

fanstuff

Semi-Pro Podcast

R Lichtman

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Let's Re-examine Some Fannish Common Wisdom

There are two significant things I know for sure about common wisdom: It isn't always common and it isn't always wisdom.

Despite those limitations, common wisdom is hugely popular in mainstream society. People who possess a rich store of common wis-

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dom, preferably in the form of pithy slogans, can often managed to go months or even years without having to think about anything.

It's all too easy to substitute unsupported, or even provably false, beliefs for verifiable facts and slick slogans for logic.

Fans aren't immune. Common wisdom is seductively reassuring, even to inner-directed fans like us.

Statements become common wisdom in one of two basic ways: Most people believe they are true at the time they are coined or are willing to accept it, because "what everybody knows" comforts and reassures them.

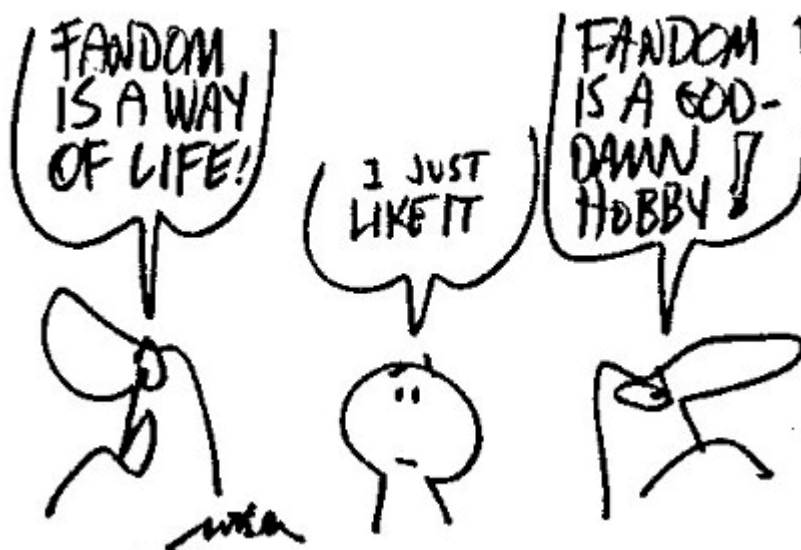
Some "common knowledge" is, and remains, true. The Earth *does* orbit the sun; the Magic Mimeo *is* the one with the trufan at the handle.

Some common wisdom was never true in the first place. An example is the nearly universal belief, disproved only a few years ago, that Billy the Kid was left handed. A fannish example is that it is not, and never has been "all about the 'boo.'"

The passage of time and accompanying changes in circumstances may invalidate a previously true piece of common wisdom. When I was growing up in the 1950's and 1960's, every school kid knew our solar system has nine planets. Then the astronomers demoted Pluto. "It's a Proud and Lonely thing to be a fan" is similar. I presume fans are still Proud, but it's hard to characterize them as Lonely.

I think there are some pieces of common wisdom that need a re-think. Let's examine a few of the more dubious ones...

All Fans Are Brothers. Even allowing for the facts that some broth-



ers are sisters and that it wasn't meant to be literal, it doesn't apply to contemporary Mass Fandom. The hobby is too large and diverse for it to be even metaphorically true.

My connection to someone who sits in the audience at world sf cons or spends their entire fanning time making and presenting costumes is tenuous. Naturally, there would be individuals in the audience or among the costumers who might become my friend or even a "brother," but I don't think there is an automatic connection.

Could we say, "All Trufans are brothers" or "Trufandom is like a big family"? That might be closer to the mark, admitting that no one likes all their relatives. Maybe there'll be some discussion in next issue's "locker room."

Trufandom is growing old. We're all getting older. Each of us experiences our own aging and the aging of many of our closest friends. We read the obituaries.

Trufandom's age demographic has changed greatly since 1963, the year I entered the hobby. Back then, fanzine fans were mostly 15 to 30 with a few lifers like Jack Speer and Bob Tucker.

Trufandom has now moved into a new phase. As older fans die or gaffiate, much younger people replace them. For instance, the three members the Vegtrants have added in 2012 are all in their mid-30s.

Our subculture has experienced a lot of death in recent years. That's expectable in an older group. Trufandom is growing steadily, if not rapidly, as any faned can attest

Trufandom is composed of elitist snobs. We've all heard and read that allegation many times from people who expect acceptance without performance, or those who approach our group expecting everyone in it to adapt to their wishes.

My experience, and probably yours too, is that Trufans are eager to welcome anyone who seems to share our interests.

Younger people don't do fanzines any more. Sure they do, just not for our Fandom. There are plenty of wrestling, anime, gaming and other fanzines being done by high school- and college-age editors.

Some of those amateur publishers will probably come to Trufandom down the road, but the association with science fiction is a big negative to young media rebels. They don't want to get caught monkeying around with something their parents like.

Fanzines have reached the end of the string. Statistical evidence contradicts this. There are still a great number of hard copy fanzines and digital fanzines have greatly increased the number compared to 20 years ago.

The new fannish media – websites, e-lists, blogs, audio and video – are rapidly gaining popularity and further expand the scope of fannish creativity by providing alternatives to traditional fanzines.

Still, fanzines are a unique artform that continues to fascinate Trufans. It looks like there will continue to be a lot of fanzines for the foreseeable future, despite the obstacle that may ultimately curtail hard copy publishing. — Arnie

FIAWOL VERSUS FIJAGH

Fandom's Eternal Debate

One of the quirks of Mundane common wisdom is that almost every adage has an equally venerable, but opposite, one. For instance, "He who hesitates is lost" is balanced by "Look before you leap."

Such examples are much rarer in Fandom. "It's a Proud and Lonely Thing to be a Fan" is not opposed by something like "It's a Shameful and Herd-like thing to be a Fan."

There is one singular exception. Two bunches of initials, FIAWOL and FIJAGH, represent opposite viewpoints that have been the subject of debate for decades.

"FIAWOL" stands for "Fandom is a Way of Life." "FIJAGH" means "Fandom is just a Goddam Hobby." (Some fans prefer to render the latter as "FIJAGDH," for "Fandom is just a God Damn Hobby," but that seems like a minor quibble in view of the larger issue.)

The passage of time has added spice to the discussion. That may account for its continuing popularity as a topic.

I'm taking an unusual step, because I want to give everyone the widest possible freedom to express themselves on this topic without filtering it through my comments.

