekkers started showing up. There would be special Star Trek attractions, including guest appearances by one star or another. And, of course, then came Star Trek conventions – but sf cons still



Shelby is surrounded by Madeleine and Walt Willis at the 1989 Tropiccon.



Lee Hoffman ad Shelby ponder.
had their Trekker factions.

Then came filkers.

Filksongs were an obvious by-product, because some fans liked to sing and create take-offs of folksongs slanted to sf. I guess 'The Green Hills of Earth' got it all rolling, but I'm willing to be corrected on that.

Fans started showing up with their guitars and serenading those who would listen. So another splinter group was formed.

Don't forget gaming! The game industry loved sf for the basis of their action games. Then someone started bringing games to conventions. You know the rest!

Japanese Anime is something I'm not that familiar with – the history, that is. I wonder if it started as game animation and then went to cartoons, or vice-versa? In any case, it began appearing among fans and at conventions. Seemed like a con wasn't complete without its anime room.

Another aside: (Yeah, there had to be one!) (. . . Maybe there should be an Aside room at the next convention?) I just realized! Now I know why the Sunsplash Corflu we put on was so sparsely attended – we didn't have a game room or anime or Star Trek! (I do seem to recall some filksongs going on.) No wonder we had such low attendance!

So these days there are Anime fans who think sf just comes in cartoons. There are Trekkers who

think Star Trek is the origin of sf. There are filkers more interested in rhyme than reason/sf, and gamers who consider that rocketships are just things to fight with.

But we're having bigger and bigger conventions!

In fact, I think that's the secret behind all the schismatic action. In 1951, the Nolacon committee was bragging that there were over 400 paid members.

Today, there are more fanzine fans than that!

Back then, 'It is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan' was a statement of fact. Today, there are fans everywhere (that is, if you include gamers, Trekkers, and anime fans – and don't forget SG1, Farscape, etc, etc) and the majority of them never heard of Isaac Asimov, Bob Tucker or Lee Hoffman. As the number increases, the fragmenting causes us to drift farther apart.

If Shelby Vick at age 21 could come forward to 2005, he would be flabbergasted at all the sf: New movies all along, a day doesn't go by without some form of sf on TV, literally hundreds of books by Asimov, shuttles going into space, rockets going beyond the solar system, the Hubble telescope. . . amazing! (Also Astounding, Startling, Thrilling, Fantastic. . . .)

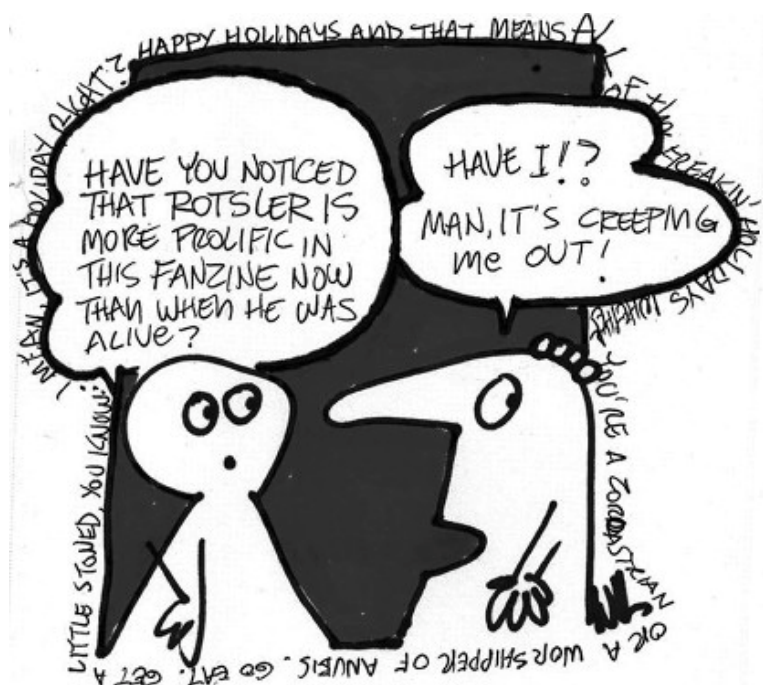
But then he'd be lost, trying to find fans. In a way, it's still A Proud and Lonely Thing. (But then he discovered the internet...)

— Shelby Vick



Original Published
in
Vegas Fandom Weekly #57

Potshot's Cartoon Theater



The Cartoon Creations

of

Bill “Potshot” Kunkel



PipeLine Sixty Years!

