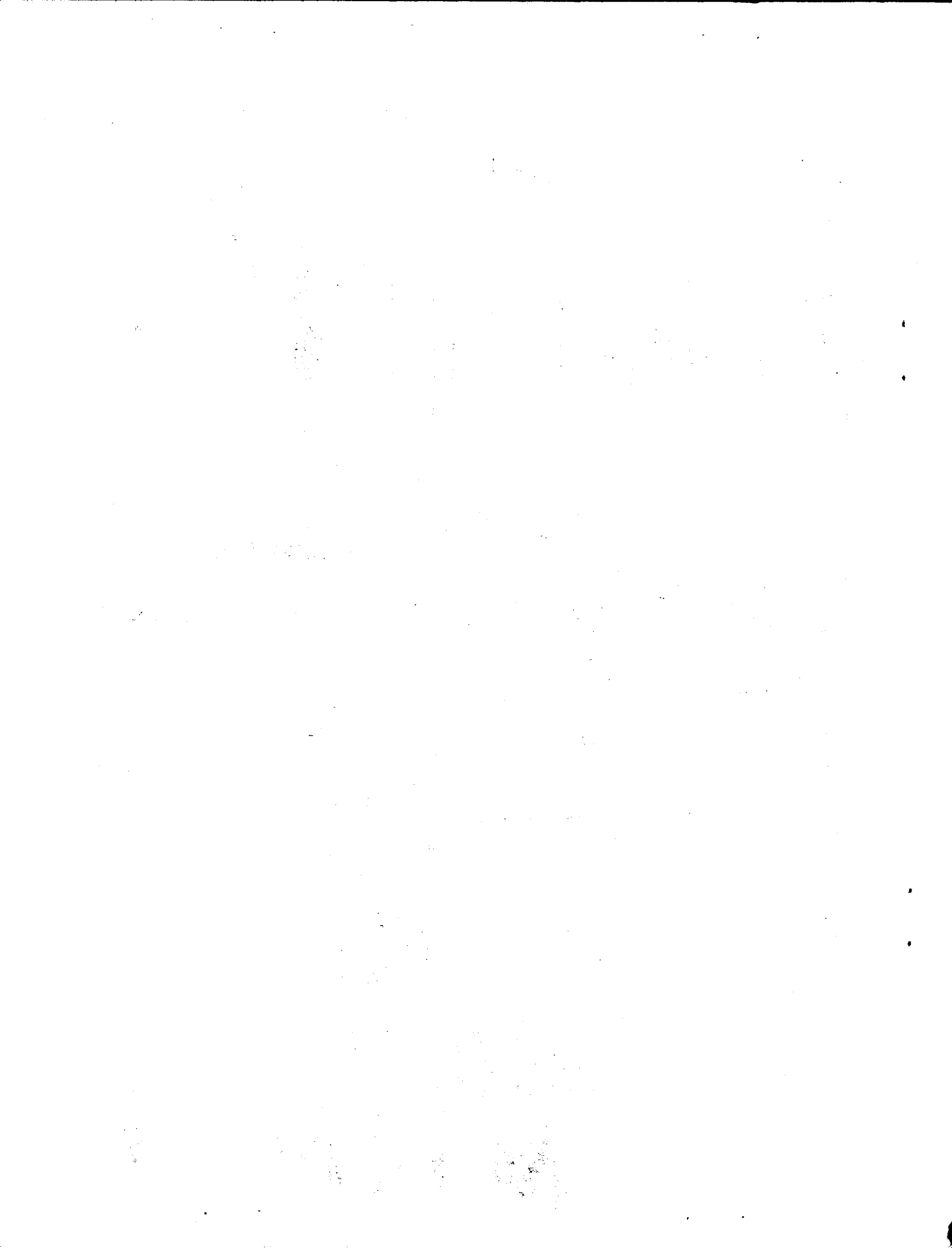


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U N I T E R I M U

This, as you can see from the title, is Interim #1, also going under the alias of Merlin publication #4, and as such is the replacement for my fanzine which was formerly titled UNIT ORDERS. As I announced in the last issue of UO (#3), I am at present running a contest to find a new title for my fanzine. So far, I have only had 4 entries, so I will hereby extend the deadline until March 1, 1964, so as to allow more time. I hope that my next issue will be ready at about that time. Remember, the prize for the best title submitted consists of 3 British prozines, whether or not the selected title is finally used (I may think of a better or more appropriate one myself). Until then, I will use the title of Interim.

While I am writing this, I am listening to Die Fledermaus, on my tape recorder. I heard some of the music on the Walt Disney biography of Straus, which was presented in 2 parts, I only wish I could have seen and heard the whole thing, but as a SF fan, I naturally want to watch My Favorite Martian, which unfortunately overlaps Disney by 30 minutes. While on the subject of TV, it seems that SF is finally becoming a little more popular with the networks. In addition to Twilight Zone, you can also find The Outer Limits which also presents drama, and My Favorite Martian, as the first SF situation comedy on TV. For those who like fantasy, or wierd tales, there is Thriller, which is about as far out as you can get in this way. Recently, they presented a little gem entitled "The Wierd Tailor," about a man who was trying to bring his dead son back to life by means of Black Magic. There is also a series called World of Giants, which is confusing. It started out with an hour-and-a-half show, and currently is 30 minutes weekly, but it has all of its episodes listed as reruns in the TV Guide. The main character is a man who has been shrunk down to six inches high, who runs around playing detective and counterspy. He goes by a name that seems familiar, to me, but I can't place it, that of Mel Hunter. Sunday morning is unnoted for the presence of Serial Theater, which is still replaying the same two Flash Gordon serials. I wish that for a change they would have the sponsor buy about 2 hours or so of time and present them in their entirety, just to vary the monotony. Saturday morning gets interesting, since there are 3 childrens shows, the cartoon Jetsons, and 2 puppetoon SF series, Supercar, and Fireball XL-5, all appearing (at least here in Chicago) at the very same time. The Superman reruns are also present on Saturdays, but the reruns of SF Theatre seem to have finally vanished from the screen. Well, this editorial seems to have turned into a TV column, but I think I will call it a day after one more note. The Folk Music fad which is represented on TV here in Chicago by Hootnanny, and the local show, Folkfest, may be augmented by a new network show called The Big Hoot, according to TV Guide. All in favor, write your local station.

Having just refueled my tape recorder and myself, I can now continue writing for the next two hours without interruptions, even though my brother is running the TV at full blast in the next room. I can even listen to the music better, as my earphones not only give a pseudo-stereo effect, they also shut out both the TV and the typewriter. The next portion of this editorial will be written to the tune of Gilbert & Sullivan's "Patience".