I've already written my piece and laid it out, so fans can have their say.

If you'd like to participate in the discussion, all you have to do is write up your thoughts and send it to me in an email.

Your contribution will be printed uncensored and unabridged. If I get enough entries, I may create a special section. (AK)

Vegas Fans Love Nicknames

I don't think there's another fan group in the world that is more rife with nicknames than the Vegrants. As citizens of America's most theatrical city, we appreciate such colorful, individualizing touches.

For instance, there are many fans named "John." Yet in all of Fandom, there's only one fan who goes by "JoHn." (The "H" represents his last name, "Hardin.")

My liking for nicknames probably has something to do with it, too. Sportscaster Chris Berman's knack for nicknames led to fame, power and wealth. My penchant for nicknames has brought me none of these, but coming up with a good one for a fellow Vegrants is very satisfying.

In fairness, though, it must be said that Bill Kunkel invented the first, and most successful, nickname for a Vegas fan. He re-christened Anthony Bernardi "Woody," because of a faint resemblance to actor Woody Harrelson. Now even his relatives call him Woody.

Bill (Potshot) and Joyce (The High Priestess of Fandom) brought their established nicknames with them from New York. I acquired mine while working as a profession wrestling journalist and it slopped over into Fandom when I resumed activity in 1989.

Vegas expatriate and possible Corflu 31 co-chairman Ken Forman became known as the "Mainspring" in the 1990's. I thought it perfectly described his role as one of the sparkplugs of Glitter City's fan activities. Marc Cram, recently returned to the Vegrants after a too-long absence, is, of course, "Mr. Palindrome." James Taylor is now "Lucky Jim" as a result of a Bruce Gillespie comment at the time of his marriage to Teresa Cochran. I even found a theme song for him.

Teresa was already "Tee" when she met Fandom, though I changed the spelling. She lit up, when I told her about Riva "The Bat" Smiley. I dissuaded her, despite her love of those critters, but I think she'd like to be known as "Batgirl." (AK)

A Brief Survey of Fannish Nicknames

Nicknames have always been part of Fandom. A surprising number of fans have acquired a colorful nickname or special phase.

This propensity is, literally, as old as Fandom itself.

Science Fiction Fandom is generally agreed to start with the letter from Forrest J Ackerman to Jack Darrow. The communication continued a discussion from the letter column of *Amazing Stories*.

The sender invented more variations of his name, from "4sj" to "FoJack" to "the Ackermmonster" and also enjoyed the sobriquet "Mr. Science Fiction." Forry also invented the middle name "J" without a period.

The recipient is an enigma. "Jack Darrow" was a pseudonym and he is sometimes referred to as "Alias Jack Darrow" as a result.

AckAck bestowed a few nicknames. His long-time mistress Myrtle R. Douglas became "Morojo" and her cousin Patty Grey got nicknamed "Pogo. (It's based on Esperanto, not an allusion to the Walt Kelly newspaper comic strip.)

Francis Towner Laney, who managed to feud with Ackerman while dating Pogo, also had multiple nicknames. Often identified by his initials, FTL, Laney was also known as "Fran the Iconoclast" and "The Stormy Petrel." (The former refers to Laney's literary idol, Brann the Iconoclast.)

Morojo and Pogo weren't the only female fans who got fancy extra names. Georgina Ellis (Clarke) is "The Duchess of Canadian Fandom" and is also sometimes referred to as "Dutch." Ethel Lindsay, a nurse in the UK, was sometimes called "Little Sister" due to her job and diminutive size.

Size had something to do with the nickname for Miriam Dyches (Carr/Knight), whom Terry Carr dubbed "the girl with the golden googies." About a decade later Katya Hulan (Kathy Atkins) turned heads as "The Girl in the Yellow Dress." She was sometimes also called "Fandom's Bond Girl."

Lee Hoffman's name was often shortened to "LeeH" and, in addition, she was known as "The Good-Humored and Conde-

scending BNF.” Joyce Katz, one of LeeH’s greatest admirers, is “The High Priestess of Fandom,” though a few fans have taken the title from her anthology of a few years ago and refer to Joyce as “The Sweetheart of Fanac Falls.”

“The High Priestess of Fandom” may sound a bit gaudy, but it pales beside the grandeur of the nickname of long-time Insurgent and fannish character, Elmer “God” Perdue.” At one time Elmer was also known as “Ephless El,” an allusion to a typewriter that lacked the “f” key.

Charles Burbee and William Rotsler, two of the most prominent LA Insurgents, never had nicknames to rival those of Laney and Perdue. Burb claimed that he was known as “Sweet Old Burbee” and Rotsler outlived his odd early moniker “The Amiable Bulldozer.”

Bob Tucker, whose real name was “Arthur Wilson Tucker” was also known as “Grandfather Tucker.” I don’t know which came first, the name or his habit of referring to fans as “grandson” or “grand daughter.”

Tucker’s close friend Robert Bloch didn’t exactly have a nickname, but he was the object of the famous 1950’s fannish slogan: “Pickle Bloch for posterity.”

Perhaps Bloch occasionally wondered if the pickling would be done post mortem or on his living body, but there was no such ambivalence about the phrase attached to a popular fan humorist and fanzine editor during the same decade: “Dean Grennell is a Ghod Man.”

Inevitably, some fannish nicknames are meant to be unflattering. I’ve got four examples on the tip of my tongue. I can’t share them with you, because I want to keep the friends I’ve got.

Ted White and I each claim credit for dubbing rich brown “Dr. Gafia,” but I don’t think anyone is rushing to claim “Wombat,” the nickname of Jan Howard Finder.

I’m indisputably responsible for Robert Lichtman being referred to as the “Sage of Fandom.”

Bill Kunkel’s “Potshot” was self-inflicted. It was the name of a fanzine he did for a computer baseball simulation league. He took to signing his cartoons with the same name and it stuck.

That’s a cross-section, not a complete catalog. If you’ve got some good ones to add, send them here.

— Arnie

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The 'Loccer Room' House Rules

I want "Loccer Room" to stay a level playing field and an appealing forum for discussion.

These are the ground rules:

There are no editorial interruptions or revisions. What you write is what I'll print. My comments are in the skinny columns.

When a writer addresses a topic the full text is always printed. It's like posting on an e-list, except that it's easier to read and won't bury your contributions at the end of a seemingly endless thread.

