

N'APA 247

July 2020



The Official Organ

#247

Next deadline: September 15, 2020

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Procedure: Please Read:

George Phillies will collate and mail, but submissions should be sent to the preparer, Jefferson Swycaffer. No harm is done if submissions get sent to George, but the process should be to send them to Jefferson.

N'APA is the Amateur Press Alliance for members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F). As it is distributed in PDF format, there are no dues or postage fees. It is open to all members of the N3F. If there are members interested in joining who have no computer access, special arrangements may be possible. People who only want to read are welcome to ask to be added to the email list. Check with the official collator, who is George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609; phillies@4liberty.net; 508 754 1859; and on facebook. To join this APA, contact George.

We occasionally send a copy of N'APA to the accessible (email address needed) N3F membership, in the hope that some of you will join N'APA. Please join now!

Currently the frequency is every other month, with the deadline being on the fifteenth day of odd-numbered months. The mailing will normally be collated in due time, as the collator is retired and the prepaper has a full-time job. Publication is always totally regular, though some readers question my interpretations of "is", "always", "totally", and "regular". N'APA has been in existence since 1959, but has transitioned from being a paper APA to an electronic one.

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Super thanks to Jose Sanchez, who sent many works of art for use as covers.

Synergy 23



July 2020

NAPA Mailing 247

Editor is John Thiel, 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904, kinethiel@mymetronet.net
This zine heralds the advent of Ninth Fandom, long a-coming, and is created by
VacHume Press under the auspices of Oort Cloud Publications, for the N3F.



Picture shows a young couple engaged in Synergy, or having the
experience of Synergy.

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EDITORIAL by John Thiel



THE HARSH REALITIES VIEWED

There are two views of life, the optimistic and the pessimistic. In fact, there are a lot of possible views of life, but in modern circumstances we may be forced to view things from either one or another of these perspectives, or have no identifiable viewpoint. It seems that what we read is largely dominated by the pessimistic in these times, but we do not necessarily write what we read. I have myself been maintaining a viewpoint of optimism, despite there being a certain detachment from perceivable reality in this attitude. This is found in my writings for the N3F, wherein I have been striving for improvement and good quality, in admittedly dark circumstances, but I have been happy to see statements of optimism from other people here. The attitude for the N3F is automatically an optimistic one, for it has progressive and improving standards. When progress and improvement is not happening, it might get the members downcast, which leads to a lessening of the progress and improvement of the organization. I would say that one reason for maintaining an optimistic attitude is that, just as a pessimistic one gets everyone downcast, an optimistic one leads away from being downcast, and since the mood of an organization affects the organization, we have reason to create an optimism for it, regardless of external circumstances. If the future is dire, remember that, as Will Mayo occasionally points out, there is the NOW to be considered, and the consideration of it is the consideration of what we're living in, mainly it is the now that should be of most concern for us because it is what is most affecting us. We may be accused of having little foresight if everything we do is in reference to what there is now,

but that is better than living with nothing but foresight—a foresight that is apt not to be based upon anything in the present if we allow there not to be anything to the present.

I would even be speaking of this apa while seeing things in these terms. We have very few members to the apa, which is not what may be called flourishing, and if a couple of members quit perhaps the apa would be no more. Lately, I'm pleased to say, there has been a new member moving in, and I will surely extend to him a welcome. He's a new Neffer who has immediately started showing an enthusiasm for being in the organization, and I could call his presence in NAPA an augury foretelling good for the organization, based on the reasoning that everyone is responding with belief to what can be considered dire auguries; if they can base their pessimism on auguries, I can supplement my optimistic attitude with auguries of good fortune and not be losing out to the pessimistic reasoning. We have reasoning to consider: we create good circumstances, and we create dire circumstances, with our reasoning and our discussion—what part of reality is the words we speak? How much do words have to do with what is around us? Will Mayo speaks of words as being what we have and says he gets a great contentment out of being a maker of words. There's a religion that says, "In the beginning there was the Word"; perhaps we have a new beginning here if we want to consider it that, somewhat shunning the dire words of people who are visualizing an ending. So as small as our apa is, we are not wasting words if we do not lack concern for what we are saying; good talk and communication may be worth much when there is so little of it elsewhere, and we may value our apa for that. We place some value in this apa, and it may be really good for us to place an increased value in it and make our being here of some importance. It may be the very place where we can allow our thinking and talk to flourish—you have to start somewhere, perhaps in a small apa. And beyond that, as much as the NFFF may lack of things it has had in the past, we might be contributing immeasurably to our own good in finding our individual ways and means in this organization, and in improving things here so that we are able to be witness to and part of an improvement. This may sound like the Yin and the Yang, but that has been past witness to the same situation—the mystics say things are likely to improve; it may be that it's always darkest before the dawn. Who are we to laugh off mystics? The National FANTASY fan federation laughs off everything that isn't scientifically established and proven? But it is science, in spite of its triumph in the amphitheater of public dispute, that is doing much of the suffering in modern times—and I would say that this is because they are lacking those things which are not concerned with science, but which are a part of existence which may be seen and taken in for our own