Dear Arnie,

I have to say I am a little disappointed.

After my last letter about the February 'First Thursday' meeting in London I felt sure you'd want to come along for the March gathering, what with it being the sixtieth anniversary of the first post-War London fan meeting.

I even got you a beer in, as I said I would. For all I know it's still there, sitting on the bar and getting flat and warm. Well, it was flat and warm in the first place -- this is British beer we we're talking about -- but you get my point, I trust.

We had a pleasant enough time, but we missed you, Arnie, honest we did. I know it's a long way to come for the evening but hell, there were some people who'd come, what, twenty, maybe even thirty *miles* just to be there so there's no excuse, I feel.

It all left me feeling a little bit depressed, to tell you the truth. But then I thought again. Arnie's a fan historian, I said to myself. Clearly he has decided that rather than popping over for the sixtieth anniversary of the March 1946 Shamrock meeting he'll come over for April which is per-



haps more significantly the sixtieth anniversary of the first meeting in the legendary White Horse.

Yes, that is what he will do.

So what happened to your plan, Arnie? I did wonder if you were perhaps wrong-footed by the last-minute change of location. We thought we had a booking for our usual haunt, the Melton Mowbray, but something went wrong and we ended up getting bounced to the nearby Printer's Devil which -- as I'm sure you'll know -- was once considered as a First Thursday venue in the mid-1970s. We put up signs so that those who didn't read the news on the net could find us, and it seems that most people did manage to make their way to our new albeit temporary home.

I sat with Sandra Bond, thinking that she'd be able to identify you when you arrived. 'Is that Arnie?' I asked, 'is that? Is that?' Sandra was able to confirm that my first two suspects were in fact a woman in her mid-twenties and a hat-stand, but had to concede that candidate #3 did indeed look a lot like you. But, said Sandra, he's wearing a green shirt and, *as all proper fan historians know*, Arnie Katz has not worn a green shirt on a Thursday since October 1973. Sandra's good on fanhistorical detail.

Did you squeeze into the pub while we weren't looking, perhaps while I was deep in conversation



Original Published
in
Vegas Fandom Weekly #77

with James Bacon? It was pretty crowded in the upstairs bar, and I did wonder out loud a couple of times whether we could make space by throwing out all the people we didn't like, or at least those whose luggage took up more space than they did. What we need, I said, is more fans like Niall Harrison -- tallest



Mark Plummer

man in fandom, under-30s category -- who take up about the same floor area as a postage stamp.

But I have to say, I don't think you made the April meeting either, did you, Arnie? Still I didn't give up hope. Maybe, I thought, Arnie's planning on coming to Eastercon, 'cos that's where all the fannish action is going to be. Well, not quite all of it: the Pickersgills were staying in Wales, the Harveys were in Australia as were Doug Bell and Christina Lake, Alison Scott and Steven Cain were in Belgium with the kids, Avedon and Rob rarely show up these days -- but there'd be quite a bit of fannish action. Pete Weston, Yvonne Rowse, Flick and Mike Scott, Lilian Edwards, Giulia de Cesare and Steve Davies, John Jarrold, Rog Peyton, Max and Tobes, the inevitable James Bacon -- and not forgetting Ian Sorensen as famous fan guest of honour. And it would have been an ideal opportunity for you to test out your theories about 'Core Fandom' as applied to the UK fan scene.

'Would have' is the operative phrase here. Eastercon remained Katz-free, didn't it? A few Americans came over -- Nigel Rowe was there, as were Bill and Mary Burns, and indeed late-of-Las Vegas writer Elizabeth Bear -- but no sign of you, although I did see what seemed to be a hat-stand that was curiously like the one in the Printer's Devil so I did wonder briefly whether Sandra had given me a bad steer there. You missed a fine TAFF party on the Saturday night with lots of free drinks courtesy of Interaction, last year's Worldcon, and plenty of general fannish hanging out (you also missed me attempting

to present the Doc Weir Award to somebody who wasn't in the room, but we will gloss over that).

I keep wondering where and when you're going to appear. I even looked for you at the Arthur C Clarke Award presentation in London a week or so after Eastercon. A bit sercon for you, I know, but with free drinks courtesy of the sponsors (we now know that the 'C' in Arthur C Clarke stands for 'Cobra Beer') and plenty of fans around -- including old-timers like Malcolm Edwards and Leroy Kettle, and your pal Paul Kincaid -- I thought it was a definite maybe... but no.

