

I USED TO HAVE TROUBLE
SELLING THE STUFF UNTIL
I PUT ANALOG IN THE SAME
SECTION WITH SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN.



STEVE STILES

FRAP

FRAP #1: Edited by Bob Lichtman, 6137 South Croft Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90056. FRAP is published bi-monthly and is available for accepted contributions of suitable material, publishable letters, or (as a last resort) 25¢ per issue (\$1.00 for 5). If you must subscribe, we would rather it be in addition to the other methods of getting this magazine, because we want your letters & contributions more than your money. Cover this issue is by Steve Stiles, interior artwork all by Ray Nelson. This is the September-October 1963 issue. Don Fitch, whose address is 3908 Frijo, Covina, California, publishes this magazine, and since it is also available for trades, would like (as I would) to receive your fanzines. (S71)

Most of the fanzines I pick up in the mails these days are pretty similar. It's either a discussionzine and all hung up on discussing what someone said in jest three issues ago regarding the end of the world (which will come in a blast of atomic hell, on a warm Saturday afternoon), or it's a comicbookzine nostalgizing about the good old days of Captain Marvel for the fourteenth time (I read Donald Duck when I was a little kid but I don't think this is suitable grist for a fanzine article). If it's not one of these zine-types that have established themselves during the past several years, it's probably a first issue fanzine from a young NFFF member in some town like Craw's Landing or Tully Hill. In this case the young editor (guaranteed not to be over 14 years of age) will spend most of his editorial formulating Great Plans for his fanmag -- "We will feature checklists of British science-fiction and interviews with Ivar Jorgenson, charge only 50¢ per issue, and send Seth Johnson fifty copies of each issue for his Fanzine Clearing House" -- which nine times out of ten is poorly dittoed and features scrawlings ("space artwork with Feeling") by the editor's younger sister.

Well, this fanzine which you are holding and perhaps even reading is not like any of those above. As Greg Benford points out in the letter-column, it is better for fandom if fans produce one fanzine of high quality rather than a bunch of fair-to-good apa magazines. Up until about three years ago, I published mainly one general fanzine, PSI-PHI, which placed 17th on a FANAC poll of the day with its first four issues (two of which were Baaad), but which petered out when I joined and started publishing for a bunch of apas. I eventually folded the fanzine and settled down to a routine of drivelling forth mailing comments and the like for half a dozen apas. I even went so far as to write a "fand book" for NFFF, which is pretty far. After a while, I felt all used up and started dropping out of apas.

FRAP is not going to be just another "fand book," Meyer. If this fanzine will do anything, we hope it will entertain. So send us those contributions, letters and trades and help us entertain by entertaining us.



IT'S NOT THAT BAD, MEYER. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS GIVE UP COMIC BOOKS AND YOUR WIFE'LL COME BACK TO YOU.

GREG BENFORD:

winged victory

or, THE SUNBURNED BEANIE

AND SO IT CAME TO PASS that on the 28th of May, 1963, a bedraggled crew of two, myself and my brother Jim, slipped quietly over the Colorado River and into Southern California, the fan capital of the world. It was a most hospitable reception; the first sign of life I saw was a palm tree, evidently being kept from the last throes of a lingering death by the Chamber of Commerce of Needles, California.

It was not much in the way of grand entrances. We stopped right there (next to the Chamber's palm tree) and slept out the rest of the day. Early next morning we shot through the sleeping boulevards (there are no streets in Needles, Calif.) and out onto the desert.

For some reason there must be throngs of people who have a deathly fear of the desert, for Route 66 is filled with obnoxious tourist traps which feature Live Rattlesnakes, Real Mexican Hats, Water Bags, Authentic Stuffed Dummy Animals and other cultural artifacts. The roadside signs for these places are inevitably huge and crudely lettered, whereas the businesses themselves are two-room shacks dangerously close to collapse.

But these were all dark and lifeless as we sped by, listening to JS Bach on the radio and reading James Bond novels. I was looking forward to seeing California, since I'd never been there. Everyone had sadly foretold that the traffic would be too fast, the weather too monotonous ("It's good all the time, instead of being half good and half bad like everyplace else."), and most of all, the people would be Crabby, Unpleasant and Downright Mean. I had a moment of doubt about the latter when we passed a restaurant that advertised "American, Mexican, and Chinese Foo," but it quickly passed. The freeways weren't bad, either. We did pass a white-faced man peering out from his Fiat like a frightened animal, but that was during the rush hour. And one day last week I could even see the sun.

As soon as we found a place to live, fans came. Don Fitch drove out from Covina with some Fantasy Rotators from the Cult, and armed only with a pocket-knife, a map and our address, he found his way unerringly to the proper doorstep. He looked around at the swimming pool, palms, and soft lighting. "Why, this looks like something out of Southern California," he said. "I've been out here seven years and I've never seen anything like this." "If you were Redd Boggs," I said, flashing my California smile and newly acquired suntan, "we'd throw you in the pool."

Next week we went to LASFS, stopping by at Don Fitch's to pick him up. We didn't get there on time, of course. I have never gotten to any fan gathering remotely close to the appointed hour, so I expected nothing else. The meeting place of LASFS is the general-purpose building of a public park, mostly because said location is free. Jim, Don and I stood around the building looking at people play games and run in and out. It all reminded me of those travelogue films one sees of children rather mindlessly throwing balls about and milling around together, with background music indicating that this is a happy, carefree life. For some reason the gambit is also used in deodorant advertisements, but fans have beaten that poor subject to death so I won't go into it.