Apologies for disagreeing with the editor are unnecessary. The last thing I want to do is stifle anyone's opinions. I'd like to keep the column free of personal attacks, but I don't care *what* you write as long as you make your case intelligently. Fact is, I don't even have a firm opinion on many subjects raised in **fanstuff**.

I'd like everyone to write every issue, but I understand that won't happen. Write when you can and ignore the crushing guilt.

Rapid Fire

The Competition Begins!

A spirited, if unlikely, competition has begun in the "loccer room." It's not anything official or planned; more like the idea erupted in a couple of brains simultaneously.

Two prolific and entertaining letter-hacks, Chris Garcia and Taral Wayne, sent letters of comment on **fanstuff #11** sooner after I distributed the issue than I would've believed possible.

I confess that I obsessively watch my email inbox from the minute the issue goes out to Fandom.

Imagine my surprise and delight when I received a full-length letter of comment (the one printed in this issue) from Chris Garcia a mere 1 hour and 9 minutes later!

Taral Wayne's letter of comment arrived 1 hour and 29 minutes after I distributed **fanstuff #11** — and he actually sent a couple of brief notes in *less* than an hour!

loccer room

Chris Garcia

I was off in Yosemite, waiting for FanStuff, and then it was there when I got back. True, I had thrusting granite walls and trees, MY GHOD THE TREES!, to keep my mind off it, at least.

I've been a member of several APAs - eAPA, the Everlasting Club, SNAPS, FAPA, LASFAPA, SFPA, ANZAPA, StippleAPA, a couple of others, and being in them has taught me something very important to know: I'm generally bad at APAing.

It's weird, I can crap out an issue of the Drink Tank in a couple of hours, but an APAZine takes me days for some reason, even if I'm not making mailing comments! I don't know what it is. Currently, I'm not in any, though I'm planning on sending a submission to eAPA in hour of its 100th mailing. I must admit that my favorites were ANZAPA (lots of folks I knew, many I did not, and when you're getting mailings with stuff from Bruce Gillespie, Claire Brialey and the amazing Interstellar Ramjet Scoop, you can't go wrong!) and FAPA (because of the long history, the great mailings, getting stuff from my heroes like R Twidner and Jack Speer). I miss SNAPS, it was a good group, good stuff. That's one of the things about APAs that awesome: you get so many different views. I think your list of things that makes for a good APA is really solid, though I have to admit that geographically specific APAs have a very interesting role to play. I'm beginning to see more value in regional fandoms. There's something about having a geographic focus that can be great. StippleAPA, out of Minnesota, was a great APA and one that I enjoyed a lot, and it was much focused on folks from that part of the world, which was cool because I had no exposure to folks from that region, and here I was reading their writings and making comments and such. I had very much the same feeling recently in SFPA, where I got to know some of the fine Southern fans.

As far as APA legends, of the folks that I had first-hand experience with, I'm down with R Twidner, Harry Warner (my vote for The Greatest Fan Writer Who Ever Lived!), Dale Spiers, Claire, Bruce, Guy Lillian, yourself, and a guy name of Mark Valentine in a Ghost Story APA I was in who is one of my favorite writers. I have a few issues of KTEIC laying around the house that I really think are spectacular. I really enjoy 'em!

I don't have a preferred form of LoC. Claire Brialey sent me my all-time fave LoC, 3K words of commentary on various issues of The Drink Tank, noting many of the issues she had with the... issues, as it were. I actually kind of like LoCs with a lot of ephemera. Then again, ephemera is my life, I think. I love that stuff. I don't get much response, that is no doubt true, and it doesn't really affect the way I work on The Drink Tank. I love doing it, and that's what's most important to me. Doing it is my favorite pastime. I actually have no idea how many people read The Drink Tank (maybe 75 or so? Some issues get hits after ages because of classes, like the Vonnegut issue I did right after he died which has been used in at least 3 different college classes!) but for the most part, I have no idea who reads besides Lloyd, Eric, John Purcell, and Ta-

ral. It's how things go, I guess.

Very saddened to hear that Askance is going away. First eI, now Askance. It's a sad time in eZines!

Taral Wayne

Eric's comments on the evolution of locs and their role in fanzine fandom is brilliant! Positively brilliant. It isn't anything I haven't said before in one or two articles over the last couple of years -- in fact, Eric and I have been corresponding about just this subject for over a year. but it's brilliant nonetheless...

Particularly this, "My impression is that there aren't enough fans interested in ezines to support the number of ezines published. There are plenty of fans who want to publish a fanzine but not very many who want to read fanzines. Which simply confirms what I figured already."

That was certainly the conclusion I came to after lengthy thought. Everyone wants to publish a zine and express their point of view to anyone who will read it... but, alas, hardly anyone wants to read anyone else's zine. A health environment for fanzine fandom has to take the shape of a hierarchy, with a large number of readers and loccers, a modest number of contributors, and a relatively small number of publishers. Instead, we have a fanzine fandom that seems to consist mostly of publishers, a few dedicated writers and almost no fanartists or loccers.

One idea that Eric and I kicked around, I think, is that digital publishing makes it so easy that everyone wants to do it. The bottom of the pyramid is crowding to the top. Well... that may be, or it may not. But clearly, fanzine publishing is less a community act than it was, and looking alarmingly solip-sistic.

John Purcell's next issue of Askance is the last? That's the worst news I've heard in a long time. Lucky that I persuaded him to run two of my articles in that ish.

I'm disappointed by Murray Moore's comment that he doesn't read non-print fanzines. If this isn't short-sighted and self-defeating, then I'm a left-handed, colour-blind slip-sheeter! Does that mean my friend and fellow Toronto fan has never read any of the issues of Broken Toys I've sent him by e-mail? Doesn't he realize that there's brilliant stuff in there? Can I make it any plainer that I can't afford to print fanzines and mail them just because Murray has a Rule About Not Reading Digital Fanzines? I've also kept Murray on my private mailing list of fans I send previews of my newest writing. Now I see why Murray is one of those who never respond. Since I can't publish on paper, nothing I've been doing is "real." This is devastating news, indeed! All this time while I thought I was horribly overworked meeting deadlines, grinding out art on demand and loccing fanzines, I was really doing nothing.