perceptive consciousness. Let's not starve with scientists getting down to the formulated essentials, and let's not let them starve either. Perhaps they are lacking contact with people with views other than their own. Are they happy with all of that? People take this generation of formulated reality out on science fiction rather than science, which they cannot reach—but science fiction is exactly what might solve the problem of scientific single-mindedness. If everybody is not too busy feuding, the interchanges of the scientifically-minded would be much more pleasant reading. Isaac Asimov has said that from time to time—but claims that he has been too mired in the world of scientific and other forms of dispute to do much of that himself.

If we start doing well here, it might spread. We live among people who show a great deal of depression—a depression coming from the consideration of the many dire things there are in existence. Science fiction has sometimes helped create this attitude of direness. But when you get too dire, your work, and other things of life suffer from the veritable attitude you have taken on. Bad events plus dire forebodings=pretty much the same thing. More bad events and increasing dire forebodings. You get a more complex equation if you add a few things that are more cheerful. The simplicity of the ongoing pessimistic equation is not worth having.

So you see that I consider that we should look for good in an organization, and I am doing that myself, often, I think, without being understood to have this in mind. I think I might rectify this now by expressing what my attitude is, and if few people are seeing it, they might be the very ones I would want to say this to—they are all NFFF members as well as being in this apa, and I might get something to the NFFF via them. One is a director, and our President is also in the apa. Come to think of it, there's two directors in the apa, including myself. So if anyone else wants to speak, that's an important consideration. Jefferson Swycaffer has started expressing a brighter outlook lately, although his NAPA writing tends toward the sardonic.

That's my NAPA contribution for this month, and if others think it doesn't contribute that much to NAPA, I'll point out that a contribution consists of something that is not had by where the contribution is given; more of what it has is more of a furtherance than a contribution. I'll add that I got more out of writing this editorial than I usually have gotten out of writing things, and upon that I base my consideration that I'm doing some good writing, from my point of view at least—a whole lot of argumentation about shaky circumstances is not what I find to be very good or fulfilling writing. We must give free reign to the creative within ourselves to be finding any real value in existence.

MAILING COMMENTS

WILL MAYO: Heinlein had the prototypical cosmic oneness novel in *STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND*. In one scene the fellow tells his girl, "Thou art God" as expressive of the sexual act in which he is engaged with her, and her answer is "Oh! Oh! THOU art God!" The occurrence is saved from being fornication by this religious feeling. There is a lot of striving for oneness and unity in Sturgeon's novels. "People have been pulled apart at some early time. Now they need to be put back together" is a quote from one of these novels.

SAMUEL LUBELL: You certainly are active in science fiction circles. I hope this activity continues in the N3F, as it is already doing by your doing a NAPA zine. I'm really happy to see you joining NAPA, as we were suffering a small membership that might get smaller. But if the talk is good, that's something right there. No apa is really large. If you know some N3F people already maybe you could persuade them to do NAPA zines also. I've been trying to get more people to be members, as you saw from when I suggested NAPA to you and you said you were already in. (I'm also an N3F recruiter.)