Britain -- and British fandom -- still waits for you, Arnie. Soon I'll be setting off for the May First Thursday meeting. Melton Mowbray, as usual, unless we've been double-booked or it's been crushed beneath a giant space beetroot or something. In which case we will leave a note for you telling you where we've gone. It's not too late, Arnie; we'd love to see you, really we would...

Regards,

-- Mark Plummer

Arnie's Explanation



I was on my way to the meeting, when I ducked into a call box to telephone for directions. Imagine my surprise when I discovered that it was a lot bigger on the inside than it seemed -- and that it was tenanted by an intriguing guy who called himself The Doctor and his very young blonde friend Rose.

It turned out that, just after I entered this thing, they had turned it on and somehow we had gone 60 years in the past. So I went to a science fiction club meeting with them.

Then they took me back to Las Vegas. — Arnie

London Calling England Fans!

Such is the scale of London, such is the sheer size, such the density of its dizzyingly varied and multiethnic population, that even after more than a quarter century of living in the capital there are still many parts of it I've never visited, and some I haven't returned to in decades. Twenty years ago (though in memory it seems more recent), I used to regularly meet up with the denizens of North London fandom, people such as Pat & Graham Charnock, Leroy Kettle (now an OBE), John

Brosnan (now, sadly, deceased), Chris Atkinson, and Malcolm Edwards - who was then editing the fanzines TAPPEN and DRUNKARD'S TALK, both of which I used to run off on the Gestetner that resided in the kitchen of my flat). We used to meet up to play pool in the back bar of a pub called The Salisbury. Somehow, we drifted apart and, until last Friday (10th March), I hadn't been back to the area in the two decades since then.

The Tollgate is a pub on Turnpike Lane, a street I don't think I've ever been down before. Like most large and modern pubs it doesn't have a lot of atmosphere. Fortunately, it also lacked something too many other modern pubs have - loud music - and had something they often don't - good beer - and thus was perfect for our needs. I arrived at 7pm to find John Hall and the Charnocks already present, a plate of nachos on the table in front of them. John was smartly dressed, having come straight from work, and the reason for this meeting. He and the Charnocks had known each other since the early 1970s and the days of Ratfandom, but I'd first met him about 15 years ago when he called at my house to drop off a pile of mostly 1960s UK fanzines, a godsend since I was then just about to start writing that sec-



tion of THEN, my history of British fandom, and 1960s fanzines were very thin on the ground for some reason. John bought me a pint, and we started in reminiscing about absent friends and the last time we'd all been together at John Brosnan's funeral.

I was delighted when Rob Holdstock joined us about a half hour or so later. Rob lives locally, about two streets away from the Tollgate, and had been persuaded to drop in by Graham. Older and a bit greyer, perhaps,

but he didn't look much changed by the passage of years. We got onto the subject of the urban fox for some reason - London's back gardens are getting overrun by them - and I mentioned Patrick Nielsen Hayden's surprise on seeing one nonchalantly strolling along the wall at the rear when he and I were recovering in my own back garden last summer following a long, hot bicycle ride:

"Holy shit, you have wild beasts roaming your gardens!" he'd said.

"You know Patrick Nielsen Hayden?" said Rob, genuinely surprised.

"Since my TAFF trip in 1984," I said.

"Avedon's known him since he was sixteen."

"He's my US editor, but I've never met him," said Rob. "What's he like?"

Now it was my turn to be surprised. The Nielsen Haydens had been at YORCON III, the 1985 UK National Convention (held that year in Leeds) and so had Rob, so far as I knew, so I assumed they must have met then, but apparently not. As it

Original Published
in
Vegas Fandom Weekly #70

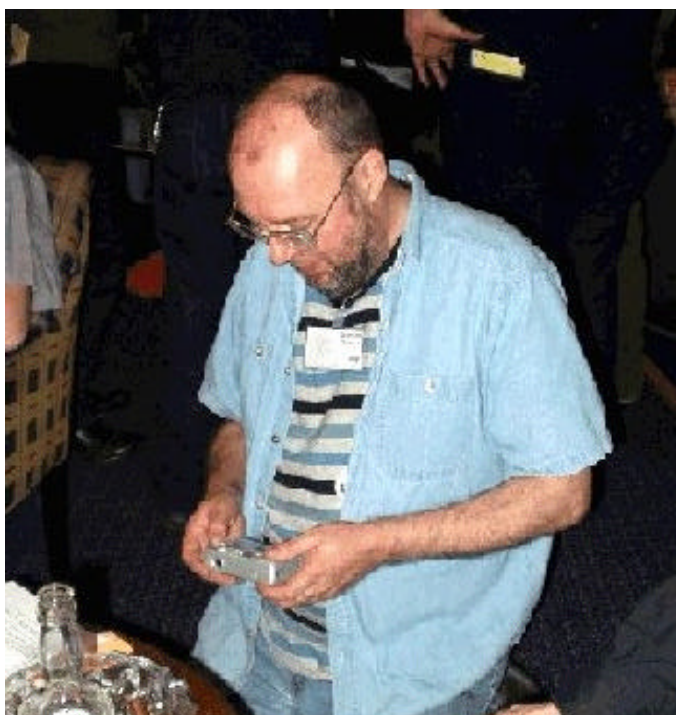
happened I still had a little videoclip of Patrick on my Palm Zire that I'd taken during our last trip to the US, so I was able to show him this. Rob declared Patrick "much younger" than he'd imagined.