Hope Leibowitz and I are old friends -- I've known her longer than she's lived in Toronto, and that's an ice age or two. When I listed fans in Toronto I was speaking of fanzine fandom, though. If I wasn't, I'd have had to fill a page or two with names that few of FanStuff's readers are likely to be familiar with. Most of fandom in Toronto is involved in running conventions or participating in con programs -- but not fanzines. By no means is Hope a fanzine fan. She has penned a few letters of comment over the last 40 years, but probably rather fewer than Lloyd Penney writes in a month. Hope's main claim to being a fanzine fan is her attendance at Corflu, making her only a fanzine fan by association. To be facetious for a moment, if Hope is a fanzine fan, then my absence from Corflu might be interpreted that I am not. CIJAGC. Corflu Is Just Another Goddamn Con to many fanzine fans.

To Chris Garcia

Thoughts about the APAsphere

There was a point, during my first trip through Fandom, when I was in about a dozen apas. Sanity returned and I dropped most of them. With the demise of SNAPS, I'm not currently in any amateur press association.

I like apas -- and founded several -- but I've gradually tightened my focus on genzine publishing. I try to do my fanzines at a somewhat more leisurely pace. I try not to get in the position of having to do a whole apazine in one day, even though I have done so more than once.

For me, it's just a matter of how I want to spend my fanning time and energy. I've been an extremely avid apan in the past and I will be again when the circumstances are right. For now, I'm more interested in **fanstuff**.

More to Chris Garcia

My All-Time Favorite Fanwriters

I can't say that your choice of Harry Warner as the greatest fanwriter is in any way objectionable.. He was a very good writer who could develop interesting essays out of fairly ordinary aspects of his daily life.

My favorites change regularly, I usually have Walt Willis at the top and Charles Burbee second.

I feel that Fandom was fortunate beyond reasonable expectation to have been WAW's favorite audience. I don't think there was a finer humorous essayist in the 20th Century. He had a rare talent for writing a well-structured serious article that, along the way, had so many humorous flourishes.

Four-Dimensional Mental Crifanac All-Time Favorite Apans?

All-Time Favorite Fanwriters?

All the topics we discuss in **fanstuff** don't have to be deadly serious. Sometimes, it's fun to kick around more frivolous topics.

It looks like we have a couple of them started, so I'm looking forward to getting your choices for best apans and/or best fanwriters.

**To Taral Wayne
LoCs, Digital Fanzines
and Trufandom**

I've published electronic fanzines for about 15 years and, frankly, I see things differently than you and Eric. (I agree that Eric did a masterful job of presenting his case.)

I challenge the statement that digital publishing is easier than print publishing. What extra work does today's print fanzine editor do? The faned makes a trip to the copy shop and another to the post office. What digital fanzines are is *cheaper* to do.

The switch from stencils to desktop publishing is what made fanzines easier, not the shift from print to digital. I could hardly believe the difference when I applied my DTP skills to a fanzine (*Folly*).

The bottom line is that the computer, DTP and the Internet make it possible for anyone to produce a digital or print fanzine that doesn't scream "Crudzine!"

That's not how it went back in the olden days. When you got a fanzine, a cursory examination enabled an experienced fan to winnow out the time-wasting fanzines and concentrate on the good ones.

Bad repro, ugly artwork, sloppy corrections, careless art stenciling and uneven lettering were hallmarks of a bad fanzine. Sometimes, a fanzine with those traits turned out to have good writing and sometimes a fanzine with none of those traits had dull writing. In general, though, you could make a preliminary verdict.

You don't see many print or digital fanzines with those flagrant flaws any more. If fear of committing such mistakes kept some from publishing, then that deterrent is gone. I'd argue that those with the most reason to be afraid are the least likely to let that stop them.

More people publish fanzines than should. More people blog than should, too. Digital publishing has made possible a renaissance in the number of published fanzines. (Robert, got some stats on this?)

I'll talk about what I think are the problems for digital fanzines in this issue's "fen den."

John Purcell

As you now know - and have acknowledged in your zine - my fanzine *Askance* is *not* folding: The usual quarterly issues come out in March, June, September, and December, but June of 2012 was largely devoured by an online graduate statistics class to complete my doctoral degree plan in Education. So because of that commitment, I announced that I would simply shove the June issue back to July in order to focus on the class. I am glad I did, too; it was a difficult course - bad enough I'm not very mathematical in the first place, and research statistics requires some serious higher math skills that I'm rusty on - but I passed the sucker. Sure, it was a C grade, but that counts. Now it's onward to preparing for my preliminary exams in early September, then defend my research proposal at the end of September. Fall semester this year will be devoted to my research and even more dissertation writing. All is proceeding according to plan, meaning I will graduate in May 2013 from Texas A&M University with my Doctorate in Education. It will be tough, oh yes, and may require my being rather flexible in publishing *Askance*, but the zine will continue, if anything as a means of maintaining my sanity -- whatever will be left of it, that is.

With that business out of the way, you packed a bunch of comment-laden material into *Fanstuff #11*, so I might as well dig in.

First off, FAPA is probably the most revered apa in science fiction fandom, and for good reason. Founded by Donald Wollheim back in 1937, it definitely was a brilliant idea. At that time, FAPA was probably the best way to distribute fanzines, and to think it is still a going concern is a testament to its staying power and allure. Your brief history of FAPA's development and influence was well done. Once in a great while I get the urge to send in the necessary dues to join FAPA, but at present, that would not be a good idea. Once my PhD work is done, then I can think about this again. There are many good people involved with it, and to think that FAPA is at 300 distributions is a landmark achievement. How long it will last depends on its members. I hope your optimism for its future bears out. Because it is true that many fanzine fans prefer the good, old paper zine, I can follow your logic about FAPA being a place where paper zines are welcome and to be a repository for that tradition. Well, we shall see. In the meantime, congratulations to FAPA and all those involved with it.

Since the topic here is apas, I am saddened to see SNAPS end its run. Let it be known that I enjoyed my membership in SNAPS immensely. So many good people involved: besides you and Joyce, of course, there were JoHn Hardin, Jacqi Monahan, Teresa Cochran, James Taylor, Shelby Vick, Ross Chamberlain, Laurie Kunkel, John Nielsen Hall, R Lorraine Tutihasi, Chris Garcia, and oodles more. Face it, it contained a damn good bunch of folks, and I am sad to see SNAPS fade away. Of the other apas that I have been involved with - Lasfapa, Minneapa, and Azapa - during my time in fandom, SNAPS is the longest running membership I have had. My apazine *Nukking Futz* saw 41 issues, which are the most issues of any single title I have ever produced. I liked being involved with it, and I thank you for letting me be a part of SNAPS.