I looked around at the typical suburban activities and thought about the mysterious organisation which weekly met within, unbeknownst to the mundane protectors of the community. How did the LASFS officers explain the role of the club and its activities to the park officials? But then, considering the Temple of Mentalphysics we had seen some days before sitting nonchalantly next to a supermarket, I suppose science fiction must seem pretty dull stuff out here.

We stood there, speculating on why the Greater City of Los Angeles had cultivated the area around the nearby reservoir and then made it impossible for people to use any of it, and how the inhabitants of the apartments on the surrounding hills got food and water up the 80° inclines they live on, until people began to arrive. They brought in boxes of fanzines and stuff for the auction that was to take place, and I rummaged around looking for things I needed. Eventually someone said, "You must be Greg Benford," and I found Bob Lichtman looking at me. The only reason I knew him was because he said so; he didn't look like the Bob Lichtman of my mind's eye. In the paper world, Bob L. is 5'10", thin, glasses and blair hair, with a serious, intellectual look. But unfortunately for one's preconceptions, Bob is about 6'2", brown hair, and looks like an ordinary mid-western type who will soon Find The Right Girl and Settle Down, never troubling with the grave issues which concern Bob L. I was discouraged by this turn of events, and was about to suggest that he either change his name or shrink in order to avoid further strain to my peace of mind, when a number of people came in, among them Lee Jacobs and Phil Castora.

"Gee," I thought, "Lee Jacobs in the flesh." (I did not verify this last statement, incidentally.) Here was a legendary figure, almost, standing right alongside me in a multicolored shirt, talking about selling old fanzines. What could I say to him? Come to think of it, did he know who I was? Probably not. So I passed up my opportunity to meet the legendary Lee Jacobs.

Phil Castora was wearing a leather jacket, which made him look somewhat forboding and mysterious to me, for some reason lodged in my subconscious. We talked for a while about the good ol' Cult of yesteryear, when people actually wrote interesting letters and published thick FRs.

At this point the people began to get all scrambled up, since they all seemed to arrive at the same time (I hate punctual people), and some of them I unfortunately met once and didn't see again. Don Franson blended into the scenery so quickly I didn't even get to do more than glance at him, though as I remember he looked as Don Franson should, and restored some of my faith in the underlying logic of the world.

Jack Harness came in (I recognised him from an old Cult photo). I asked him if he happened to read the Ian Fleming James Bond series, and he brightened somewhat at the prospect of another Bond fan. I've read all but one of the series (GOLDFINGER), including the one serialised in the more recent PLAYBOYS, so I was crushed when Jack said that GOLDFINGER was the only book in the series that was bad. Now I have nothing to look forward to, and the lethargy that falls upon all series-readers when they've run out of books weighs upon my shoulders. I suppose now I will have to take up science fiction again.

Bruce Pelz and Dian Girard, who always seemed to be together, staggered in with some materials. Someone mentioned that Johnstone (Ted Johnstone lives!) wouldn't be coming, since finals were on, so the AREM wouldn't be complete that night. I wondered if they had a little song and dance, complete with vaudeville tricks like the VOID Boys, but didn't have the courage to ask them. Bruce Pelz, who seems to like tight-fitting clothes, does not look like The Real Bruce Pelz at all. He seemed to be looking out at people and examining them rather than watching what they're doing. Someone remarked in the Cult that Pelz was "the most self-assured person" he knew, but this quality comes through in a group more as arrogance, perhaps because it is more difficult to remain calm and even-mannered in a LASFS meeting (except for Don Fitch, who has nerves so steady he should have been an Englishman.).

And Dian Girard. For some reason all female fans seem the same to me, so I will withdraw my vote from the Sex Queen of the LASFS competition, and simply say that Dian reminds me of MZBradley. Since Bruce is standing for TAFF, I don't know if this will be construed as a compliment or not.

I introduced myself to Ed Baker, who told me Esperanto was a truly International language and that millions of people spoke it. Bjo Trimble came in. I weaved my way through those folding metal chairs that always seem to have enough legs to trip you but not enough to sit on comfortably, and said hello. Again, this was about the last I saw of her, for the poor girl was recovering from the shock of an easy final examination when she had expected a difficult one, and I didn't see much of her the rest of the evening.

I milled about for a while, looking at the huge numbers of books and magazines up for auction and catching fragments of conversations (I heard my brother Jim say to Bjo, "I'm not a fan, I'm a zealot," but that may have been later) until I was told that Ron Ellik had arrived. Jim and I went over to meet him about the time

the LASFS convened and I wound up sitting between Ron and Lichtman while the formalities of the meeting took place. For all the good wishes behind the fans are slans movement, I would hate to see a community run by we devotees of the literature, for I fear we would all starve. The normal noise level at the LASFS is high, as one would expect, for fans are an unruly lot and are unaccustomed to sitting primly in their seats while someone drones on. But most of the noise comes from fans shouting at the person speaking, various officers debating procedure, and general wrangling. I would hate to arrange the lowering of a lifeboat from a sinking ship by utilizing the devious routes of LASFS power, but still they do get things done, as I discovered later.

The meeting itself was short (no puns from Harness), and broke up a few minutes before the auction. Thereupon a group formed in the back of the room and began talking. Bruce Pelz called for order, looking back at us. Bob Lichtman was telling us about some incident in the history of fabulous LA fandom. Bruce said, "Lichtman, either shut up or leave." We all looked at Lichtman and left. Which was just as well, for I suspect none of us had collections that needed embellishment.