Around 7.45pm Sandra Bond showed up. I introduced everyone but obviously didn't do too good a job since Sandra misheard me and spent the next half hour chatting to Rob under the misapprehension he was Leroy Kettle. Only after she made a joke about his work

on 'Slimer' – a novel (and I use the word advisedly) Kettle co-authored with Brosnan - did the truth dawn.

Shortly after this Rob Jackson appeared, the final arrival of the evening. Rob was another long-time fan, someone I'd first met in 1976 and also not seen in about 20 years. His fanzine, MAYA, was the second I ever received a copy of in the mail, the second I ever wrote a letter to, and had the most impressive reproduction of any UK fanzine of the mid-1970s. There were contemporary US zines that equaled or surpassed it in this department, of course, but Brits of the period were generally more impoverished than their American counterparts and did the best they could with what they could afford.

I found myself the second youngest person at the table, something that doesn't often happen when you're over 50, while at the same time finding myself more comfortable and at ease conversationally than I sometimes am with those younger than me. The shared memories and experience of your age co-



Graham Charnock is one of London's best-known fans.

hort really are a wonderful thing.

Conversation was lively, there was much laughter, and I think a good time was had by all. John had to leave early to catch a train, and Sandra too did not stay long, with the result that when those of us remaining left the pub at the end of the evening, Pat and Graham found themselves outnumbered by Robs. Holdstock and I had to head for our respective homes, leaving Rob Jackson and the Charnocks to seek out a

curry.

All in all it was a pretty good evening in that way that touching base with people you have not seen in too long can sometimes be. I hope it isn't another twenty years before we do it again.

- Rob Hansen



Rob Hansen is one of British Fandom's top fanwriters and publishers and also one of its foremost historians. He is the author of a four-volume fanhistory called *Then*, which he published in the late 1980's and early 1990's. It's a great way for US fans to become a little more familiar with our brothers and sisters on the other side of the Atlantic.

You can read Rob's magnum opus online at: http://fanac.org/Fan_Histories/Then.

The *Star Wars*

Wealth-Building System

Nothing turns a hardnosed rationalist into a mystic like a little gambling. After turning a dollar in change into \$20 at the downtown Pahrump Terribles, I thought I'd stumbled upon a system to beat the casino. But the odds struck back.

I was running on empty and the check I was expecting to live on had not yet arrived at my mail drop. I was considering cannibalism when I remembered the change dropped over the years into the little center storage area between the front seats of my car. I dug desperately and recovered a small handful of coins from the bottom of the compartment. Thing is, the nearby casino would only be interested in the quarters and nick-

els. As for the pennies and dimes? "We don't take their kind." They'd have to wait outside during this mission.

The cashier was not impressed with my logical powers when I handed her four quarters and a nickel. She pushed the nickel back along with a single dollar bill. But at least the rebel forces were now equipped to take on the empire. I made my way to the nearest *Star Wars* themed penny slot machine. Upon insertion of the dollar, C3PO said, "R2, welcome our new guest." When playing the game for amusement in the past, I had been a penny-a-liner, playing five lines. But in these dark imperial times, I was playing one penny total each game. At that level, we see characters from Tatooine such as Jawas and the red droid, and we hear the main theme repeated again and again. After a few fruitless "Game Over" results, I got a Vader vs. Kenobi bonus fight.

Obi-Wan might have been my only hope in this most desperate hour. After some energetic crossing of light sabers, Darth Vader sliced through Kenobi's now-empty cloak, and said in an inhuman voice, "You have chosen poorly. You have betrayed yourself." Kenobi's failure may have been complete this time, but I'll never join the Dark Side. Many gambling companions have foolishly switched sides after such a defeat only to face surprising destruction at the hands of the bathrobed elderly gentleman. "There is much fight left in the old Jedi." In my case, the consolation amount was only three cents. So, the Vader duel payouts were based on the total bet. Interesting. Usually I'd get up to 50 even when I lost on 5 lines.