The Pandemic is well compared to end of the world stories; it's showing a resemblance to the Cosmic Medusa in Sturgeon's novel. There's apt to be a tremendous variety of reactions to the Pandemic. They get interpretable in terms of following directions or not following them, compliance or rebellion. I don't know that you should come down so hard on those not complying well, as you are assuming that the others here do; it seems to me Jefferson Swycaffer is not caring for total compliance all that much.

As a matter of fact, I saw a news item that Asimov's was being read on Skylab. But it's the first newsbreak I've seen on that topic.

George Phillies: You're up for being Libertarian President? Or the candidate you favored was being thus fooled with? I'm not up on politics much as I just skim any of it.

JEFFERSON SWYCAFFER: As I said people could do it, I don't say what jigger means.

In my view of science fiction, group entityship has always been a major theme. Opinions of it vary—in an issue of **Startling** it was a major horror and intolerable fate. But it is seen by many as a potential move away from death. Note my fanzine's name is **Synergy**, soul fusion.

HIGHER EDUCATION by JEFFREY REDMOND



Educational and military synthesis on another world

From the ancient Er-Dan manuscripts (Codex 2559), as translated by Ed-Mon:

On the planet of the three moons, after the partly successful campaign to extend the military defense frontier further to the East, the units of the Second Army were finally halted. They had reached the next great salty river, and remained there, in fortified defensive positions, for quite some time. The commanding army leader claimed and reported his success to the capitol city rulers, and they, not having any other information to go on, agreed.

The army commander decided to grant his troops liberal furloughs and even longer home leaves, and as many of his subordinates as could took full advantages of both of these. Half of the first section, of the first sectiongroup, of the first actiongroup, of the first battlegroup of the reserve division were granted additional extended home visits. They were decorated veterans of the entire campaign, transferred in from naval coastal units. The army leader called them his "special heroes" for their service to the great campaign, and he felt that they had earned more time away.

Half a dozen survivors of the unit got transport west to their coastal dwellings location, along the cold shore of the fresh water Northern Sea. They had been seafarers until the outbreak of hostilities, and had been first activated into the naval units, and then transferred to the land forces as additional replacements. Casualties, as usual, had

been tremendous, and as many others as were available had been sent to the east to keep the fighting units up to full strength.

These half dozen naval-land warriors were young, unmarried, and eager to visit their families and friends, after so many seasons of being away. A few of them had been lightly wounded, and all had received promotions, pay raises and bonuses, new uniforms, and enough medals to impress the civilian populace. It was of vital importance to the capitol civilian rulers, and to the military leaders, that the official needs and reasons for the continued warfare be met with such displayed giving of full honors and glories.

The half dozen young reservists arrived safely and were joyously welcomed in their homes. They were exhausted from the constant marching, fighting, and laboring involved in the campaigning. They ate well, rested well, and visited well, for the first part of their leave. But soon after, the youths began to become restless and bored with the inactivity, and decided to busy themselves with other pursuits. All sports events and festivals had been suspended in order to re-channel the full public consciousness toward the campaign. Most of the laboring was now being done by workers drawn up from among the males of the enemy captured in the East. They worked for near decent meals and accommodations, but were kept in secured internment facilities apart from the local populace. Jobs were thus filled, and the only activity available to the returnees was in attending classes for older students at the local educational center. And this they did.

The sectionleader, Pa-Al, led the others to the school. They had received the basics of official education during their childhoods, but had not, as most had not, been taught to read or write. The capitol rulers had decided that too much learning was not good for their masses of followers, and only the inheriting offspring of the leading elites were to be made literate. The young reservists thus decided to take art, music, poetry reciting, drama, and other such cultural classes...for an easier time of it.

These classes were mainly filled with unmarried young female students, who, not having any males their ages around, dressed and styled themselves plainly and unattractively. This mode of attire and appearance was also strongly encouraged, and even at times enforced, by the local religious leaders. They, as older males, felt the need to dominate and control the females in their community, including to keep them "safe and protected". Provocative dress and behavior were frowned upon, and the discipline of expressionlessness was made to remain the norm. The older females were thus almost always married and domesticated, while the younger ones were often not. The

younger females were allowed to attend and participate in schools, religious functions, and extended family activities and events. It was of course hoped that they would eventually be able to be married off to whatever surviving males returned from the wars.