We went to a typical coffee-shop and restaurant affair which I gather is the traditional gathering place for LASFS. Don Fitch ordered a full meal, an unusual thing among fanzine fans, except in extreme emergency. On the way over Ron Ellik told me about one day back in 1959 when he'd been walking along a street in LA and met Peter Kranold, a strange character who'd frequented LASFS some years before, sued Forry Ackerman, and corresponded with me (in that order). Kranold looked at Ellik, said "Greg Benford told me you said I was crazy," and walked on. That was all. A cryptic sign, perhaps.

Not too long after we got there some more people arrived and the conversation became so complicated I had trouble keeping track of the double meanings and multi-leveled minds. I remember someone was telling Walter Breen stories ("There is speculation as to whether there is intelligent life in Walter Breen's beard." -- Ellik), and then there were Dave Rike stories. I wonder whether Rike realises what a lot of Boswells he has in the LA area. Lichtman, I believe, told about last year when Rike was cooking something, needed milk to complete the dish, and went out to buy it from a grocery nearby. On his way back someone on their way to the '62 Westercon in LA passed by and asked Dave if he'd like to go. He thought about it for a minute and climbed into the back seat with the milk. Off for the weekend in LA with nothing but a carton of milk, which he was observed to drink throughout the convention.

A waitress came in and announced that a car was blocking a driveway. "A red Ford," she said. "Are you sure?" someone asked. "Well..." she paused. "It may be a Volkswagen."

John Trimble came in (he is a Nice Guy). He told me about the trials of working and going to college simultaneously and the biology course he and Bjo would have to take next fall. I suggested they just present their marriage license and ask for a waiver, but this provoked no reaction. I suppose they are thinking about it.

Ron Ellik was cornered between me and a wall, so I told him about the theory I had evolved concerning fanzine-oriented fans. I thought that perhaps the transient nature of both fan marriages and fan communities could be explained by the fact that although fandom is a place in which one can achieve rather easily, it is also transient in its scope. One doesn't remain well known in fandom unless he stays active and keeps at least some quality in his production. (This excludes the people who become legendary, or infamous, or both.) Because so much of fandom can be dealt with on the surface of the

emotions -- dyed-in-the-wool FIAWOL types excluded -- one doesn't really take up anything which involves him emotionally unless he goes outside fandom. And in fanzine fandom, to achieve some sort of prominence you must spend a good deal of time on it. So it seems to me a fanzine fan could get into intimate, emotional relationships without realising the extent of the commitment (in fmz fandom, one can go gafia anytime), and he would be in for some shocks later on. If two or more people in the same relationship have this background, it may be too much. By "relationships" I mean marriage, close partnerships, intensive professional concentration, etc. (This also ties in with the fact that fmz fans are usually noted for lack of ambition, since this is usually a pretty intensive emotional commitment.) Without stretching things too much, this might explain the failure of the Church of the Brotherhood of the Way.

I told Ron all about this, since it is still a half-formed theory, and asked what he thought. "Well," he said. Those were the comments of Ron Ellik.

At this point Bjo turned around from the next table and pointed Ron out. "That's Ron Ellik," she said. "I cannot be held responsible for that," he said quickly, probably a result of being a TAFF-man.

Speaking of TAFF, the auction yielded \$51.00 for this noble cause, so I suppose LASFS can get something done, after all. Ron looked at the money Bruce Pelz had given him, and someone came over to get change for a dollar. "Why, I can change anything," he said. Jim gave him a napkin and said, "Change this to a \$100 bill."

Ron and I mused for a while about why more fans aren't science-oriented and I told him that Murray Gell-Mann's "eight-fold way" solution for the elementary particles seemed to have encountered quite a bit of success. "Drinks for everybody!" he cried expansively. Somehow I don't think Ron has the proper attitude toward science.

Dian Girard came by and Ron related how she had given out a "Who are you not speaking to?" questionnaire when she entered LASFS so she could find her way around in the maze of feuds. I don't mind feuds so long as they produce lines like "I ran down all of LA fandom in one night--barefoot," and mythical organisations like the LA Fan Tong. About this time everybody began to trickle out and it seemed to me the evening had hardly begun. Sure it was midnight, but... I knew I was going to write something about the trip, so I told them I needed more material. "I've got to get 10,000 words out of this, so you people can't leave." But they did, though, and I wound up outside talking to Bob Lichtman about the IWW and radicalism in general. Jim tried to tell Bob how to get to our apartment, but things just got more confused. Have you ever noticed how people are always saying "you can't miss it"? "There's a rock near the corner that sort of looks like a dog's head, you can't miss it." Jim gave Lichtman a couple of sets of instructions laced with this phrase, so of course I never expect to see him again.

About that time Don Fitch and Jon Shaw came by and we drove off into the lights of Los Angeles. The 1235th meeting of LASFS faded into history.

-- Greg Benford

"...more than you may really care to know..."

about & by Ray Nelson

Autobiography?

A real autobiography would take a whole book or two, of course, but I can give you all the facts which bear more or less directly on my interest in writing in a short form.

I was born on October 3, 1931 in Schenectady, New York. My father is Walter H. Nelson, an electronic engineer (see entry in "Who's Who" or California "Blue Book" for "Walter Huges Nelson") and my mother Marie Reed Nelson, daughter of the Reeds after whom Reed Lake in Michigan is named. I have one brother three years younger than me who is an architect. His name is Trevor Reed Nelson.

My whole life since birth has been spent on the move. My father moved constantly to follow his job and I, in turn, have continued the wandering tradition during all my adult life. Before the age of ten I had visited all the states in the Union (48 of them at the time) plus Canada, and had lived for some time in New York, Connecticut, Indiana, Michigan, California, Florida, and Tennessee.