Eric Mayer's commentary on the state of loc-writing in the modern era of electronic fan publishing is quite on the mark. I still consider letters of comment the life-blood of a fanzine much as mailing comments are the life-blood of apas. Without that feedback, a fan editor could very quickly pack up his virtual mimeo and steal away quietly into the night. The good news is that more people are turning to online fan activity - what I call cyber-fanac (I consider myself mostly a cyberfan now, even though I do still go to cons when possible) - to maintain their connectivity with others. See, fanzines are one aspect of the community of fandom, providing one avenue of communication. In fandom, communication

keeps us together. As communication technology changes, so will fans. We are a resourceful lot, adapting to changes in reproduction over the years: carbon copies, hectographs, lithographs, offset presses (for those wealthy few), ditto machines, mimeographs, photo-copiers, and so on, have all become part of the legacy of fandom's desire to stay connected with each other. The electronic age of fanac we are in now certainly does result in fewer locs; as Eric noted, one time I invented three locs to "fill up" the loccol (only Lloyd Penney, bless his dutiful heart, wrote the only real loc in that issue of *Askance*), but I decided to make them silly, a virtual hoax letter column. The tactic worked: I got some fun responses as a result of my efforts. Now the zine is doing well.

But Eric is right that most e-zines don't get many locs, perhaps because the action of sending paper zines to each other spurred the tradition of producing a tangible response: send your own fanzine in exchange, write a loc or article, draw some illos or a cover. That sort of thing. Those of us who were birthed and swaddled in twilltone still try to fulfill this tradition because that is how we were raised, so to speak. That was the fannish culture we experienced, so we did it. Nowadays, the Internet implies that everything is "free" so not that many people feel obligated to respond with an e-mail loc, artwork, or even a fanzine: those tend to simply show up at efanazines.com. At least Bill Burns lets us know on the fmzfen listserv or through an rss feed that a zine has been posted to the site.

Eric's closing comment that the fanzine community is rather insular strikes home and we may indeed be "a close-knit group [with] strictly limited potential audiences." That makes sense. If we can reach out to others - and the Internet has a remarkable ability to provide this outreach - and bring more folks into this particular aspect of the fannish communication link (like blogs, listservs, social media, and e-mails), then electronic fanac and e-zines can survive. Again, like I have said many times before, we shall see how the era of cyber-fanac develops. The future will no doubt surprise us with what actually happens. We won't know until we get there.

Man, that's a rather existential viewpoint, ain't it?

Hey, this was a wonderful issue, Arnie. Lots of interesting viewpoints and ideas presented. I like the 'Loccer Room House Rules' you included at the start of the loccol. Very good ideas, ones that work across all of fanzine fandom. I thank you for that, and look forward to the 12th issue of *Fanstuff*, which I assume will be posted this coming weekend. You are definitely on a prolific roll right now, Arnie, and that's good.

Jay Kinney

Fanstuff continues to snag my attention with every issue, which is not something I can say about every e-zine out there. I think you've done a fine job of conjuring a -- dare I say it? -- focalpoint out of the weekly groove of Dazzle.

I enjoyed your meditations on FAPA and its future. They provided an interesting juxtaposition to Eric Mayer's musings on the lack of LOCs to e-fanzines. I'm one of those people who read e-fanzines only intermittently and feel little guilt over not LOCing them. On the other hand, when I get one of those fanzines from the UK with multiple 2 pound postage stamps on them, I feel like I damn well better LOC or contribute (at least once) just to offset the small fortune the faneds are investing in sending print zines to U.S. fans.

Personally, given the popularity of fan e-lists/Yahoo groups and LiveJournal blogs, I'm kind of surprised that we have any fanzines (whether digital or print) still being published. I suppose the urge to publish still courses through the veins of Fandom, but I wonder whether the present and upcoming generations of potential fans - more accustomed to tweets and instant messaging than

To John Purcell Askance Lives!

This is one mistake I'm delighted to correct. I've enjoyed *Askance* and consider it an ornament to the fanzine field.

I often direct newer fans to efanazines.com. I always try to give them a few recommendations, because the site has a *lot* of fanzines. The titles I mention most often are *Trap Door*, *eI*, *Askance*, *Chunga* and *Banana Wings*.

If they're Vegas neofans, I also point them toward Andy Hooper's *How Green Was My Vegrant*, *The Sweetheart of Fanac Falls* and the second edition of *The Trufan's Advisor*.

So, what's next for you on the education front? Have you ever considered teaching at the Harvard of the Mountain Time Zone, UNLV?

More to John Purcell FAFA Forever

I sincerely believe that great days could return for FAPA if all the fans who weep for the dear days of printed fanzines flocked to FAPA. It has some great advantages for hard copy publishing.

More to John Purcell 'loccer room' House Rules

Thanks for the compliment on the house rules. I try to leaven it with a bit of humor, but I take the rules themselves very seriously.

I've seen plenty of letter column atrocities and I can understand why many fans want to know that their contribution will be presented fairly, respectfully and completely.

I don't want anyone to wonder what will happen to their loc after I get it. The House Rules are my pledge to keep those standards.

I want *fanstuff's* letter column to live up to its mission to be an unfettered and uncensored discussion forum.

I'm hoping more fans will see what's happening here and participate.

**To Jay Kinney
The “F” Word**

The merest mention of the phrase “focal point fanzine” could plunge my sweet lil fanzine into treacherous waters. It’s debatable if there could even be a fanzine that was, in some sense, the focal point of Mass Fandom.

I think a fanzine could possibly develop into a focal point for our subculture. I don’t think that **fanstuff** has progressed in that direction enough to make it’s a legitimate question.

I don’t know if it ever will be a legitimate question and I don’t care either way.

If **fanstuff**’s readers are enjoying it and participation continues to grow, I couldn’t wish for more for the fanzine.

Send fanstuff Your Fanews

Only with your help can I keep “fanews” from being an obit page.

Fanstuff needs some fan reporters. It’s not necessary for anyone (except me) to do a mammoth amount of work, but a small amount of help would make a big difference.

So if you find out something interesting, I’d greatly appreciate you passing it along to me for **fanstuff**.