Things were looking grim, but I kept betting. And then a miracle happened. I hit a Death Star Bonus! Han Solo chased a squad of stormtroopers around a corridor, yelling all the way, and then my view of the situation consisted of choosing which dork in a stormtrooper outfit to shoot.



Probably fanboys from the local Neon City Garrison. I touched the screen and the rightmost trooper fell from a blaster shot. This was to choose the lower Death Star pointer position. Another three stormdorkers showed up and I blasted the leftmost one. That picked the upper pointer. I hate centrists, but upon further reflection, they're the only ones I left alive. Now it was time to spin the Death Star. Primary ignition was commenced and the lower pointer moved over amounts like 100, 20, 50 and finally settled on 600. My strategically chosen upper pointer rested on 400. I just won a ten-dollar bonus with a single penny bet!

Now I switched to playing five lines and the very next spin included a pay line with five Han Solos in a row, paying yet another ten dollars. I had a few spins left, and after getting back down to 20 dollars credit, I hit the "cash out" button. When I brought the twenty-dollar ticket to the cashier, reminding her that this resulted from about fifteen minutes of play starting with one single dollar, and that I was starting a new career playing *Star Wars*,



she still regarded me as a complete idiot.

I bought a five-dollar lunch and put ten bucks of gas in the car. Perhaps I had stumbled across a method to beat the game. The remaining singles would fuel a test of my theory at the other Pah-rump Terribles location, which was on the way home. Despite being a moral cripple, I had no valid handicap parking sign and thus had to park in an able bodied space. Inconvenient.

I played five lines with five dollars until I had less than three dollars credit, then switched to single penny play. Upon winning enough to exceed a total balance of three dollars I switched to five lines again, fell back to single penny, then five lines--back and forth--and after a few hard fought hours of play, walked out of the Lakeside Terribles with another twenty dollars. Assuming my time was worth nothing, I had come out ahead yet again. But prolonged exposure to smoke and sneezy gamblers in winter had given me a cough in addition to the cash.

But I soldiered on and reported my winnings to the visiting John DeChancie. "I've analyzed the *Star Wars* slots and have found a weakness. Just bet only one penny total at a time."

"What good is a single penny against that?" John said, remembering a group of the imposing machines, each crowned by its own Death Star Bonus sphere.

"Most so-called penny players are impatient drunks playing max bets per game, so the casino doesn't view the rare single penny bettor to be any threat," I replied, recalling the cantina aliens that show up with cantina background music when five cents are bet per line and the space ships with heroic music when ten cents are bet per line. "It's time to make an effective demonstration of this system--I suggest we use it."

Of course with an audience present, my initial gloating over the poor casino's fate of having to face an insurmountable gauntlet of penny payouts turned into me feeling like a malfunctioning little twerp. All my remaining extra cash earned earlier was eventually lost. John fared no better. Although my system was totally blown away, I was still ahead of the game that day.

But now I have a new strategy. Make a series of movies and sell toys. — Kent Hastings

Winston Churchill

Statesman, War Leader... Fan

There is, I think, clearly something that, for want of a better phrase, we can call fannish writing. It's that writing style common to both science fiction fanzines and postal games zines. And, for all I know, the other myriad types of amateur publication that are out there. (The newly-revived Factsheet 5 might be a good place to track these down, if & when the re-launch issue emerges Real Soon Now.)

Fannish writing, like jazz, is one of those things that defies specific definition, except for cop-outs like "If you has to ask, you ain't got it." But for the purposes of the article, I would guess the main features of fannish writing are mild cynicism combined with enthusiasm, and a eye for the risible or self-importance, both in the world at large, the subject matter and even the author herself. Fannish writing is not necessarily confined to fandom. It has been pointed out elsewhere (I think by Arnie Katz) that Dave Berry is probably a good example of a professional writer who writes in a fannish style.

And people who write fannishly in fandom can sometimes find it difficult to switch off. Many of the

better weblogs are written in fannish style -- as are some of the more infamous weblogs that have resulted in people losing their jobs. The weekly newsletters I did for the GNU Enterprise free software project often read like fannish writing, at least the way I did them. And, although I tend towards ultra-cautious in any formal writing I do at work, I tend to be a bit more informal and fannish with e-mails, at least when I know the person at the other end well enough to be sure they can take it.

