

Midwestside Story

Annotations

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Some references won't be clear to some modern readers/viewers. Maybe this is turning into "The Annotated Midwestside Story".

Some of those are issues of mainstream historical progression (or just technical change). Those are easily researched (for example, "typewriter", "mimeo", "ditto").

Others are more specific to fandom, and might be harder to find information on.

"Even aliens must register." Reference to US Government publicity campaign. January is alien registration month.

Ted White, when editing *Amazing* in the 1970s, really did at one point charge twenty-five cents as a reading fee for slushpile manuscripts. This was roundly mocked at the time, and today reading fees are one of the red-flag warnings for publishing scams. The amount was, among other things, a fannish reference to "sticky quarters", which was one way you could get some fanzines; it was also, of course, a convenient amount to tape to a page, just one coin. In fairness to Ted White (who is still alive and involved with fandom as I type this), he was the first person to do this, its association with scams developed *later*, and the magazines' owners wouldn't pay for enough people to read the number of unsolicited manuscripts being received. His other choice was to stop accepting unsolicited or unagented manuscripts, which he wanted to avoid.

Yes, agents really did charge only 10% once. And they represented short stories as well as novels.

Yes, *Orbit* (a British science fiction magazine) in particular and the New Wave in general were stereotyped as being weak on plot.

"Will you please autograph this copy of *Galaxy*?" Ben Bova was editing *Analog* at the time.

The "one no trump" reference, however, has nothing to do with any reality TV star and politician; it relates to the card game bridge, which was more commonly played in fandom (and the rest of the world I think) then than now.

On the other hand, "mild-mannered reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper" is probably as well-known now as it was then (it goes back at least to the 1941 Superman movie).

Roger Elwood was famous for saturating the market with mediocre anthologies in the 1970s. Then he moved on to edit Harlequin's ultimately unsuccessful attempt to get into SF publishing, Laser Books.

"Blog", in this work, is not a contraction of "web log", but rather an alcoholic punch served in the Minicon consuite. So "I can't read a Laser without blog by my side" might confuse some modern readers!

"It Comes in the Mail" was a fanzine published by Ned Brooks in the early 1970s simply listing the fanzines he received.

"Great stuff, and there's no copyright notice! It's in the public domain!!" This was written in 1976 and 1977, and first published in 1978--which means this wasn't correct as of when it was published, at least. Knowing fans, that could have been deliberate.

"Jerry Pournelle was just sitting on the windowsill at the party and he fell out!!" Niven & Pournelle's *Inferno* was published in 1975.

"We've run out of Beam's Choice!" Beam's Choice, specifically, was Bob Tucker's booze of choice and therefore the canonical booze to "Smooth!" with.

"I can always catch it later on the video tapes." In 1976, Minneapolis fans (mostly) did the first major video taping at a Worldcon, and the first tie-in to the hotel television system.

"So much for my sensitive fannish grace." Play on the old "sensitive fannish face".

DD-B