Since Interim is replacing UNIT ORDERS, all subscribers to UO will get INTERIM. By the time I finish this issue, I hope to be notified that I have finally become a member of NAPA, which I just missed getting into last time, because of my procrastination. INTERIM will, like UO, be published quarterly, to coincide with the NAPA mailing, and will continue to be available for 20¢, trades, LOC's, and most of all, for contributions. On the other hand, I will also send a copy to anyone who evinces an interest, or gets on my mailing list for one reason or another. I am very interested in hearing from my readers, and will endeavor to print any

letters which I think are interesting or comment-worthy. As editor, I reserve the right to excerpt, or to correct any errors, even though I may not exercise it, as anyone who saw page 1 of UO #3 can see. I noticed at least a dozen typos, but only after I had finished running the stencil. In fact, there are 2 sets of typos for that page, since the stencil tore half-way through the run, and had to be recut. I noticed that several people commented on the generally light reproduction in the last issue. I can only plead that they have patience with me. I just had bought a new mimeo in time for that issue, and was not really used to it. In addition, I am at the present time experimenting with different combinations of typewriters and backing sheets, to see which gives the best impressions. I will also try to increase the ink flow somewhat, but I have small hopes of this helping, as my mimeo runs at about 100 copies/minute, and I just can't hardly slipsheet that fast. Even with the light inking I had last issue, I still got a bit of ink on the back of some of the sheets. I am going to try and get an Elite typewriter for my home, so I can cut stencils at home, without the rough draft I usually have to make. But it will have to be a cheap one.

Since UO #3 came out, I have been transferred again. I am now stationed in Chicago, instead of being at Fort Sheridan. Since I am 28 miles from home, I can no longer afford the expense of commuting, and I will be going home only on the weekends. This will make things somewhat harder, in that my mimeo will be unavailable to me for most of the week. At the present time, I have 12 pages cut, and I hope to finish the remainder by Thursday night, so I can take them home this Friday (6 Dec), and run off the whole issue over a 3 day pass, to make the deadline for the Dec N'APA mailing. As I said, I just missed making the apa last issue, and was informed that I was #5 on the waiting list.

PLEASE--Will all correspondents take note, I desire that all mail be directed to my home address, as follows: 1747 Elmwood Drive, Highland Park, Ill., 60035. This will save trouble when I finally get out of the army next year, and will in addition lessen the possibility of my mail being lost, since it will pass through fewer hands. My answers will be slower, but only by a few days.

As I have mentioned in UO #3, I am interested in writing, and have joined a group of other people who are also interested. This is sort of an offshoot of Project Semi-Pro, which is being conducted by Alma Hill. If anyone is interested in forming a quad, or in belonging to this group, you can write for further info to HARVEY FORMAN, 1214 Disston Street, Philadelphia, Penn, 19111. I had better close this off for this issue.

MARK IRWIN
 Editor, Publisher, &
 Chief Typist

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THE PROPHETS OF DOOM

by

Hugo Gernsback

When, in April, 1926, I launched the first issue of Amazing Stories, I called it "The Magazine of Scientifiction." Not a very elegant term, I admit, but I had the fixed idea, even in those early days of science fiction, that Amazing Stories henceforth was to be known as a scientific fiction monthly, to distinguish it from any other type of literature.

Not content with that slogan, after a good deal of thought I added a second, more explanatory one: "Extravagant Fiction Today—Cold Fact Tomorrow."

I carried both of these slogans on the editorial page between 1926 and 1929 as long as I published Amazing Stories.

Later, for vol 1 #1 of Science Wonder Stories in June, 1929, I wrote another descriptive slogan: "Prophetic Fiction is the Mother of Scientific Fact." I think this still means what it says. Science fiction—under any term or name—must, in my opinion, deal first and foremost in futures.

It must, in story form, forecast the wonders of man's progress to come. That means distant exploits and exploration of space and time.

Contrary to the opinions of many latter-day, so-called science fiction authors, the genre of Jules Verne and H G Wells has now been prostituted to such an extent that it often is quite impossible to find any reference to science in what is popularly called science fiction today.

The classic science fiction of Jules Verne and H G Wells, with little exception, was serious, and, yes, instructive and educational. It was not primarily intended to entertain or to amuse. These stories carried a message, and that is the great difference between technological science fiction and fantasy tales. I repeat; either you have science fiction, with the emphasis on science, or you have fantasy. You cannot have both—the two genres bear no relation to each other.

In 1961 I expressed my displeasure with the decadence of modern science fiction in a talk which I gave before the Eastern Science Fiction Association. I then stated: Once upon a time there was just the ordinary garden variety of scientific Science Fiction. Then, like atomic fission, science fiction began to proliferate into a chain reaction and we witnessed such mutations as (to name only a few): Pseudo-Science Fiction, Fantasy-Science Fiction, Sexy Science Fiction, Fairytale Science Fiction, and, lately—believe it or not—even Computer (i.e. Analog) Science Fiction, and then the so-called psi deviations, from psychic phenomena to spiritualism, including astrology.

Unfortunately, this state of affairs has degenerated lately with increasing momentum, chiefly because most authors know little about the incredibly vast future of science, nor have they the imagination to cope with coming events.

Also, let us admit that scientists as a rule are not good writers when it comes to inspiring literature and they are rarely hommes de lettres.

So the author, nine times out of ten, takes refuge in non-scientific fantasy. It is far easier to compose and probably reads better than a technical-science yarn that often is not easy to digest by the uneducated reader.

Often an author attempts to disguise his scientific poverty by using pseudo-scientific terminology. This point was made recently the New Scientist of London, July 18, 1963, by science reviewer R S R Fitter, in commenting on the book The Web of Life, by John H Storer: "The book is written in extremely lucid

This article is from an address by Mr Gernsback before the MIT Science Fiction Society, on October 25, 1963, used with the permission of Mr Gernsback.

and simple language, with none of the pseudo-scientific gobbledygook one associates with American scientific writing."

Hence the overwhelmingly large percentage of magazine and book editors can no longer buy true science fiction stories as they did in the twenties. There are just not enough science fiction authors today who can deliver adequate material with science-motivated content.

Let me state here without quibbling that I have never had, nor do I have now, the slightest quarrel with fantasy literature. In fact, I personally do like it, particularly if it is of the adult type, say the Edgar Allen Poe variety. What I detest is the parading of pure fantasy stories as science fiction and their sale as such to gullible readers. I consider this an out-and-out fraud.

It was particularly humiliating to me when I read the 1962 volume of The Hugo Winners, which the publisher, on the cover, lightheartedly labeled "Nine prize winning Science Fiction stories." Well, in my book it should have read "Eight fantasy tales, plus one science fiction story."

I do not envy the editor who had to edit the book, because the selections had already been made by the World Science Fiction Convention. So he had no choice.

It is also an incontrovertible fact that true science fiction today is still avidly sought out and read by our country's industrial leaders, engineers and technicians because it still gives them invaluable ideas of events to come. Science fiction, believe it or not, is still a powerful force that stimulates thinking men whose destiny is tied up strongly in the future.

It also makes me sad when I see the constantly-recurring scribbling of the many prophets of doom who have recently become fashionable in their endeavor to write off genuine science fiction as passee!. Such bankruptcy of intellect can always be traced directly to the inability of such writers to comprehend the status and message of true prophetic science fiction. This fantastic lack of imagination often is as ludicrous as it is pathetic.