My most vivid childhood impressions are of being attacked at regular intervals by my classmates (sometimes armed with knives) in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, because I rode in the back of busses (with the niggers) and was a "damnyankee." The fact that the children who attacked me were supported and urged on by their parents and many of the teachers and other figures in authority such as the police, local PTA, etc., has left me with a distrust of all authority which has grown greater rather than less over the years. It has also given me a feeling of common cause with all "underdogs," particularly minority groups such as the Negroes, Jews, American Indians, Japanese Americans, and now at present the new American scapegoats, the Beatniks.

Various experiences with the police in Chicago too numerous and sordid to relate here have also contributed to the "chip on my shoulder."

I began writing and drawing at about the age of five, at first producing mostly comic books in imitation of Andy Panda, Superman, Batman, etc., but later developing a style and characters of my own. During this period I also started telling stories about these characters to my classmates, in spite of constant efforts on the part of my teachers to make me "get a little exercise." My first SF book was Verne's "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea" which I read at about the age of nine. After that I discovered Weird Tales and remained a loyal reader of that magazine until it finally folded.

My first publication came at the age of 13 (January 18, 1945) in the Oak Ridge Journal, a comic strip called "Petie Panda's Victory Garden" accompanied by a half-page feature story about myself and my brother. Here's a quote from the story: "Without being aware of it, Radell Nelson and little Trevor are already fine comic strip artists. What they may lack in technical proficiency they make up for in variety of improvisation and imagination. Technique will come; meanwhile; they're already far ahead of the field."

During the same period, I founded a school paper which I understand is still being published, called the "Elm Grove Control Tower."

Then we moved from Tennessee to the little town of Cadillac, Michigan, where I graduated from grade school and entered high school. In my freshman year I published my first fanzine, Universe, and began reading more SF than just Weird Tales, eventually joining the Michigan Science Fantasy Society and the Detroit Science Fantasy League and finally even SAPS, where I published briefly a zine called Stupefying Stories. During this busy year the pattern of my whole future life was set. It was at that time that I first began cartooning in the style which has since had such a great influence on fan cartoonists and even some professionals. It was then that I created the "propeller beanie," symbol of the fannish "cosmic" mind. It was then that I first began corresponding with Claude Degler and joined the "Cosmic Circle Club." It was then that my first "Globblie" cartoons appeared, "Man and his God" and "The Average Man."

Also during this year I first became involved with the group of writers and artists who have since become famous as the Beat Generation. At that time they were publishing a slick paper little literary review called "Circle" and were spoken of in Harper's as a "cult of sex and anarchy." In fact, it was this article in Harper's, intended to frighten people away from the beatniks, that first attracted me to them. I was at that time and still am very much interested in both sex and anarchy, so it looked like the Beats were just my dish of tea. (They weren't called Beats back then, of course.) My participation was mainly limited to exchanging mss. and letters, roaring about the country in cars, listening to bop, and indulging in all-night beerandbull sessions. In those days we had not yet really discovered Zen, but I wrote a lot of stuff on religion for the fanzines and early Beatzines and even quoted the Taoist scriptures in SAPS. I had a little trouble with the police over marijuana...mostly a tempest in a teapot. Marijuana is vastly overrated, friend. It is NOT a habit-forming drug nor a particularly harmful one. It is easier to quit marijuana than Coca-Cola. On the other hand, it is also not really a very good stimulant to the literary or artistic muses, which is why I do not use it today...or any other drug including tobacco, coffee or miltowns. I still drink a little now and then, but not often or in great quantities. To tell the truth, I am a little leery even of drugs prescribed by a doctor ever since a girl friend of mine got hooked on a cough medicine that contained a small quantity of codeine and is available without prescription in every corner drugstore and one of my pals became a junkie in the hospital. I have never been able to understand why the law picks on a harmless, non-addicting, no-hangover drug like marijuana while they let these vicious tranquilizers and cigarettes and coffee and coca-cola go scotfree.

And also during my freshman year in high school, I helped found the school paper, still being published today under my title and with many of the features I originated. I had many of the articles I wrote for the school paper reprinted in The National Echo, OO of the Quill & Scroll Society, a national amateur journalism honor society, and won a Quill & Scroll pin award for journalism.

During my sophomore, junior and senior years I continued to publish fanzines, coediting at one time or another the old Spacewarp, Odd, Fanvariety, Detroit's Mutant and many others. I was also feature editor of my school paper and a contributor to some of the early Beatzines, like Neo-Dada, Studio M, and the like. I was also, strangely enough, very active in the youth fellowship of the Congregational Church, in spite of, or perhaps because of, my growing doubts about the validity of the Christian religion. In fact, if my memory isn't playing tricks on me, I think I was actually president of the darn thing in my senior year.

When I graduated from high school I found myself right in the middle of the situation which I personally believe is more to blame than any other for the bitterness and alienation of the Beat Generation. That is, the draft...compulsory military service. Then as now young boys could be forced to die for their country, but they had no voice at all in the country's government. We felt

then that if we were old enough to fight, we were old enough to vote, and we certainly knew just as much about world politics and affairs as our elders, in many cases more. I still think we were right.