**More to Jay Kinney
Fanzines and E-lists**

I don’t see e-lists and fanzines as directly competitive, because each has its distinctive set of strengths and weaknesses.

E-lists excel at rapid communication. Most posts are short and tightly focused.

Fanzine material is generally more substantial — and more artistic. **Fanstuff** tries to give immediacy while featuring the level of craftsmanship fans expect from a good fanzine.

To Eric Mayer

In view of a passing comment I made last week and your loc, I feel I should say that it was *not* your article that delayed the issue.

It just wouldn’t be fair to leave folks with that impression.

to email, much less snail mail - will have much use for e-lists or fanzines.

Yet, print seems to retain its allure. There is a zine shop a block from our place which stocks all manner of zines, none of which overlap with our fandom. Sure, you have to pay \$ to get them, but I strongly doubt that their publishers are even breaking even. Like Fandom or Mail Art in the '70s, this is mostly art for art's sake. Will Fanzine Fandom (or Trufandom, in your parlance) be able to attract such folks, given their similarity to us? I doubt it. The traditions in Trufandom are so deep (and complicated) and the learning curve is so steep, that precious few publishers from the Zine Universe would likely be too interested in penetrating very far into the bramble patch.

Ironically, it would probably be easier for fannish fanzine publishers to migrate over to that wider zine subculture. Not that many would.

In any event, my appreciation to you for continuing the weekly publishing from Dazzle to Fanstuff. Good stuff, Arnie.

Eric Mayer

Look, I'm sorry about you missing the deadline after 72 weeks. I appreciate you making excuses but, let's be honest, I broke it. I have a long history of killing publications that accept my articles. At least Fanstuff is still going. Twenty years ago, when I was trying to sell non-fiction, no sooner would I find a market than it would go belly up. The biggest casualty was Omni. From the moment I read my first Andre Norton juvenile I dreamed of being a rich and famous sf author. For some reason -- well, lack of aptitude to write sf – that never happened but finally I did manage a sale to Omni. Okay, it was a little scrap of non-fiction, but still.... And then the magazine, at least in its big, glossy iteration, folded before my piece appeared. So I never did get to see my byline in a real sf magazine. At least the check cleared. Anyway, I don't write very much for e-zines which probably explains why there are so many.

Murray Moore's confession that he reads only print fanzines, aside now from Fanstuff, hurts, but I can't criticize him. After all, when I returned to Trufandom I promised myself that I would not wander outside its electronic districts. The main reason is time. Mary and I need to work for a living but we've also been writing mystery books. There is barely time for both of those activities, let alone fanac. Much as I enjoy reading and responding to fanzines I can't allow that to eat up all my fiction writing time, as it surely would if I didn't limit it somehow.

So I respect Murray's decision but I also urge him and other print-only fans to consider the point you made, that many of us who publish only in electronic format do so because we can't afford print. I also have to add that a refusal to read ezines is not quite the same as refusing to read printed zines. Virtually every faned today – I know there are a few exceptions -- composes his or her fanzine first on a computer and once that's done it's a trivial matter to convert it to pdf and send it to Bill Burns. Fans who don't want to do that have made a choice to prevent non-print fans reading their stuff, whereas many of us who do ezines would like everyone in fandom to read our publications only we simply can't afford to cater to the print-only folks.

Anyway, having had my grump, I will go away and await Friday's issue, which will no doubt arrive on time unencumbered by the curse of a Mayer submission.

Robert Lichtman

Thanks for putting the spotlight on FAPA in this week’s issue. In it you write, “Although I have no first-hand knowledge, I get the impression that

FAPA is currently at a low point. The roster is far below the 65-member maximum and a good many of its former luminaries are no longer members.” On that latter point it should be pointed out that many of those who are no longer members departed the organization upon their death, something that doesn’t reflect on FAPA’s worth as an organization at all. In the last five years this has included Dick Eney, Jack Speer, A. Langley Searles, John Davis, Ben Indick and most recently Robert Sabella (who was the OE).

FAPA currently has 33 members out of a possible 65. You point out that FAPA membership is a way for people who want to publish paper fanzines but lack the financial resources to maintain a large circulation to get their publications out before what you refer to as “a responsive, quality audience.” You also write that although “Mailing comments have declined in importance in FAPA... Still, something sent through FAPA is likely to draw 20 to 30 comments, which is a lot more than most digital fanzines expect.” You may be correct on that last point, but in actual fact it’s my observation that at best one might expect a dozen comments on one’s FAPazine. This could change if enough people were to join the organization with the idea of returning it to its former, more interactive ways.

Because the copy count for the upcoming 300th mailing (its 75th anniversary, making it the second oldest continuously operating organization in fandom, exceeded only by the LASFS) was set in the previous mailing, there are only room for two new members should anyone wish to join in time for that auspicious mailing. After that, there are 30 more open slots. (And Arnie, since you write “Geeze, I think I’ve almost talked myself into rejoining FAPA,” I’m waiting for your application and dues.)

I’ve been the group’s Secretary-Treasurer since 1986 (setting a record for longest-serving FAPA official) and it’s to me that applications should be made for membership. There’s an easily-fulfilled activity requirement to qualify. Minimum activity is the most leisurely of any of the remaining print apas at only eight pages per year, and mailings are quarterly. If interested, contact me at robertlichtman (at) yahoo (dot) com.

Regarding your sidebar, “Four-Dimensional Mental Crifanac - All-Time Favorite Apans?” I have a few comments:

“**Redd Boggs.** Redd was one of Fandom’s premier essayists, a talent he amply showed in zines like *Bete Noire*.” Subsequent to his 26 issues of *Bete Noire* published 1962-1974, Redd went on to produce 76 issues of *Spirochete*. The first 20 were distributed in other venues, but once he discontinued *Bete Noire* it appeared in every FAPA mailing until his death in 1996.

“**Robert Lichtman.** He hits the mailings and he may be the finest Mailing Commenter.” You must have me mixed up with someone else. This characterization would be true for my participation in SAPS and in SNAPS, but in the last five years of FAPA mailings leading up to the 300th I’ve only appeared in half the mailings. And I’ve done mailing comments in only two-thirds of those zines.