I only quote one recent writer--there are dozens of others everywhere--in the science fiction fan magazine INSIDE, June 1963. Let us proceed with INSIDE's forecast:

The Future of Science Fiction

"A question which naturally arises is, What of the future of science fiction? If it evolves through the discovery and working out of its congenital possibilities, what remains? What would be the next developments?

Personally, I do not see much of a future for science fiction. There are several reasons for hesitating to make such a statement, one of which is that the detective story seemed to be dead in the 1880's, but they are all general and negative. I see no specific and active reasons for supposing it has any lively future.

In tracing out this general line of speculation, we quite naturally arrive at the thought that there will come a time when all possibilities are exhausted. Then science fiction will be "completed." There will be "nothing new," regardless of clever variations. It will have realized everything that is in it as a literary organism and will sink willingly, as it were, into extinction. Actually, it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to foresee a time in which there will not be published occasional stories of the marvelous, the fantastic, and of future science; but it is not so difficult to believe that there will come a time, probably in our personal futures, in which there will no longer be a "field"--only a "genre."

So much for one prophet of doom. The quoted statement brings to mind a long list of great unimaginative non-believers in the world's future. Nor are they

unknown; some of them are quite famous in their own right--not as prophets, but as scientists and other highly-placed celebrities.

Arthur C. Clarke, in his epoch-making book, Profiles of the Future, calls their deficiency "Failure of Imagination." Here are a few of those he mentions:

There was famed philosopher Auguste Comte, who in his Cours de Philosophie Positive (1835) stated this about the heavenly bodies:

"We see how we determine their forms, their distances, their bulk, their motions, but we can never know anything of their chemical or mineralogical structure... the stars serve us scientifically only as providing positions with which we may compare the interior movements of our system."

Let us not forget world-famed Lord Ernest Rutherford, who, perhaps more than any other mortal, was responsible for our insight into modern atomic science. Yet up to his death in 1937 he constantly ridiculed the idea that we would ever be able to harness the energy locked up in matter. Sad to relate, the first atomic chain reaction occurred only 5 years after his death!

Next listen to the great American astronomer Simon Newcomb (1835-1909) who wrote a celebrated essay that ended thus:

"The demonstration that no possible combination of known substances, known forms of machinery and known forms of force, can be united in a practical machine, by which men shall fly long distances through the air, seems to the writer as complete as it is possible for the demonstration of any physical fact to be."

Not to be outdone by such a pereposterous prophecy, the British Professor A.W. Bickerton (1842-1929) wrote the following masterpiece, which I quote verbatim, in a paper published in 1926:

"This foolish idea of shooting at the moon is an example of the absurd length to which vicious specialization will carry scientists working in thought-tight compartments. Let us critically examine the proposal. For a projectile entirely to escape the gravitation of the earth, it needs a velocity of 7 miles a second. The thermal energy of a gramme at this speed is 15,180 calories... the energy of our most violent explosive--nitroglycerine--is less than 1,500 calories per gramme. Consequently, even had the explosive nothing to carry, it has only one-tenth of the energy necessary to escape the earth... hence the proposition appears to be basically impossible."

Lest you think that such recorded foolishness is rare and isolated, rest assured that it is commonplace. All one has to do is to read our newspapers and magazines for the latest examples of total decay of imagination.

It is a measure of our times that just as the poor, misguided, unimaginative scientists whom we quoted failed to look into the future, so the present day science-illiterate author cannot possibly comprehend the myriad of technical wonders still to come.

He cannot understand--nor extrapolate into future terms--that each new invention and discovery automatically opens the door to a host of new ideas that proliferate countless others.

And all of these are excellent spring-boards for novel, true science fiction stories, never dreamt of before.

If these are often termed derisively "gadget stories" by the technologically illiterate, the more power to those far-seeing authors who have the imagination and the intellectual gifts to read the future aright so they can point out to their more modest and less fortunate brethren the direction in which the world is heading. Given enough such outstanding authors, true prophetic science fiction could very well stage a massive comeback--it could become the renaissance of the

Jules Verne, H G Wells type of technological science fiction so badly needed in our present idea-impooverished world.

Let me give a single example of what is coming in the next decade. You might call it educated-guess science fiction, because as yet it is not in existence, although we have practically all the scientific and technical elements now.

It is taken from an article I wrote a few weeks ago entitled Microminiature Color Television. The idea deals with microminiaturized TV cameras so small that they can go through the hollow opening of a large-sized hypodermic needle. Before you scoff at that, electronic technicians will tell you that transistors have already shrunk into the microscopic, so minute that they cannot be seen by the naked eye. How small can a TV camera shrink? No one knows.

Next, we combine the X-Ray with the electron microscope and the TV color camera. This should give us enlargements of 300,000 diameters upwards.

The hardly-visible microscopic TV camera can now be introduced through the hypodermic needle into practically every inaccessible part of the human anatomy.

Just imagine a 300,000 diameter enlargement of, say, an internal incipient cancer, or other disease! For all practical purposes, the entire human body will have become as transparent as if it were glass or plastic.

How many science fiction plots can this single idea engender?

In technology, the probing microminiature TV color camera will literally have thousands of new uses. Coupled with the X-Ray and the electron microscope, such future TV camera-probes will ferret out points of weaknesses and practically all potential failures, not apparent otherwise.

Take only one example: Our present-day rockets, missiles and our various satellites. Today's percentage of failure is intolerable. Its cost is well-nigh astronomical now. Often failures occur once the space vehicle has been placed in orbit. But most occur before they are off the ground.

Almost all these potential failures could be anticipated and overcome with miniature color TV probes on the molecular level. They would be cheap at any price. Does this give you any ideas?

I thank you.

* * * * *

THE LAST MINUTE by Mark Irwin

This column of news and notes is, as its name implies, being written at the last minute. Today is Dec 5, and I am hoping to get this fanzine done by the 10th. I have been unable to collect my mail lately, in fact, yesterday, I went home for the sole purpose of collecting it for the past 10 days. I found a real surprise awaiting me in the shape of DOUBLE BILL #7, which is the 1st Annish of this zine which is published by Bill Mallardi and Bill Bowers. This issue contains 100 pages, which includes 13 full-page illustrations for the Art Folio. Also included are pt 1 of the D-B Symposium (the questionnaire sent out to editors & authors), a SF quiz, and a whole assortment of other goodies. This is one of the largest zines I have ever seen, and also one of the best. The cover features some of the prize-winning costumes from Discon. This issue is worth much more than the 30¢ purchase price.

I have just heard, from a source I cannot recall (SF Times, maybe?), that NOVA Publications, the publishers of the British prozines New Worlds and Science Fantasy, are planning to discontinue them early next year. I hope there is little truth in the rumor, since they are among the best sources for good SF and Fantasy. Science Fantasy in particular is the home of the Sword-and-Sorcery story, as typified by the stories by Michael Moorcock.