Historic examples of fannish writing will inevitably become rarer as you go back through the 20th Century, before even the early days of First Fandom. However, reading Roy Jenkins' excellent single volume biography of Winston Churchill, I came across a good early example of fannish writing, significantly pre-dating the SF fandom era.

The story so far: Winston Churchill gets elected for parliament in 1900 as a Conservative, then switches parties to the Liberals over the issue of free trade. By 1910, he has worked his way through various ministerial posts, and pressurised Prime Minister Asquith to make him the youngest Home Secretary since Peel.

In the late Victorian and early Edwardian times, one of the PM's duties was to do a private letter to the Queen or King every day that the House of Commons was sitting, telling them what had gone on. (Assuming, of course, that the PM was a member of the House of Commons -- at this time, the PM could equally well be a member of the House of Lords.) By 1910, the PM had managed to off-load this task on to the Home Secretary. (The Home Secretary had several other odd royal-related duties, including having to be present at all royal births "to prevent the babies being switched.")

For Churchill, who had made his name in the Boer War as what we would today call an embedded reporter (albeit one who was actually a member of the army rather than employed by a news organisation), doing the daily letter was of course grist to the mill.



Rather than do the minimum, he would write up quite substantial pieces whilst sitting in the Commons. Not just giving the dry gist of what was said, but describing the atmosphere and mood of the House in terms that were quite fannish.

So, his report on the Army Estimates of 11th March 1910 went “The House assumed that listless air which indicated that the questions of interest lay outside the debates [...] other Members took refuge in the smoking rooms.” This could, almost verbatim, be a description of a panel session gone bad at a science fiction convention.

Like all good convention reports, any friends of Churchill’s – including the surprising number of Conservatives who were still on speaking terms – would get star billing for their contributions in debate. And a point made by a speaker, or even just their method of delivery or demeanour, could inspire an off-topic diversion, of the sort that normally gets removed in the second draft of fanzine articles.

But of course Churchill was working first draft only, in his own handwriting, so the completely irrelevant section as to how Lloyd-George had looked the absolute spitting image of Joseph Chamberlain before LG grew his moustache stayed in.

Churchill got no real feedback on his letters, so he kept on going. The crunch came on the debate on the King’s Speech. The Labour Party, which as a result of a semi-formal electoral pact with the Liberals was now a small but growing third party, had put down an amendment about the “right to work.” Churchill wrote up the debate as normal, but then added some pugnacious comments of his own. It is typical early Churchill, not least in its ability to cross-over conventional left-right political shibboleths:

“As for tramps and wastrels, there ought to be proper Labour Colonies where they could be sent for considerable periods and made to realise their duty to the State. [...] It must not however be forgotten that there are idlers and wastrels at both end of the social scale.”

This unsurprisingly didn’t go down well with the King, and his private secretary wrote a letter of complaint to PM Asquith. Asquith, in much the same bind as an Official Editor of an APA trying to dampen down



WSC and his assistant slip-sheeters rushing to un-jam the paper feed mechanism in the mimeograph (Or, if you insist, David Low’s famous “All Behind You, Winston” cartoon from the London Evening Standard, May 1940)

a potential inter-member feud, got dragged in against his better judgement. He instructed Churchill to write an apology – as the neo-fan who had upset the BNF (in this case, the hereditary chief BNF).

The “apology,” of course, turned out to be a masterpiece of fannish writing itself. Churchill pointed out that he had never had any feedback, and had just carried on as he had done for the previous King. He “now gathers that YM [Your Majesty] desires that he should confine himself to a narrative of the debates.” But pointed out that he was very busy, and that the King could just read the newspaper reports if that was all he wanted. And he would be frightened of upsetting the King again – would it not be better to get another minister to do the job? As Jenkins notes, the letter was a classic of “dumb insolence.”

The result was, in effect, a score draw, with Churchill being told “your letters are always instructive and interesting and [the King] would be sorry if he were to receive no further ones from you in the future.” So Churchill carried on, noticeably toning down the letters to start with, but soon getting back into the swing of things, continuing until he started his first (less famous) stint as First Lord of the Admiralty.

So Churchill didn’t lose his job over what he had written in his “daily newszine,” but he did get a shot across the bows. And the issue of whether his zine was meant to be “sercon” or “fannish” was, as in all the best fan disputes, never really resolved.

— Peter Sullivan

Original Published
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Vegas Fandom Weekly #65

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