“**Bill Rotsler.** Not only an incredibly prolific cartoonist, Bill put many issues of *Kteic*, *Masque* and *The Tatoed Dragon* through FAPA.” This is a nit-pick—and I’m not going to spend the time it would take to go through my *Fantasy Amateur* file to make sure—but to the best of my knowledge *Kteic* was never distributed in the FAPA mailings. For the most part they went to a small and select list (as I recall, Bill printed only fifty copies at best), and once Bill was invited to join Lilapa he included them in that group’s mailings (perhaps because most if not all of its members were on that “small and select list”).

To Robert Lichtman The Elephant’s Graveyard

There’s no question that FAPA, as the home of many long-time fans, has felt the impact of death more forcefully than many other fan groups.

It’s also true that FAPA has not been able to replace the departed, whether due to death or disinclination, with comparable fans.

Still, that’s all beside the point. FAPA’s time may have come again. If so, you can include me among those who’ll be glad to see it.

More to Robert Lichtman The Finest Apans

As always, thank you for the fan-historical embellishments to my list of favorite apans. In trying to keep things fairly short, I’m not always able to go into the detail I’d like.

Wally Weber is an excellent choice. In fact, had I added one more name, it would’ve been his. As I wrote a couple of issues ago, his apazines always crackled with his humor

More to Robert Lichtman Categorization and Exploration

Maybe I haven’t explained myself adequately on this key point: Categorization is the beginning, not the end, of the analytical process I am trying to bring to bear on Fandom and the subculture I’ve been calling “Trufandom.”

Categorization isn’t intended to map complex human interactions or provide detailed insight into the doings in Fandom. Before anyone can write much of worth about fan-history or fanthropology, there must be common points of reference in the form of precise and widely understood terminology.

Looking at the possibility of more than one fanzine division within Fandom is the prelude to exploring the similarities, differences and interactions among the divisions. When we have the big picture, we can fill in the details.

**More to Robert Lichtman
About Dick Lupoff**

Somehow the word “inaccurate” in my manuscript came out “accurate” on the page. That, of course, almost totally reversed my intended meaning.

What I was trying to say is that Dick is definitely *not* active only through my fanzine. Dick’s credentials as a BNF are impeccable and I would never suggest otherwise.

**More to Robert Lichtman
Little Hoaxes**

Terry Carr once invented a Walt Willis anecdote. He told the bogus story so convincingly that it took a direct, unequivocal denial from WAW to persuade rich brown and I that it had never happened.

**More to Robert Lichtman
Charles Wells**

I wish I had Charles Wells’ email. I’d love to add him to the *fanstuff* emailing list. Prominent fans from the early 1950’s are starting to get a bit scarce and it would be interesting to hear what Wells might have to say about those days.

More to Robert Lichtman

I don’t think the copyshop permissions problem is endemic... yet. I’m sure most fans can find a suitable printer who doesn’t get so intrusive.

The worry, I think, is what happens when this and similar policies become universal. We’ll survive, but it’ll be a headache...

“**Ted White.** *Gambit* was a great long-running FAPAzine and Ted also wrote voluminously at a very high level for several secret and private apas.” *Gambit* was Ted’s perzine. His FAPAzine was *Null-F*. It was definitely long-running, though, having 51 issues between 1955 and 1975.

I also would include Wally Weber on my list of all-time favorite apans. He rejoined SAPS in 1990 and since then has appeared in every quarterly mailing—a total of 89 issues so far—and his *Key Hole* is almost always the largest zine in the mailing. (SAPS has open membership slots, too, and I’d be happy to pass on information about membership. It has much more of an emphasis on mailing comments than FAPA, plus a smaller copy count.)

Regarding the little box you’ve run in every issue so far titled “There’s Still Time to Discuss the FAAn Awards,” I don’t recall seeing any discussion in *fanstuff*’s pages on this subject. In its absence, it would be helpful if you added (with his permission, of course) Andy Hooper’s e-mail address to that box so interested fans could get in touch with him directly.

If all it takes to get fans like Lenny Bailes to suddenly take up writing for fanzines again is my dropping a name in my letters to *fanstuff*, I think I should do it more often. I definitely agree with his observation that “the relationships and activities that go on, these days, among some of the people who self-identify as fans are more complicated and interesting than can be known from the classification schemes that you’ve attempted from time to time (as articulately formed as some of those schemes have been).”

But more interesting was his account of encountering Charles Wells at that Minneapolis convention. In introducing him to Emma Bull, Lenny said that Charles was someone “who used to hang out with Lee Hoffman.” But of course he was even more than that—he was associate editor of *Quandry* for its last few issues. And how interesting that Emma Bull is a fan of Lee Hoffman’s Westerns and is undertaking to write in that genre herself! And also how interesting that it was Emma, not Lenny, who told Charles about Corflu and that he expressed a strong interest in attending one. I look forward to meeting him in Portland next year.

You’re certainly right, in your sidebar to Murray Moore, that “it’s quite accurate to write that Richard Lupoff is only active in fandom through me.” Dick has had major contributions in two of the last four issues of *Trap Door*—both illustrated with incredible Dan Steffan artwork—and has also written LoCs from time to time. (He’s also one of my nearest fannish neighbors here in Oakland and a long-time friend.)

I was pleased to read in John Purcell’s LoC that Halperin “would very much like to digitize the entire [*Harry Warner Jr.*] fanzine collection in order to preserve it for research purposes.” That would be amazing. I assume/hope he would make it available to fandom.

You write, “‘All Truth is Contained in Fanzines’ is a famous saying, but it ignored the fact that fanzines also contain a great deal of material that isn’t true.” An example of that would be the story I told in my LoC on *fanstuff* #6 about making up a hoax encounter with Peter Vorzimer as used car salesman in Los Angeles—a story that made its way into the mimeographed edition of Harry Warner Jr.’s *A Wealth of Fable*. But that aside, the main point I want to make here is that the *correct* old “famous saying” is that “All Knowledge is Contained in Fanzines.” That’s not true either, of course.

In a sidebar to me you note that to my list of favorite faan fiction stories

you would add Kent Moomaw's "The Adversaries." Actually, I had it in mind when I was composing my paragraph about MZB's, Larry Stark's and Dave Ish's faan fiction yarns, but I got sidetracked in finding the book in which the latter's story appeared and it slipped my mind when I came back to the keyboard. And another story I would add is Gordon Eklund's novella "Sense of Wonder," which filled almost all of *Trap Door* #22 (and like Dick Lupoff's pieces in other issues was beautifully and extensively illustrated by Dan Steffan).