But as casualties mounted from the endless battles, it was realized that many of the females would not find husbands from there no longer being enough males available. Traditions dictated, firmly, that marriages be monogamous, and foreign males, by custom, were not permitted into the society at all. So a new social movement began to emerge, that of larger numbers of younger females becoming more independent, self-sufficient, and self-reliant from the males. Instructors in the schools were now the few educated older females, and they influenced the younger ones, more and more, to decide to not need males as much as before.

The young males of the section came into the school some days after classes had already started, but the warriors soon fit into the academic routine. They drew, sculpted, sang, played instruments, and recited poems with the others, the mostly female students. The males mostly ignored the females and concentrated on their own studies. But they were also trying to recover from their many battles, and found it somewhat difficult to relate to, and interact with, the local females. This was especially so with their not appearing or behaving in the more feminine and provocative ways of the females the veterans had experienced in the East.

The reservists' favorite class was a drawing one run by a nice female instructor named Rob-ina, and they had come to attention, and saluted her, when she had entered the room on the first day that they had attended. She had smiled and nodded at them to remain seated, and encouraged them to relax and become a part of the regular class. Rob-ina was talented and wise, and rare in that she believed that the true essence of art was in depicting the unclothed forms of the citizens themselves. She often used lovely young nude females as models to pose for her students. These models had been used to posing for only other females, but now found a half dozen young males in the art room as well.

The visually-oriented males were very impressed by the models' unclad appearance, and their relaxed and sensuous feminine demeanor. The auditory-oriented females were soon very impressed by the voiced compliments and respectful masculine attentiveness from the males. The veterans were subdued and patiently protective in their behavior. They were not used to so many beautiful and desirable naked females posing for them, in such a peaceful place. They were inspired to recite poems about how wonderful the models were, sing praises about them, and escort them to arrive and return safely to

and fro. It was rare for males to do this with females in public, but the returning reservists had survived many battles, and experienced many new ways in the east, and defied conventions with their honest enthusiasm.

In the coastal communities anti-rape laws were strictly enforced, and the genders were often segregated when raised. The local morality held that local females should and would not pose or perform nude for art or entertainment purposes. It was not at all the custom there to dance naked around funeral pyres as in other places on the planet. The local female art students would thus never pose nude themselves, and the models came in from other places. The local religious leaders used guilt of offending the will of the deities, and the civilian rulers used fear of harsh punishments, to make the populace obey the decreed laws. Females were taught that sex was a negative activity for them, except in monogamous reproductions, and many of them thus felt "evil" or "wicked" for having any sensual thoughts.

The society and culture thus functioned with great personal repressions of natural desires, with many dysfunctions and other problems throughout. Female children were sometimes molested, and males would frequently converge into entertainment centers to view young females performing deliberately lascivious dances for them. Females in reality were thus often viewed by males to be basically sexless, but at least in crude fantasy they could be given the illusion of perfect sensuality. Younger females were often viewed negatively and deeply resented by older ones, especially when the males of all ages would pay more attention to the former and ignore the latter.

The strictly enforced religious morality, and the vast numbers of males being conscripted and made casualties, caused lower and lower marriage and birth rates in the society. The religious leaders also did not want their followers, especially females, to marry and mate with others from any other potentially rival religious group or area. The males in this society and culture, as in so many others on the planet, preferred their females to be shorter, darker, and plumper. Because of the wars the females often became thin and lighter, from the losses and worries they constantly endured, and this made many of them undesirable to the surviving males as well.

For the half dozen returnees it was a real treat to see such shapely models, especially as contrasted with the plainer and haggard female students in the school. The posing females were soon all attracted to the tall, muscular, disciplined, battle-hardened, adventurous, dynamic, earnest, attentive, and well-paid veterans they could so impress and control as desired. They soon realized that they could feel safe and secure with these males, as well as gain great amounts of envy and status to themselves from the

other females in the society. The models even began to compete amongst themselves as to who of them could be the more successful in attaining a male now in her life. But all of the models were also very lonely, and all of them wanted to have offspring of their own. Becoming pregnant was also perhaps an excellent way of getting these particular more honorable males to become husbands for them.