(Cont'd on page 16)

THE SILVER SCREEN

Current Events: Actually, the movies reviewed here are not quite current, but they were eliminated from the last issue for lack of space. I have much shortened them, because of this.

CAPTAIN SINBAD--A very colorful movie, with all the action and adventure which is usually associated with the Arabian Nights type of movie. The Special Effects department was working very well when this movie was made, especially with the effects accompanying the workings of "Magic" spells. Unfortunately, the only real novelty in the movie was the method of execution which was devised, wherein the heroine was about to have her head stepped on by an elephant. Naturally, the hero stepped in, by long distance, to stop the execution. This is a typical grade B action picture, but it is fine for the kiddies.

JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS--This is another adventure movie, again, not SF, but fantasy. The story of the Argosy, complete with gods and goddesses, is very badly mangled here in this movie. The color is good, but the special effects aren't all that they should have been, since this movie depends on them for its effect on the audience. Our heroes fight the clashing rocks, a skeleton army, and a 9 headed hydra, just to get hold of an old sheepskin. The producers should have read the original story a little more thoroughly before making the movie.

THE MOUSE ON THE MOON--The release of this movie followed very closely upon that of the book, by Leonard Wibberly. Starring Margaret Rutherford and Terry-Thomas, the movie treats the book's plot very liberally, in order to make room for that Rutherford woman as the female lead. Her part could have been left as in the book without impairing the movie at all. Except for this, I find no fault with the movie. Excellent all-around fun, for the entire family.

Coming Events-- For a Christmas present, Walt Disney is presenting THE SWORD IN THE STONE, his latest all-cartoon feature. Adapted by Bill Peet from the book by T H White, this picture has been 3 years in the making. The picture relates in a highly amusing way the story of the legendary King Arthur's boyhood and his adventures with Merlin, the prophet, magician and benefactor of the young king.

This picture is just what the cartoon was designed to do. In no other medium could Wart (the young king), Merlin, Madame Mim, the Owl, and other characters be depicted as funny as they are in THE SWORD IN THE STONE.

There are two hilarious sequences that should make anyone laugh. One is when Wart and Merlin change into squirrels and have to adjust to life high in the tree-tops, and their experiences with two overly amorous female squirrels. Another is when Wart is turned into a sparrow to try his wings in the sky, and falls prey to the mad Madame Mim, who is a cunning sorceress and arch enemy of Merlin. During a laugh-filled duel between the two powerful wizards, to decide his fate, the youngster discovers two important things - good eventually triumphs over evil and for self-preservation one must pay particular heed to one's instincts.

These are only two of the highlights of a picture which any youngster can be proud to take his parents to see.

(The above release is courtesy of Walt Disney Productions)

THE GROWING PILE—Fanzine Reviews

As you can see, I have chosen a new, and very appropriate, title for my fanzine review column. The following are fanzines which I have received since Sept, when my last issue came out.

1. LUNA #3, 1963, Franklin M Dietz Jr, 1750 Walton Ave, Bronx 53, N.Y. Available for 15¢ or 5/50¢. Also for selected trades. Back issues are available at 15¢ each. Luna is a magazine devoted to the reprinting of material from various SF conventions and conferences of the past. This issue contains "The Jet-Propelled Apocalypse," by Fritz Leiber, from the NOLACON, and a debate on dousing "Witchcraft in SF," by Lester del Rey and Randall Garrett, from LUNACON 1962. Both are very interesting reading, and I recommend this magazine highly. The cover is by John Gaughan, and is also excellent. This is the current issue of a quarterly(?) magazine.
2. DOUBLE-BILL, #6, Aug 63, Bill Bowers, 3271 Shelhart Rd, Barberton, Ohio, 44203. Available quarterly for 25¢ or 5/\$1. Also trades, contributions, or LOC's. The main features of this issue are notes on Space Wars by Mike Shupp & Terry Jeeves, and a short by Mike Deckinger. This magazine has 11 pages of letters out of 42. Good reading. There is a request that trades and LOC's be sent to Bill Mallardi, 214 Mackinaw Ave, Akron 13, Ohio, 44313, who is the Co-Editor.
3. OUTRE #1, Allen G Kracalik, 1660 Ash St, Des Plaines, Ill, 60018. Published bimonthly, limited to 100 copies, free to interested parties. Featured is a story by the editor, titled "Enemy," movie reviews, and letters. This magazine is the successor to LUNAR LOOK. There is an excellent cover, and interior matter to match.
4. HMLPLOD #4, Summer 1963. (This magazine is subtitled GNOME, "So that you may speak freely of it."): Published irregularly by Michael J McInerney, 81 Ivy Dr, Meriden, Conn. 30¢/c. Main features are a short by Clifford Simak, "A Pipeline to Destiny," which has echoes of his old story "Time and Time Again," but is still good. Also, a belated CHICON report, and speeches about Henry Kuttner by Sam Moskowitz, L Sprague de Camp, Cyril Kornbluth, and Larry Shaw (from the 1958 ESFA). Excellent reading, even if some of the material is a bit dated.
5. YANDRO #127, Aug 63. Robert & Juanita Coulson, Rt 3, Wabash, Ind, 46992. 25¢ or \$2.50/year. Aside from the usual editorial comments, this issue also contains a story by Don Whiteman, "Space Crazy," and articles by Enid Jacobs and Earl Kemp. Also in this issue are 9 pages of GRUE #31, by Dean Grennell, mainly notes about air guns and about 2 pages of very bad puns and Swifties. This is a good issue of YANDRO, and GRUE adds the frosting.
6. YANDRO #128, Sep 63. This being a convention time issue, it would be understandable if the magazine suffers from malnutrition, material-wise. The main part of the issue contains only the usual editorials and letters and the review columns. But the 12 pages of letters are interesting. The most important part of this issue isn't properly a part of it at all, but consists of 18 pages of YANDRO's 2d Bibliographic Supplement. This one is by Ed Wood, and is an issue by issue history of Famous Fantastic Mysteries, and its two companion mags, Fantastic Novels and A. Merrit's Fantasy Magazine. This wins my vote as the best feature of the year.

The Growing Pile(Cont'd)

7. KNOWABLE #5, Sep 63, John Boardman, 592 16th St, Brooklyn, 18, NY, 11218. 25¢ or 5/\$1. Also for trades, contribs, LoC's, sample, or what the hell. This issue continues with parts #5 of "Science Made Too Easy" and "The Story," chapter 9 of which is in this issue. Also in this issue are a DISCON report, and "Speculations about Giants," by the editor, and a very nice cover. If you have been reading the previous issues, you will understand the story, if not, you won't really miss the first four parts. This issue shows a great improvement over the first 4, and I hope that succeeding issues continue to improve.

8. JELERANG #2, Summer 63, 25¢ or 5/\$1. Address correspondence to The Mercurian Club, c/o Harriett Kolchak, 2104 Brandywine St, Philadelphia 30, Pa. This issue contains 40 pages, including notes on Harriett's Florida trip, the first part of an article by Olin Fredegar in re Criticism of SF, the further adventures of Benedict Breadfruit. Also the usual letters and fanzine reviews. I think you were a bit harsh to call UO#2 a military manual, it has very few of the characteristics of one. I have tried to eliminate any it does possess. According to your checklist, I got this issue for 10 different reasons. In any case, I enjoyed reading it, and would like to get a copy of #1, if possible.