I could have gone on to college and gotten a student deferment, but instead I went to work in the Hudson Motor Company in Detroit as a lift-truck driver. I wanted to have a little fun before being carted off to the slaughter house, and to do that I needed money, the kind of money that can only be made in salesmanship or industry. In those days there was plenty of overtime, so it wasn't long before I had enough saved to buy a second-hand car and a tear-drop trailer, pick up a chick, and set out on a trailer tour of the USA, slow and easy. I made a little change along the way painting house numbers and signs, but before the trip was over I was flat broke. I finally got to California, where my parents were living then, sold the car and trailer, and bought a second-hand Dodge panel truck. My parents finally succeeded in talking me into going to college (mainly to put off being drafted). I set out with the truck fitted out to live in, with a bottled gas stove, ice-box, sofa-bed, closets, table, etc., and I headed for Chicago.

During the first few months that I attended the University, I lived in that truck in the streets around the campus, along with my chick and numerous overnight and weekend guests, including the fan, Bob Johnson, publisher of Orb.

The egg hit the fan one Sunday morning when we were parked in front of a church. I was sitting in my PJs slumped down in the front seat and my chick and Johnson were in the bed in back, snoozing. After a while Johnson woke up and lit a cigarette, then opened the back door and tossed out the match. Some deadon or something from the church saw him and came over to see what was going on. He was pretty mad when he saw Johnson and my chick living in sin right there on his doorstep, but he darn near swallowed his adam's apple when I peeked around the corner and put in my two cents worth. He didn't seem to think our trinity was exactly holy, and he reported us all to the dean. The dean gave me a simple choice. Either I could live in my truck or attend the university. Not both.

I won't bore you with the details. If you've ever lived in a big city, you know what it's like to look for apartments and worse yet, to try to live in them once they're found.

Well, I stuck it out at the University of Chicago for three years, drawing cartoons for the school paper and the yearbook, making posters for student organisations, singing my fool head off in the folk music club (and learning to play guitar), drinking, dancing ballet (I was the second bem from the left in the science-fiction ballet given at the Chicon II), composing music (that was me cooked up the percussion part of the music for the SF ballet), joining all kinds of radical crackpot organisations, and living on stolen food and cheek. It finally turned out that I inadvertantly got out of the draft after all. When the draft board got one whif of the organisations I was in and one glance at my "colorful way of life," they said, "The Army doesn't want your kind."

I quickly recovered from my disappointment.

I finished up my courses at the University of Chicago except for one; that was language. I couldn't, no matter how I tried, get all that foreign jabber into my head. Finally I just gave up and said the hell with it. I didn't need to be a student any more to keep out of the army, so why drag out the agony? I quit school and bounced from job to job like a Mexican jumping bean. I was a salesman, a literary agent, an industrial designer, a publicity man, a commercial artist, a bum, a contester, a printer, and even, God help me, the president of the Chicago SF Club. The hardest thing of all to believe is that I

was still active in church groups. I had long since lost my belief in God and the Christian Way, but somehow I kept hanging around Church groups, either from habit or because of a glimmer of hope that there might be a "way back" to Christ. It finally came to a head when our church group put on a "Youth Sunday." There's one Sunday in the year when the students in the youth clubs in our church put on a special service of their own. Wouldn't you know it would be me who ended up in the pulpit? Well, it went off just fine, and everyone said I ought to become a minister -- I had such a soothing voice, after all -- but even my strong stomach couldn't take the stinking hypocrisy of it all.

That was the end of my Christian life.

Now I don't belong to any church. I feel a lot of sympathy for Buddhism, Taoism and Zen, particularly the last, but for the moment I'm a free-lance in the spiritual world. I'm beginning to come to an understanding of something, but I'd rather not call that something God. It's much too different from the smiling father figure in the sky I used to know by that name.

I went to the Art Institute of Chicago for a year, taking painting and illustration. I didn't get along with the instructors very well and I wasn't exactly popular with my fellow students, either. Like most beatniks, I'm pretty careless about my personal appearance and pretty free with my critical and sarcastic remarks. Finally I got into an argument with the teacher in the design class that ended with him throwing a painting (not mine) at my head. Well, I was nimble enough not to get hit, but when I gathered my millions of paint tubes, brushes, canvasses, etc., together and staggered red-faced from the room I resolved never to return again and I've kept that promise to this day.

Next I went to work as a silk screen printer in an outdoor billboard factory but spent my money about as fast as I made it on all sorts of moon-shooting schemes to make a fast buck. When I finally got sacked (it was bound to happen), I had no cash reserve to tide me over until I found another job, so I was really up shit creek without a paddle. I said to myself, to hell with money...who needs it? and I lived in Chicago for about four months without a single penny passing through my hands. I was always turning up at people's houses right around supper time and rolling my sleeping bag out on the floor afterwards. The funny thing was, people loved it. Some of them even thought I was some kind of saint. I'd spend my days in the public library, reading all the classics and mad zen stuff and early little magazines and the National Geographic Magazine in the cool, dusty shadows. The best of all was the encyclopedia. Sometimes I'd come in when they opened the door in the morning and stay until closing time, just reading the encyclopedia.

Sometimes I'd take out a book and go to the park and read St. Augustine and sketch the chicks who were sunbathing there. I used to feel pretty superior, lying there doing nothing while everybody else worked, but now I see that somebody had to work in order to make it possible for me to flop and goof off. That was the people who were donating meals and floor area to keep me alive. They were still working, thank God. They got their money's worth out of me, though, when you come to think about it. I had been flopping on the floors of everybody in the community, so naturally I knew all the latest gossip. Besides, I was the cheapest baby sitter known to man, and I was pretty reliable too. I've always been a whiz with kids. Maybe it's because I'm so childish and irresponsible myself. They kind of feel at one with me.