The first model, Jen-Na, found that she liked the dominant Pa-Al, and would especially smile at him while deliberately positioning herself more directly at him. The next, Dee-Ana, liked the tall one named Aja-Im, and would "aim" herself more in his direction. The third, Mich-Ela, flirted her lovely nude body with the silent one, Iro-An. The fourth, Reba-Ka, liked posing directly at Este-Ev the personable one. The fifth, Kris-Ina, laughed at the complimentary humor of Eto-Am the witty one. The sixth, Am-Eea, enjoyed hearing the comments of Bik-Il the wise one. Soon there were many drawings, statues, and figurines of the females from the half dozen males. Most importantly, each male kept one perfect little statue of each female they were favored by, and each carried these with him from then on.

Many of the local citizens felt that such female behavior of posing unclad for strange males was improper and even immoral. But the males found the half dozen models to be completely unlike so many of the other females in the community. These ones were sensuous, glamorous, warm and caring, loving and nurturing, and potentially very domestic and maternal. Indeed, all of the half dozen models soon became with future offspring. Marriage proposals were thus honorably tendered, and immediately accepted, and wedding ceremonies took place soon afterwards.

The local religious leaders, after being paid more than the usually appropriate bribes, announced their approvals and formally sanctified these new procreative relationships with the blessings of the deities. They publicly concluded that the "immorality" on nude modeling for female-dominated art classes was at least done for altruistic artistry. It was certainly not at all as negative an activity as the "obscene" nude dancing of the male-dominated entertainment centers.

The half dozen young warriors settled their new young wives into fine households subsidized by the rulers for the society's veterans. These females were indeed warm and responding, caring and desiring, and especially so in their finally being able to enjoy the security of homes and husbands protecting them and providing for them. The families of all eventually accepted the new situations, and the final results were that all half dozen lovely females then had legitimate pregnancies. There would thus be a half dozen future offspring to continue the family ties, military traditions, and power bases of the

political and religious leaders. The rulers and family heads always liked to keep their females as childlike and dependent as possible. If they couldn't control these females' nudities, at least they could thus give support to their fertilities and reproductivities.

As the extended home leaves came to an end, the section was called back and again brought back up to full strength with the conscriptions of another half dozen even younger males. The entire unit was once again ordered to return to the east. The veterans left the school just before classes were to end for the academic season anyway. They made their farewells with their new wives and other family members, and got transport back to the military defense frontier. The front was still stabilized, but new campaigns were planned for the immediate future, and every section, action, and battle unit would be needed.

The Second Army was suddenly engaged by massive numbers of Eastern enemy forces in a surprise counter-offensive. The civilian rulers in the capitol, not wanting to appear at all weak or losing, ordered the army commander to stand fast and not retreat. There were to be no surrenders or withdrawals of any kind from then on. The Second Army was thus quickly surrounded and attacked from all sides. The troops dutifully obeyed their leaders' orders and fought to almost the last life. The few survivors were captured and force-marched further east to also be used as slave laborers, until they too died. There was no further account or report of any of the transferred naval troops of the reserve division, whatsoever.

However, in one of the fortified positions along the salty river an Eastern enemy unity found a half dozen dead Western warriors in an unusual situation. Each was still firmly holding one of a half dozen little figurines of different lovely naked female forms. The Easterners thought these invaders from the West very strange indeed. They themselves would never take such depictions of what were obviously goddesses and religious deities with them so far from their own temples and holy places. That was certainly something no decent and deity-fearing Easterner would ever do. Females were to be admired and appreciated in themselves, and not depicted with mere representations, in their cultural heritage.

The half dozen little figurines were nevertheless taken as war booty, and sent as more trophies, and as further proof of the ultimate victory to come, to a museum in the Eastern capitol fortress. It is not known what anyone there thought about them, or even of how many Eastern civilians ever came to actually view them.