9. The BUG EYE #12, July 63. Rolf C Gindorf, 5603 Wülfrath, Hans-Böckler Str. 52, Deutschland. This mag is billed as "The only German English-language amateur magazine distributed throughout the world this side of the Iron and Bamboo Curtains." Published quarterly, 200 copies distributed for contribs, LoC's, trades, and reviews. Features are articles, "SF, Fandom, The World and I"(by Rolf Caesar), "Genius, Anyone"(the Editor), both excellent, and 16 pages of letters. The articles are good, but the letters leave me confused. This is the first fanzine I have ever received from over there, and I enjoyed reading it. If my German wasn't so rusty, I would like to receive the German language zine mentioned by the Editor.

10. YANDRO #129, This issue contains some of the best artwork I have seen in YANDRO for some time. It also has the convention report, which includes the stencil cut for the panel at the con. In addition to the usual selection of fanzine reviews and letters, there is also a critical review of "Glory Road", an article by Katherine Maclean, and, as an extra, a special "Press Release" by Dennis Lein. All in all, an excellent issue, and well worth reading.

11. SPELEOBEM #21, Bruce Pelz, Box 100, 308 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles 24, Calif, 90024. Published for SAPS mailing #65, Oct 63. This issue mostly consists of fanzine reviews and letters, but in addition it also has part 4 of a Chicon Report by Madeline Willis, mainly covering post-convention doings in the Chicago area.

12. SHAZAM #3, Fall 63. Don Glut, 3754 N. Magnolia Ave, Chicago 13, Ill. 50¢ per issue. Don announces that this is the last issue of his zine. If I were one of the fans who really are old-movie fans, I think I would mourn its passing, because it brings back fond memories of the good old days when Tom Mix was galloping across the silver screen, and George Reeves was flying around in his blue union suit. Also, notes on Arsenic and Old Lace(which recently returned, again, to the local idiot boxes) and a short biography of Bela Lugosi. Naturally, as so many of this type of magazine are, there are many illustrations taken from movie stills which explain why Don says he found the expense too high to continuing his publication. Nevertheless, this is a very well done job, but very high-priced for an amateur publication.

The Growing Pile(Cont'd)

13. DYNATRON #18. Roy & Chrystal Tackett, 915 Green Valley Rd, NW, Albuquerque, New Mex, 87107. Available for 15¢ contributions, or trades. This issue arrived tacked on to DYNATRON #19, so I will also combine the reviews. Besides the editorial ramblings of both editors, these issues contained columns by Ed Cox and John Baxter, and notes by Gary Labowitz. #19 featured a report on Westerson #16, by Len Moffatt. Naturally, there was a letter column, and the whole made up 40 pages of enjoyable reading.

14. POINTING VECTOR #18, Oct 63. John Boardman, 592 16th St, Brooklyn 18, NY. 25¢ or 5/\$1. This is noted as Operation Agitation publication #39, and is called by the editor a personal newsletter of fact, opinion, and comment. As such, this issue is 6 pages of anti-Goldwater, pro Liberal, Democratic party government for the City of New York propaganda, and nothing else. Personally, I much prefer reading KNOWABLE, especially as I don't agree with John as to his choice of political parties. But that's my privilege.

15. THE SHADOW FAPA. Don Fitch, 3908 Frijo, Covina, Calif., 91722. This issue is the Shadow of the 104th FAPA Mailing, and as such consists of comments by Don Simpson, Jim Benford, Dave Locke, and Chuck Hansen, and FAPA mailing comments by Greg Benford.

16. GENZINE #37, G. M. Carr, 5319 Ballard, NW, Seattle 7, Wash., 98107. Produced for NAPA Mailing #18, this issue contains comments on Mailing #17, and 12 pages of interesting letters.

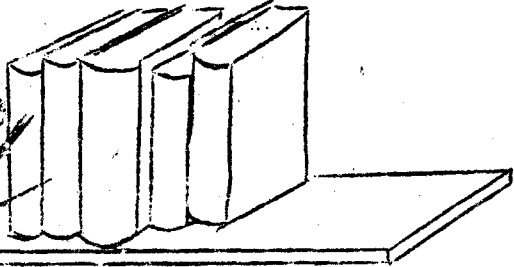
17. AMRA #25, June 63. Box 9286, Rosslyn, Arlington, Va. Available for 30¢ or 8/\$2. Aside from the usual selection of excellent illustrations, this issue contains Uncleanish Freethinking, by Poul Anderson (taken from The Zed), and also notes On Weapons of Choice and/or Necessity, by Pournelle, De Camp, O R Sowers, Hal Lynch, et al. As usual, I enjoyed reading this magazine very much.

18. AMRA #26, Oct 63. Printed by the Terminus, Owlswick, & Ft. Mudge Electric St Railway Gazette. Most of this issue is devoted to an article Fafhrd & Me, by Fritz Leiber, on the origins of Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser. This article probably answers many longstanding questions about them, and is interesting aside from that. A superior fanzine, as usual.

19. ISHBAK #1, L D Kafka, 2819 Morris Ave, Bronx 68, NY. This first issue arrived with AMRA. It consists of 2 pages, and is a newsletter which is printed 4 or 5 times a year, to provide information about the Heroic Fantasy field, and the latest developments within it. Anyone as interested as I am in this will send 75¢ or a years subscription (dues). It seems to be associated with the Hyborian Legion somehow, but I can't figure it out. Anyone who can tell me where the name comes from?

20. GARDYLOO #4. Frank Wilimczyk, 147 10th Ave, New York 1, NY, 10001. This zine arrived with a NAPA Postmailing, which also included a copy of my own zine, UO #3 (why do they send a copy of the zine back to it's editor, to save trouble?). Since N Bucklin likes it so much, I thought I'd mention it. This issue contains 6 pages of notes on Progress (in weapons et al), Repartee, Psi, and ERB, and also 4 pages of Mailing Comments on NAPA mailings. Need I say more, Mr. B?

The Book Shelf



KEY OUT OF TIME--Andre Norton, World, \$3.50. This is the latest in the series started with Time Traders, and continues the adventures of Ross Murdock and Gordon Ashe, this time on the water world of Hawaika, where, in the company of a Polynesian girl, Kurara, and a pair of trained dolphins, they manage to foil the enemy aliens met in the previous books. At the end, our heroes are left stranded 10,000 years in the past, leaving you to wonder how long it will be before the next book comes along to rescue them. As Andre Norton is one of the few authors who writes good stories of this type today, I am eagerly awaiting it, and recommend this one.

Great SF About Doctors--Edited by Groff Conklin, Collier AS518, 95¢. This is one of 3 SF PBs from Collier I have found recently. This book had 18 stories, ranging from Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter" and "Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar," by Poe, thru "Expedition Mercy," by J A Winter, to "Ribbon in the Sky," by Murray Leinster. All are first-rate, making this collection a must for your library.