I was also a great dishwasher and maid of all work. I was always getting invited to parties because the hostesses knew they could count on me to clean up the place afterwards, no matter how late the party lasted. I ran errands, helped people move, took books back to the library, helped students who were taking courses I'd already finished at the University, dug up bargains for people at the Salvation Army, Goodwill and Army Surplus stores, and all kinds of

things like that. To some people I was a real godsend. There was one woman, for instance, who had an illegitimate child and had to work. She was too poor to hire anyone to watch out for her kid, so when I did it for nothing, she was overjoyed. I just popped the little bastard on my shoulders and took him along with me wherever I went, though there were some raised eyebrows when he showed up in a bar.

All that time I never touched a nickle.

Then one day I hooked up with a new chick and had to go back to work. People didn't mind a saint sleeping on the floor, but it just didn't fit in with their ideas of sainthood if the saint had a girl friend along.

Sometimes I really wonder how Chicago manages to get along without me, now.

I managed to get a truck to deliver from the Triple A Driveaway Company and drove to California. There were too many debts and unpaid bills in Chicago to continue there. When I got out west I tried the sign writing business but failed miserably. Strange to say, it was a beatnik who got a really good job for me finally. When I got to California, I of course immediately looked up my old friend, Bill Margolis, publisher of what I consider to have been the best beat little magazine of them all, "The Misc. Man." I did an illo for his magazine and we got to talking over old times and it emerged in the conversation that he was supporting his little magazine by working as general manager at the Artcraft Poster Company, a silk-screen outdoor billboard factory. Well, that was certainly luck, since silk-screen printing is the only trade I've ever really learned. Before the night was over, I was the assistant editor of "Misc. Man" and a printer in good standing at the Artcraft Poster Company.

If you'll pardon my beatnik slang, that was the coolest factory I ever worked in. Margolis had padded the payroll with beatniks the way some managers do with relatives. Man, like the whole scene was hip! When I went to work I felt like I was going to a party.

And in spite of what you may have heard to the contrary, beatniks are hard workers and trouble-free employees under the right conditions. If an employer is smart enough not to pass around loyalty oaths or refuse to hire negroes, he'll get more than a good day's work out of a crew of beatniks. Anyway, that crew at Artcraft set records both for quantity and quality of production.

I, myself, got promoted with dizzying speed. Then my chick left with a passing German exchange student and I quit and headed for North Beach in San Francisco, after handing over my last nickel to an old girl friend of mine as a wedding present when she married the Other Guy.

I lived on the beach and around Berkeley for a while, playing the beatnik role for the benefit of generous tourists. It was right around then that the Howl and Misc. Man obscenity trials first brought the beatniks into the public spotlight. Howl and Misc. Man were both prosecuted at the same trial, but Howl really was pretty sexy and our poor Misc. Man wasn't, so the same trial that made Allen Ginsberg's fortune wiped us out completely.

I took off for Paris, France, where I knocked around awhile with Allen Ginsberg and Greg Corso, but got tired of talking about drugs all the time, and started running with the French 'pataphysics crowd instead. The 'pataphysics group operates out of a left-bank bookstore called Le Minotaur. To the inner circle, this bookstore is not really a commercial establishment at all, but a college, le College de Pataphysique. These people have already had all this beatnik business with Sartre and Existentialism right after the second world war, and they are now working way out on the other side of beat, way long after despair and absolute defeat. They like fanzines, sentimental postcards,

antique toys, Alfred Jarry, monster movies, sex, popular music ten or more years old, dadaism, a normal life with a job and wife and everything only all strange inside. They like rubber stamps, too, and illustrated letters. You might say they've put sainthood on a paying basis.

Jean Linard is the only 'pataphysician widely known to American fans. When I couldn't pay the rent and keep up with the prices in Paris, I moved to Vesoul where Jean lives and spent many a wild weekend in his crazy house.

In Paris I got married and became a father. The kid is a boy, name of Walter Trygve Nelson, and he's my first legitimate child. The wife is Kirsten, a small package of blonde dynamite who proves once and for all that European girls are better than American girls and that the best girls in Europe come from Norway, just like everybody says.

We met at a French language school and a few days later went to England to visit British fan Mike Moorcock. I'd met Mike at the London World Science Fiction Convention where we spent most of our time playing guitars and kazoos up and down the halls and in and out of the toilets. Mike's mother told Kirsten about me, and even offered to introduce her to some "nice British young gentlemen," but it was no use. She married me anyway.

When we got too poor even for Vesoul, and it looked like Kirsten might need an operation, we moved to Norway to visit her folks and see about the operation. Well, the operation turned out to be a false alarm. While waiting her turn to get into the operating room, she gradually got well all by herself. Chalk up another victory for modern medical science.

After making some amateur movies about monsters and flying saucers and such with Norwegian fan Roar Ringdahl, we finally managed to plough through all the red tape and come to America, where the Berkeley fans threw a huge welcome home party for us and made us feel like returning heroes.

If I've left out anything important, just let me know, but the names of the chicks are being withheld to protect the guilty.

-- Ray Nelson, 1959



CONVERTING THIS PLANET WON'T BE EASY, BROTHER. THEIR LANGUAGE DOESN'T CONTAIN THE WORDS "SIN," "HELL" OR "GOD."

HAPPY BENFORD CHATTER —

Reading, Massachusetts

I suppose every fan is a Library Fan, because those of us who can read spend a lot of time in them trying to find the books we want. I do this too, but I've probably had more experience with the dark recesses of the Librarian Mind, since I have to putter around looking for technical references.