Dan Steffan's lovely account of his search for the right hotel for Corflu XXX had the best punchline possible: that one can now make room reservations and Dan provides full details.

I hope that other copy shop Dick Lupoff found in Berkeley—the non-corporate one that had no problem with reproducing the cover of his latest book—was Krishna Copy, the shop that has produced all the issues of *Trap Door* since I moved from Glen Ellen to Oakland (and a few before that), as well as all 30 issues of the *Philip K. Dick Society Newsletter* and all 28 issues of the third "newsletter" series of Paul Williams's *Crawdaddy!* It's now run by the son and daughter of the original owner, and does excellent work.

Too bad about the passing of SNAPS, but perhaps it was the only way to cut loose of the albatross that had made it less than ideal as a meeting place. I refer of course to the member—who shall remain nameless except to those in the group—who came to dominate the distributions. For instance, of the final 365-page mailing 283 pages were from that member, who somehow couldn't take the hints liberally dropped by others that perhaps too much was too much.

Graham Charnock

When I started publishing fanzines part of what I was doing was emulating, in my small warped mind, professional magazines, so it kind of seemed essential to have amateur fiction. Most of the neofans I grew up with were writing it anyway without any hope of it finding a professional outlet. Hence people who would later become professionals like Brian Stableford and Chris Priest found publication in my fanzines. Of course I gratuitously published a lot of my own stuff under pseudonyms, so I could get some feedback in terms of comment.

Now I am old and grey, Father Arnie, I realize not only how naive I was but how it is impossible to be that naïve now, which, in a sense is a shame. Anyone with a modicum of sensibility knows what is out there to be measured up against.

Fan fiction is kind of different of course, and relies on the familiarity of its readership with established characters and pre-history. I admire Ted White's fan fiction although I sometimes remain perplexed why he continues to write it.

I have researched other areas of non-sf fan fiction and found several self-published novels by James Bond fans, for example, which bear up to the originals.

My old mate Ian Maule will tell you he has had several similar experiences with Jane Austen fandom. I think they succeed because they are all crafted out of love.

Can I just say Lenny Baile's *Loc* in 11 was the best thing I've read for a long time, only eclipsed by Dan's Corflu stuff.

Still More to the Sage The SNAPS Albatross

You are probably right, Meyer, that dissolving SNAPS may have been the only semi-graceful way to escape. I don't think either of us had the heart to fire salvos at a couple of very nice people. They lost a little perspective and allowed their enthusiasm to cloud good sense.

The thing that I found somewhat disturbing was the inability of the apa's other members to penetrate their obliviousness.

Just about every member, each in his or her own way, attempted to explain the problem to the two fans. Yet despite all the verbiage, all the outright pleading, neither fan made even the slightest alteration in their behavior.

To Graham Charnock Welcome to the Sandbox

It's a great pleasure to have you participate in "locer room," Graham. I hope you continue to find **fanstuff** worthy of your attention.

You certainly may sing the praises of Lenny and Dan. Both acquitted themselves superbly in **fanstuff** #11 and I am hoping that they'll contribute again soon.

fen den

The Digital Response

Since their inception, digital fanzines have had a problem generating response comparable in quantity to print fanzines. Fans have offered theories; this is another.

Trufandom, our gang, is in the midst of significant changes. It began when offset replaced mimeo, continued as the computer and the Internet become vital to fanac, and now includes the tremendous growth of digital fanzine publishing.

Whenever there is great change, some folks don't make the leap. Harry Warner didn't make much use of computers. John Hertz won't use the Internet for fandom and Greg Pickersgill won't read fanzines that reach him in digital form. It is regrettable, but inevitable, that great change will leave some fans behind.

Those are extreme examples, but every long-time fan must feel it to some degree. Digital fanzine editors are asking fans to give up habits of fanac they have developed over 30, 40, 50 years. It's a hard thing to do and I'm grateful to every fan who makes the effort. I know damn well that many fans would contribute, or contribute more often, if **fanstuff** arrived on twiltone. I don't think it would be as good, but I can guarantee that it would get a lot more response.

A successful digital fanzine must make maximum use of the advantages of electronic publishing. The editor's mission must be to give fans a reason to overcome the understandable tendency for fans to prefer doing things in comfortable, familiar ways.

One reason that digital fanzines get less response is that, on average, they are not as good as the print fanzines. Experienced, accomplished Trufans are more likely to publish a print fanzine, while newer and younger fans are more likely to utilize digital technology. When a talented faned like Earl Kemp does a digital fanzine, the response is much stronger.

My goal is to make **fanstuff** that kind of fanzine.

Please, let me entertain you.

fanews

Askance Isn't Folding!

John Purcell brings the joyful news that his popular fanzine *Askance* is positively *not* folding. It was all a miscommunication on my part, because John had absolutely no plans to fold it.

It seems appropriate at this point to report that *Chunga*, *Banana Wings* and **fanstuff** aren't folding, either.

Arkies Hit the Road

Ken Forman and Ben Wilson will make a quick visit to Las Vegas next weekend, driving from their Flippen, AR, home. It's just a quickie to tie up some loose ends, but the Vegrants are hoping to get together for a reunion before they have to head back East.

Mearas, Skeltons Pub Their Ish

If you've been holding your breath, waiting for the second issue of *Don't Go*, *Columbus*, *You'll Fall Off the Crunchy Bit*, you might be dead. They did the first one 36 years ago, which is a pretty long time to hold your breath.

The 16-page "two-shot" is the collaborative effort of Mike and Pat Meara and Paul and Cas Skelton. It's a light read, liberally decorated with photographs. Write to Mike Meara (meara810@virginmedia.com) to get a copy of this high-spirited fanzine.

Fanstuff Returning to Friday Release

Fanstuff #11 went email late last Sunday night (7/15). This issue is going out Saturday morning. I could have finished it in time to go out Friday, 11:30, but I thought it would turn out better if I gave the proofreader more time.

No reason to think that **fanstuff #13** won't return to Friday release. See you then. Meanwhile, keep fanning! - Arnie

fanstuff #12, July 20, 2012, is a frequent fanzine from Arnie Katz (cross-fire4@cox.net), who is apparently under a geas to put out a fanzine every week, at least for the present.

Fanstuff is sent free and without strings to my emailing list. It is also available at efanzines.com, thanks to kindly Mr. Burns.

Reporters this issue: Joyce Katz, Mike Meara and me.

Cover illo: Bill Rotsler

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