The Coming of the Robots--Edited by Sam Moskowitz, Collier AS548, 95¢. This book reprints 10 stories from the prozines, including the original Adam Link story, "I Robot." Only one clinker in this book, I recommend it to those who like to have anthologies to supplement their collections.

Exploring Other Worlds--Edited by Sam Moskowitz, Collier AS551, 95¢. Contains 8 stories by such well-known authors as Hamilton, Brown, Binder, Rocklyne, Anderson, Weinbaum, Starzl, and himself. Unfortunately, I think Sam could have chosen a better group of stories for reprinting. Although the stories are not individually bad, as a collection they leave something to be desired. Too bad.

The Beast--A E van Vogt, Doubleday, \$3.50. This book is based on 3 stories from ASF, "The Great Engine," "The Changeling," and "The Beast." Individually, these stories were good (in 1943&44), but the manner in which they were put together leaves much to be desired, since van Vogt didn't use enough "glue," as it were, and the joints between stories tend to come apart into a confused mess. A waste of money. Buy 7 prozines instead.

Bridge to Yesterday--E L Arch, Avalon, \$2.95. This story concerns Leo Tanney, who with his partner, Virgil Smith, had been working on the problem of suspended animation. The opening pages find Leo waking from a 25 year sleep. The remainder of the book is devoted to his search, in the company of reporter Nina Rollins, for a promoter named Vernon Schiller, who Leo suspects is his long-lost partner. Little of interest in it, another waste of money, but only 6 prozines worth.

Alien World--Adam Lukens, Avalon, \$2.95. This book shares two things with the above volume, in that it is one of the current selections for Pick-A-Book, and that it is a waste of time (in my case, about 50 minutes) to read its 186 pages. I really could not find it in me to believe the situations and characters invented by the author for this book, and I have been reading SF for 15 years. I'm sorry and surprised that Mr Lukens has fallen so far below his usual standards (I really didn't think it was possible.)

Missiles from the Mailbox

There, I finally got a chance to use that title for the letter column. In my last issue of UO, I started to use it, but at that time, I was submitting my stencils to my section chief for approval, and since I am assigned to a missile unit, any mention of missiles seems to have been somewhat taboo. Now that I am doing this on my own, I think there will be no more objections. This first letter shows how accurate my title is, since I felt it a hard blow to my editorial pride.

NATE BUCKLIN, PO Box 4, Docton, Wash, 98018.

I cannot believe it. I finally met a zine I just couldn't stomach. Explanation: it tasted terrible when I ate it. I comment on all fmz, but that doesn't mean I have to like them. The main problem is that you are organized, apparently sane, and totally lacking in humor; a taste of good-humored farce might well liven up those dreary pages. Do not try to review every issue of a zine that you receive; instead, review one issue of more zines, or a short combined review of several issues. Try to number only the pages, and them on top where easily accessible. Improve repro; if you have a new mimeo you aren't used to((I do)) this is excusable. Wish you'd review CRY, HYPHEN, SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES and WARHOON. The first because I sub and have heard no unbiased opinions(such as those of a reviewer) yet, the second and third because I have heard of them favorably from other sources but never read one; the problem here is that I never hear the bad side about all these good zines, and if one is bad, I don't hear of it at all. But don't review these and everything else, have fewer reviews, a balanced selection, and don't leave out anything good entirely(Good depending on anyone's definition; if some reader is idiotic enough to care for a mag like Gardyloo, you review a Gardyloo, read and ignore screams of protest. More illos; more hand stencilling--more space between lines. Put title on cover if possible, Stop that confounded blather and let someone else say something, besides lettercol. Find someone whose ideas agree with yours but who has a totally different style and will just offer a change. Maybe let someone else do fanzine reviews, or have a different byline for every review. I know I could make a good review of this UO(Not like this LoC, more of a guide to what its like instead of what is wrong) or of most fmz; a trifle uninformed and opinionated((!)), perhaps. Movie reviews should not even be included; nor editorial; only thing I really liked was the Discon report and one or two of the fanzine reviews. Find someone who'll be at a con you won't attend, give him a report to make(I wonder what the Phillycon's like...) Continue such covers; they are magnificent. Rebelliously, NB

((UO was made to be read, not eaten, maybe that's why you disliked it so much. My fanzine is entirely a one-man affair. Although I have received contribs in the form of letters, until now I have done all the artwork. Until my talent in this line improves tremendously, or I get some art from outside sources, it will continue to be very scarce. I do not have either the talent or the time for hand stencilling or illustrations by myself. If you want another cover like the one on UO #3, how about sending me about \$10 to pay for the offset job? You may remember that I am in the Army, and working for relatively low wages. I will do the best I can, though. I review every zine I receive, but I just don't get the zines you mentioned. I would be glad to have more material by others in my fanzine, but don't you think I should wait until I get some, in response to my requests? As for my style, that will improve with time. Since you are so free with your criticism (which, I'll admit, I asked for), and think you could write good reviews, Go ahead. You probably get some that I don't, and it would provide a change, as you desire, plus some egoboo for yourself.))

Missiles From the Mailbox(Cont'd)

KRIS CAREY, 1016 2nd St, Wasco, Calif.

Thanks for sending me UO #3. I must admit it is a bit novel, a notch above the norm.

This summer has been a marked one in which I was fasia for the duration. But, nonetheless, I too have tried to tape respond with Certain Selected Persons (who live in Texas and still owes me two precious tapes.). This month, though, marks my campaign to return to the mailing lists of freeloaders who LoC to zines.

I feel you are, in your contentions that the fanzine is generally a medium for expression of ideas and attitudes, right; however, you failed to mention but probably are aware of the great egoboo that is derived from seeing a product of your own cunning and cleverness and thought in front of you. I believe this to be the second great reason and the prime incentive factor for the process that terminates in a fanzine. It is certainly a sound motive, and undoubtedly a Great Idea.

About the tests, I have always had exceptional ratings in aptitude tests and IQ exams, but to soo my grades you would not know so. Fortunately I know the reason for the great contradiction between these two..laziness. In other words I am vastly superior in intellect but too lazy to utilize my attributes. Seriously, though, past teachers have confided to others that they don't understand my undiligent attitude towards work, Television can't be blamed for it, though, because we are one of the few families in the US who aren't slaves to the idiot box. The stage of existance which you mentioned(i.e."I just thought of ideas and did nothing about them"), is about where I am, with a little better use of thoughts. I don't see the clods who drift through life without caring about their accomplishments. This is misuse of life, plainly & simply.

The red tape you mention in trying to get your zine published is typical and indicative of most federal agencies. Every simple everyday action is tied up with another, and so forth, so that nothing is accomplished until the leaders have decided that they have reached the limit at which confusion ends and chaos begins. I sometimes wonder how our government accomplishes anything at all, what with all the checks and red tape that is behind everything. The only good feature about the ponderous red tape, is that it might forestall any foolish actions or moves which might be detrimental to our lives.