It is usually pretty easy to find books, although this was not always so. Until some time ago I would simply walk around in the halls looking at the markings on the backs of books and waiting until what I wanted showed up. This is, in fact, how I acquired my liberal education in the culture of the world. You can learn a lot from dust jackets. But pretty soon I was roped into learning the Dewey Decimal System and my happy wandering days were gone. I had to buckle down to serious reading. I did this for years, and one day, when the Freddy the Pig books were gone and the Hardy Boys were all used up, I had to look for things again.

Thus it has come about that I have a ready knowledge of library red tape. I am quick on the draw at the card catalog, fast as lightning with a bibliography, the terror of the open stacks. Last week, for instance, I had to get a book from the library. Of course they didn't have it. I went over to the desk attendant and asked them to order my book, since I can get anything I like as long as I don't want it when it will do me any good. Desk attendants are always women of indeterminable age and a massive ability to misunderstand. "I want Classical Theory of Fields, by Landau & Lifshitz, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Reading, Massachusetts," I said. (I always have information like this in my head.) "Fine," chirped the woman of indeterminable age. "We'll have it for you in two weeks." I went away.

In about two weeks I was back. "I have your book," she said gaily, waving the invoice. I looked at the thin pamphlet she was pushing at me. "Addison-Wesley Publishers -- Merrill, Pierce, Lynch, Fenner & Smith Stock Report," it said. It took me about a minute to think this through. "This isn't the right book." "Oh, yes it is." "No, it's not." (Conversing with well-educated people is always stimulating.) After more of this we agreed that something was definitely wrong. She agreed to re-order the book, and it would arrive in two weeks. I went away.

In another week I happened to want some reading material, so I went to order a book of Greek plays I'd been wanting. "I'd like a copy of Plays of Sophocles," I said, and gave her the publisher's name. "Plays of Sophocles," she said. "Plays of Sophocles," she wrote down. "Well, it's good to see you're not just wrapping yourself up in science, ha ha." I went away.

This time both books arrived at once. "Mr. Benford, Mr. Benford," she called over to the magazine rack, where I was reading ANALOG (see, I do write about science fiction). "We have your books!" She handed me a package with both of them inside, and I pulled the first one out. "Barefoot in Athens," it said, "a play about the last days of Socrates, by Maxwell Anderson." I looked up at her. "You got it wrong again," I said. "But that's what you orderod!" she cried. "No, I wanted a book called Plays of Sophocles." "Oh." She looked around for a pencil. "Let me write that down. Plays of Socrates." "No, Sophocles." "But I was certain you said Socrates before. Here, let me take a look at that book." She picked up the play by Anderson (which is actually pretty good). "There, see, it's Socrates." "Yes, but that only means you got the wrong book. Socrates never wrote any plays. He never wrote anything." "Oh, are you sure? I thought I read something by him in college." "Plato wrote dialogues featuring Socrates, but that was the accepted form for sophists. You probably just read Plato." "Well, yes, that must be it. We'll reorder for you. But at least you have the other book you wanted."

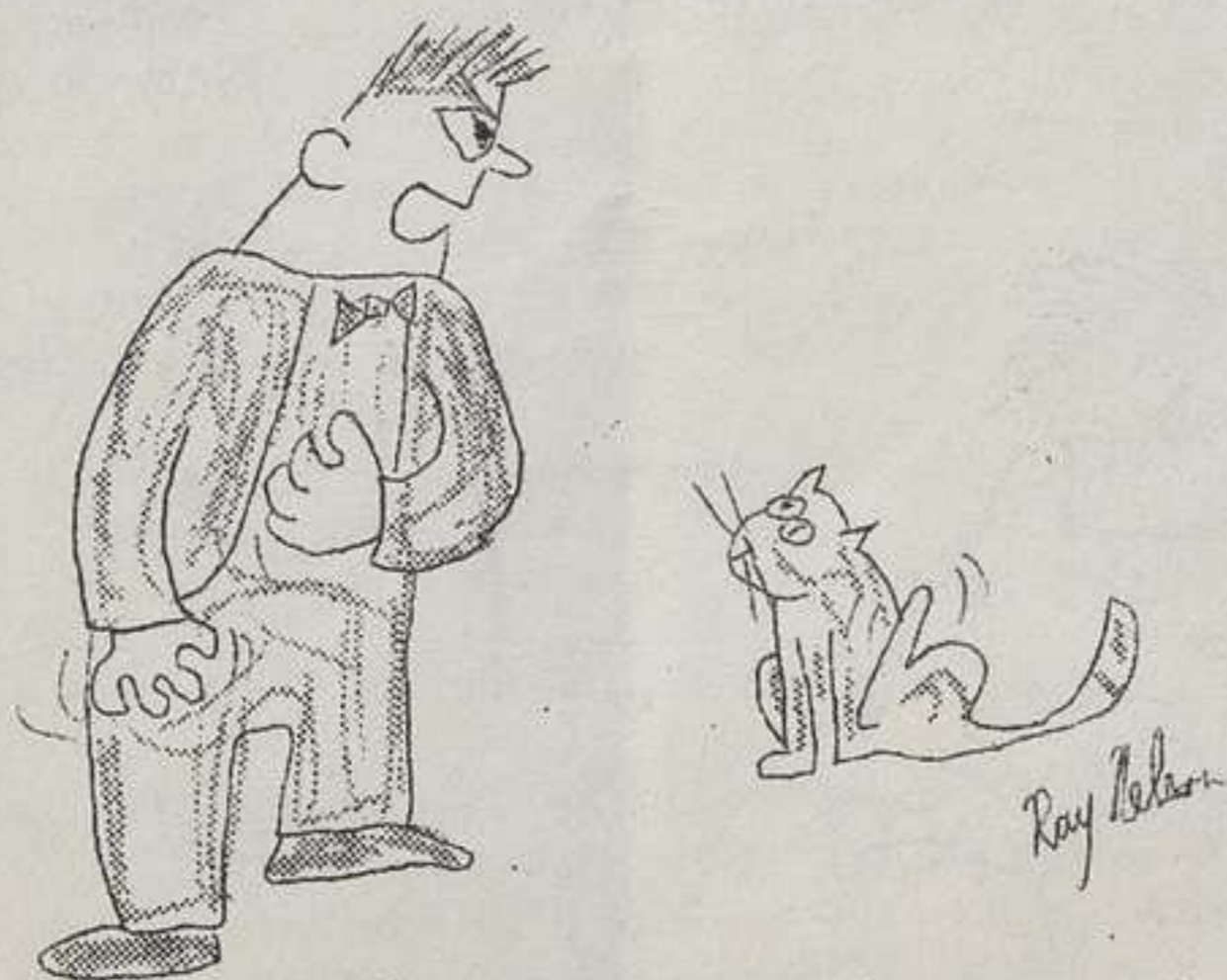
I opened the package further and pulled the book partially out. Reading in Massachusetts, it said, A Study In Modern Teaching Techniques.