The corpses of the Second Army were stripped, stacked in piles, and unceremoniously burned. The ashes were dumped in the salty river and carried away

with the current to the cold fresh water Northern Sea. There was great sadness in the communities where the families of the casualties of the Second Army lived. But the leaders assured them that their warriors had given their lives for a just and deity-sanctioned cause. The rulers awarded survivors' and especially widows' pensions to the families, and all loans and debts were officially forgiven. In the one coastal community half a dozen lovely young female models continued to pose for art classes, for mostly female students. They received modeling fees, which they used to supplement their widows' pensions to help raise their newborn offspring. Three of these were born female, to become wives and mothers of future warriors. Three of these were born male, to become warriors themselves.



DAYS OF WONDER by Will Mayo

And all through the streets of my town
old men wander, never seeing, never knowing,
while children gather around them
and listen to countless tales,
untrue yet made true with the passage of time.
These are the days of wonder,
before the storm breaks again.
Between one break in the plague and another
and between one death and another
is the birth of a kind of innocence.
Pay close attention. It won't last.
In our world nothing ever does,
But all through the streets
children gather memories like stardust,
scattering them wherever they go.
Knowing for just a while the days of their lives.



THE CONTENTS OF A GOOD LIFE #13



N'APA MAILING #247

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Cover: face mask of H.P. Lovecraft



★★★★★ (5 Reviews)

Hoodoo, Voodoo and Other Strange Stories of Life

writing by Will Mayo, available at Amazon

STRANGE DOINGS

Somewhere along the way it seems that a cog got lost in the cosmos and a madman became president in our land, a strange plague swept all the world and time got out of joint as yesterday caught up with today and tomorrow. I know not these times and, to tell you the truth, I don't know myself either. I just pet my cat, read my books, write another line and hope for the best. Maybe sometime the cosmos will get its gear together again. Maybe I will. I know only today, today, today and then no more...

In the 1700s hermits were something of a fad among the aristocracy in England.

People paid good money to have a hermit stay in a cave on their estates and fill their ears at dinner parties with all kinds of hermit wisdom. And maybe that's what we're heading into here centuries later in the days of the plague. Just to pay people good money to stay inside and not infect one another and to fill their days with all kinds of words and art via our wondrous electronic machines. Stuff to spice up our days, you might say. Every one of us could well be a hermit waiting to happen. Inquire within.

She said, "Say it bitterly, say it painfully, oh, but say it beautifully and let us be again." I did. And then we were gone.

People are always so busy doing this, doing that, doing the other. All too few just want to be.

Our world is almost neatly drawn in two. In the East, the needs of the individual are valued over the individual. In the West, the individual is what's prized. In the end, both have something to offer. And in the end we just do the best we can.

I'm just adrift on a rock in the universe, thinking my thoughts, seeing what comes my way. What awaits is anybody's guess.

In all of life, there's no denying the presence of time. Sometimes it comes in true episodic fashion like some narrative thread and sometimes it comes on us all at once, like an epiphany. But there's no denying time. Time will have its say sooner or later. In the meantime we bend and listen to the moment. That's the most anyone can do.

Reviews

AROUND THE BEND by R. Keith. There are tales of life on the edge and nothing can beat the edge, as the reader well knows, save a dive over it to crystal blue oblivion. Here you will find it all, from murder and incest and child abuse to runaway car chases to suicide with text that crosses over into poetry and back to prose and then to fantasy as one hole in the wall talks it over with a taxidermied cowboy. That you will be shocked by these stories goes without saying but you will also walk away at the end of them shaking your head at the state of the world today. For nothing can be stranger in all the universe than the reality we so often take for granted. Take a seat, grab your whiskey and pack of smokes, and enjoy the ride. This book says it all.

HOUSE WITHOUT DOORS by Peter Straub. I enjoyed reading this book by Mr. Straub. Its surreal atmosphere filled the book-lined rooms of my apartment here and occupied my days for the past month. Two of the stories, filled with images of a juvenile delinquent and murderer, brought to mind other books I've read by Straub while