Wouldn't it be hairy if the civil rights marchers staged a sitdown strike on the steps of the Washington Monument((they did, just about. A lot of the action was just north of the base of the Monument, where their HQ was located.))? If you think the peace marchers are bad, you must journey to San Francisco, and get an eyeful of the Harry Kodiak marchers. As you must know, by now, Harry is a bear who is running for the office of Mayor of San Francisco. He is being supported by Radio Station KGO. There was quite a demonstration in his support over a week ago in Union Square, at which he delivered a speech and was nearly assassinated by some evil anti-Kodiak assassin. His only trouble seems to be his illiteracy. He can't read or write, but does give very convincing speeches.

As to the Silver Screen; I didn't find your review of Call Me Bwana very aptly done. It was rather sketchy in spots. As to Bradbury and his upcoming movie; I don't think he is the most highly respected writer in the vast field of SF. That is not for one person to decide. And I don't think much of the statement "It is time for a serious movie about outer space by a mature writer.

Yours in zerb, Kris

((I've always heard it said that great minds run in the same channels, but you might well be my alter ego, sitting there in California, you sound so much like me. Harry Kodiak sounds fascinating, although I haven't heard of him before. I

Missiles From the Mailbox(Cont'd)

think he probably would make a good, honest mayor. Maybe he should be a guest at the Worldcon next year. The comments in re Bradbury and his movie are taken from a press release, and do not in the least reflect the opinions of the editor. Thanks very much for the titles you suggested.))

HARRY WARNER, JR., 423 Summit Ave, Hagerstown, Md, 21740.

I have an uncomfortable suspicion that it was you who distributed a small fanzine as a rider with one of the Chicon publicity magazines. To be honest, I was turned off a bit by the military style in which you fixed the format, if it really was you. I know that the Armed Forces are necessary, but I don't like to see their traditions and procedures spilling over into civilian life where they do no good. ((It was me, and I don't either.)) I'm glad to see that there aren't many signs of the military in this issue, except for the numbering of paragraphs. And you could always claim you are imitating the Bible or a basic set of geometric theorems instead of military communications. You seem to have conquered your new mimeo pretty well on this first attempt, except for the somewhat light inking that could be partly the result of the way you cut the stencil.

To the best of my memory, I didn't knowingly encounter you at the DisCon, putting you into a category that includes perhaps 60% of the persons there. It was my first worldcon, after many years of fanning, and I'm convinced that regional conferences are more satisfactory. There is more opportunity to spend some time with all the people you want to talk to and less of a sense of being surrounded by strangers, when the attendance runs around 100 as it usually does at a Phillycon. However, I enjoyed the thing considerably and your account fills in for me some of the gaps in my memory that were caused by my failure to spend much time at the formal program. I never learned the trick of walking from the elevator to the main meeting room without running into someone I couldn't think of failing to stop and talk to for a while. Then there is your energy in taking notes, making recordings, shooting off many rolls of film, and so forth. I had fine intentions in these respects, but found myself doing little at the convention except talking and listening. I didn't take my tape recorder to Washington. I took only about a dozen photographs, and the only notes during the three days consisted of numbers of rooms where I was invited to parties.

I can't find much of a polite nature to say about George Price's activities on April 13, I respect anyone who is willing to go to a lot of trouble to express his opinions, but not the method adopted here, that of stealing a captive audience, in effect.

There isn't anything wrong with the procedure of filling much of your own publication with your own writings, as long as you can think of things to write about. The main reason why you find it difficult to get contributions from others is that there are so many fanzines today and so few fans who are willing to write for them. I dug into fan directories once and deduced from rapid calculations that not more than ten percent of the fans who are capable of writing well for the fanzines ever do so. So a few fans are dreadfully overworked in contributing to fanzines, resulting in occasional inferior contributions from good writers like John Berry and Mike Deckinger, and more and more fanzine editors try to fill up with their own writings, contributions from high school teachers or girl friends, or reprints. I don't know how to change the situation except by pestering the non-writing readers so doggedly that they start to contribute to end the nuisance.

I think that the main reason so many fan movie projects collapse is the habit of using 16mm sound film for the productions. That quadruples the cost,

Missiles from the mailbox (Cont'd)

and when a production really does get completed, its showing is restricted to a handful of large-scale fan events where a 16mm sound projector is rented. I believe that fans should produce amateur movies just as they produce amateur magazines; admit from the start that they can't afford the equivalent of letterpress for the magazines and use 8mm film. There are synchronizing methods, as you point out, if a soundtrack is essential. A little planning and careful choice of angles and lenses can make it unnecessary to try for lip synchronization. And for a quarter century, great movies were made without soundtracks, and the invention of the sound film didn't make it illegal to produce films without spoken dialog.

The movie reviews were interesting, although I see about two movies per year on the average and passed up The Raven, to my utmost regret. No opinions on the Bradbury film project yet. I can't imagine The Martian Chronicles in theaters as a literal filming of the book, and from the description, I would be inclined to suspect that little more than the title will be retained. But as I said, it's too soon to have opinions. Yours, Harry Warner, Jr
(My percentage of people I encountered unknowingly runs about 75%, but at a Worldcon there is much more interesting activity than there is at a smaller group like the Phillycon, or Midwestcon (which I once attended). Actually I really had very little energy, and that was spent staying awake after the all night parties. I brought my recorder so I could listen to the program at my leisure, while spending my time buying magazines. I actually took no notes at all, depending on my memory, plus a handy program book for writing my report. Most of the many pictures of the con came out poorly exposed, since the available light wasn't quite enough for taking pictures without flash. I am checking into one roll which contained most of the Costume Ball pictures, which seems to have gotten mislaid. In the matter of amateur movies, I have given up that idea for lack of time, money and equipment. A fanzine seems to be enough activity for me.))

C W BROOKS, JR, 911 Briarton Rd, Newport News, Va, 23605.

Thanks for UO #3. From the comments I'm sorry I missed #2. I find the format extremely tiresome, to say the least, but the content of #3 was good. Glad to hear that you plan to change the title and all. I am trying to think of a title to suggest. I think the title should give some hint as to the type of contents to be expected. I was disappointed when I saw a copy of YANDRO and found that it had nothing to do with Wellman's "John" stories.

I enjoyed meeting you at Discon. I don't remember if I ever saw you without the blue face. I probably wouldn't recognize you without it!

Your cover was good on #3. We tested that missile configuration in our low-speed wind-tunnel a couple of years ago.

I enjoyed the con report. Discon was the first I had been to and I had a pretty good time. I am not too much the partying type, but the programs were good and I picked up some books and magazines. My main collecting interest is fantasy. I got the copy of Timlin's The Ship That Sailed to Mars that Kreuger had there. About the best thing I remember is Randy Garrett singing and telling Benedict Breadfruit stories in my room early Monday morning.