But I've become philosophical about it now. After all, there are always mistakes made in any organisation. You just have to accept them as they come along. You just have to take things stoically, and bend with fate, like a character in a play by Socrates.

-- Greg Benford

 Both taoism and receptivity mean many things, all of them important.

--Abraham H. Maslow



I like you all right, cat, but I can't say the same about the company you keep.

LETTER COLUMN

Ordinarily one wouldn't expect to find a letter column in the first issue of a fanzine. This fanzine has somewhat of an antecedent, though, as about 20 of you are aware. About a month after the Westercon, I published a one-shot fanzine called ANGLE to use up some pretty high-class material and sent it to the contributors (except for F. Towner Laney, who is Presumed Dead, though there are schools of thought on this) and a small number of other people. As might be expected when a fanzine goes to a bunch of friends, not too much comment was received. I got a letter from Don Fitch, the publisher of this high-class rag you are reading, which isn't particularly letter-column material, and I also got a letter from Greg Benford, which appears below.

Just to forestall a whole series of obvious requests, let me say here that there are no more copies of that issue of ANGLE left around here, and if you want to read it, your best bet is to get in touch with someone who received it.



I have as much right as the next feller to test I.Q.



I just make a list of all the things I know. It doesn't take long.



Then I make two little squares after each statement, one for true and one for false.



Then I take the test and then I grade it.



I optimistically look forward to a score of at least 50%.

Ryghelson

GREG BENFORD ANGLE was excellent. I know I should write you a Funny Letter about it, but one feels a bit cowed in the presence of Grennell, Laney, Raeburn, Burbee, Demmon and Lichtman. Now that I think about it, perhaps some significance lies in the fact that four (4) of these humorists lived or live in the LA area. What is it about this legendary area that creates legendary characters, Meyer?

But I'm glad to see a zine of this quality coming from the LA area, after such a long drought of fannish fanzines. I think it's a pity that so many active fans, particularly in the LA area (Pelz, especially), fragment their fanac into many apas, producing fairly good material most of the time, when they could produce one fanzine of high quality. Perhaps this is the cause of so much slush in apas, and so few good fanzines of a fannish or general nature. It's always easier to chatter away in reply to someone else's comments, than to write an article or Do Something Funny. I wrote an article along these lines, especially with reference to discussion fandom, but I sent it to Ted White and of course it got lost. I think most discussion-zines are pretty dull, especially since prolonged activity in this sphere seems to strengthen the worse parts of one's writing (example: Ted Pauls' segregation foofaraw seems to be gradually taking over all his attention and energy). And a lot of apazines would not even be good enough for normal conversation if you read them out loud.

Laney on LA bookshops very interesting, even after all this time. I seem to run into funny little men in LA bookshops who rustle around in the shelves doing Nameless Things you cannot fathom, or else follow you around nervously straightening books you've just looked at, stirring up great clouds of dust which never seem to settle. I went into a book shop in Hollywood last month, and during the course of my wanderings the proprietor actually dropped a book while he was aligning another to within a millimeter of its proper place. The book gave off rivers and torrents of foul-smelling particles which quickly filled the whole aisle. The proprietor (who looked not unlike a packrat) charged gasping from the area, clutching the offending book to his shrunken chest. I slipped out and came back a few days later, and the same cloud was hanging everywhere, choking off all life. So I don't think the city council should worry about automobile exhaust filters; all the smog is caused by book shops.

Grennell very fine on guns. When Calvin Demmon was over here with you and I presented him with a box of .22 ammunition for use in New York, I remember someone asked if keeping it was dangerous, in case of fires, accidentally hitting it with a hammer, etc. Not at all. Perfectly safe. Boom.

Well, that's all used up.

And I guess that's LETTER COLUMN for this issue.

Most new fanzines go to Great Pains to devote the back cover to a bunch of check boxes telling the innocent reader why he got the zine. FRAP simplifies the matter. You all got this fanzine because we wanted you to see it. You can continue to receive it by entertaining us as we hope we've entertained you. Contributions and publishable letters are what we need most in these early stages, but trades are welcome and so is money, the latter hopefully only in addition to something else.

REC'D 16 SEP 1963

"Ghod! What a fabulous
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