I don't see how you could sit through The Raven three or four times! It was funny in places but it wasn't Poe, and I couldn't see Lenore as a coarse, greedy adulteress, even as a joke. Did you see the Twilight Zone show about the watch that could stop all motion except for that of the owner? In the end, he dropped the watch and broke it while motion was stopped and he could never get things started again (I missed that program, but did you see the book by John MacDonald, The Girl, The Gold Watch and Everything? There is a similar item in this story.))

Missiles From the Mailbox (Cont'd)

I had heard rumors before of a filming of The Martian Chronicles, but your article is about the most complete I've seen so far. I hope they don't use Peck in it. I never have thought much of his acting ability. I'm afraid I don't find myself overjoyed at the prospect of five more so-called Poe movies from A-I. I always go to see them and I always seem to hear Poe spinning rapidly in his grave. The only Poe movie I consider really good is the one done of The Black Cat in still shots of paintings.

Good luck on the new zine. Best Regards, Ned Brooks
((If you read UO #3 carefully, you would have seen how wrong you are about there being five new Poe movies coming out. According to the information, there are going to be ten of them. I like them too.))

* * * * *
The last minute (Cont'd from page 6.)

Besides the people whose letters appeared above, I have also heard from the following, who will therefore receive this issue of Interim: Alma Hill, Richard Schultz, Seth Johnson, Harvey Forman, J. W. Bogart, Ida Ipe, Peter Singleton, Frank Wilmczyk, Fred Patten, Poul Anderson, "Doc" Smith, Bob Greenberg, K. Martin Carlson, and Mike Irwin (who wishes me to assure everyone that I am no relation of his).

Ever since Discon, I have been trying to find someone who knows something about a magazine called God Comics. This little item made it's appearance in the N3F room, but nobody seems to know who prints it. Any information available will be welcome.

I had planned some artwork for this issue, having contacted a couple of people who indicated their willingness to contribute, but due to my having a bit of trouble with my mimeo, I have had to cancel it for now. For the same reason, this issue is 2 pages shorter than planned.

The cover for this issue, if it gets here in time (I had it sent to a company which makes electric stencils), was furnished by the N3F Manuscript Bureau. I do not know the artist's name, but will try to find out, and mention him next time. At this time I am not lacking in cover material, but I would like to receive some contributions in the form of interior illustrations.

I just read The Tree of Time, which was serialized in F&SF for Dec & Jan. I think that as a story, it started out in an interesting manner, but something seemed to go wrong, a failing I notice in a lot of stories lately. Could it be that I am actually beginning to dislike SF?

In line with the Army policy of having Troop Education classes, our unit was treated today to a film produced by the National Film Board of Canada. The subject of the film was Prejudice, and the title was A Day in the Night Johnathan Mole. I mention this, not only because of the excellent quality of the film, when compared with the movies produced by the US govt, but also because the manner in which it was done makes it an excellent example of a fantasy movie, much better even than many in the commercial theatres. While on the subject of movies, I have noticed that some theatres are currently showing Vincent Price in The Haunted Palace, and also Three Stooges in Orbit. I don't remember seeing these before, but they are only playing some of the 3rd-run movie houses, not the 2nd or 1st run ones at all. I wonder why?

I have a fascinating tape that I recorded about a month ago, and if I can get permission, I will reprint the material in a future issue.

Remember, get your shopping done early.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Wobbes Settings

by E. E. Evers

11 Oct 63

SF has grown up. Not that growing up is necessarily a point in its favor; a visit to any court or jail, any skid row or Salvation Army shelter will show you that maturity isn't synonymous with virtue or success. But SF does show signs of maturity.

It's more virile but less innocent, more subtle but less direct, more skillful but less exuberant, less silly but more self-conscious. These things might not be an improvement (maybe your opinion depends on your own maturity), but it is a change, and a change that seems to resemble maturity.

Modern fans are always bemoaning the sense of wonder. I don't think it's actually vanished like a lot of fans say; I think it just grew up to match the rest of the field. It's just that we don't seem to recognize it any more.

The old Burroughs view of a story, through the eyes of a teller of fairy tales and thus of a child, is relegated to juvenile stories. If you want it, you can look there for it, and I for one won't see anything wrong in it.

But look at E E Smith and see the start of the change in sense of wonder. The sheer scope of his settings and plots generates an emotion of wonder, the greater the scope the stronger the emotion. In his earlier stories the characters go around saying Gosh-wow look at the universe. In later Smith, the reader says the same thing.

So the emotion of wonder is no longer subjective within the characters, but more or less objective within the story framework. Modern authors evoke wonder with detailed accounts of millions of years of change or galaxy-wide civilizations or unique concepts.

For example, see anything by Cordwainer Smith, Jack Vance, or Robert F. Young. So what do you think, has wonder been replaced by scope?

18 Oct 63

I just read De Camp's The Bronze God of Rhodes, a fannish thing to do, no doubt. So now I'll be even more fannish and attack it.

I don't recommend the book to fans because it has no sense of wonder or scope: too much scholarly research too near the surface of the narrative. Not that the book is dull, because De Camp is a good storyteller no matter the subject, and there's enough action in the plot to carry the reader along. But he crams all the facts and historical references he can find, taking out all the dramatic punch and slowing the action down till the book isn't the first-rate adventure story the material deserves.

I don't even recommend it as historical fiction because too much of it reads like bad Mary Renault. Not that I think he tried to imitate or even achieve the same ends, but Bronze God still reads like it was patterned after The King Must Die. The subject and general treatment, while actually quite different, appear very similar.

I credit him with a good job, but the Renault books came out first and he would have had to better them to get due credit for Bronze God. I have an idea that the Renault book paved the way so publishers were willing to accept this type of book. And when a trend is in progress, all the later followers are automatically classed as imitators of the writer who started the trend, whether they are or not.

Notebook Jottings (Cont'd)

And Mary Rennault had by far the easiest job in the first place. She didn't have to worry about historical facts, since he time was pre-history. Her task was only as hard as that of the Stf writer in creating a completely new world. She only had to fist the vaguest of patterns to include the little we know about the time of Theseus.

De Camp, of course, had pretty complete historical records to tie him down, and he followed them pretty explicitly, as I suppose is customary in historical novels. I personally couldn't care less, and if he'd wanted to forget the facts and include anachronisms up to and including tanks and machine guns I wouldn't have cared, but then I'm only a poor little Stf fan, not a historical novel buff.

And Mary Rennault had a hero to work with, real capital H type, while Chares couldn't fit into that mold at all. History gives us a good enough account of his deeds so he can't be a real hero, while not enough was known to detract from Theseus any more heroic qualities than necessary to make him plausible.

Chares and his statue are interesting enough, but there's no great sense of scope in Bronze God to equal the succession of peoples and religions in the Rennault books. So I would recommend the latter more highly to both fans and general readers.

So I wish De Camp had pjt his energies into a sword and sorcery novel and left the Mary Rennault type historical novel to Mary Rennault. And the Hell of it is, he'll probably make more money out of a second-rate pseudo-imitation like Bronze God than he ever would out of Stf, even great Stf.

INTERIM #1

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