



BEABOHEMA



This is the 16th issue of BeABohema, the Sensawonda Fanzine. BAB has just been stepped up to a weekly schedule and is available for 50¢ or in exchange for stellar contributions of words or art, letters of comment, or in exchange for your fanzine. Any old and tired fans out there who feel the urge to part with your old fanzines... I would probably be a willing recipient. I could be made very happy very easily...

The only code really worth paying attention to is the TripleX. If you have that dread sign on the front of your envelope, your ears had better perk up and in some roundabout way get your hand a moving. The TripleX is the last warning before cutting off the flow of sacred BAB... forever. Said flow may be continued in any of the above described manners...

Hmmm... A number means your subscription is paid through that issue.

BeABohema is published at 212 Juniper St., Quakertown, Pa. 18951. By Frank Lunney.

This is the special Out of School issue of BAB. Back issues are available separately or as part of a subscription if you want 50¢ issues. Issues 3-9 are 60¢ each, 10, 11, 12 and 14 are 50¢ and the special Bob Shaw issue is \$1.

Today is June 10th.

Contents are arranged in alphabetical order.

Artwork is by James Shull--1,2,3,15,20,28; Mike Gilbert--5; Dany Frolich--6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13; Stephen Campbell--19; Joe Pearson--21; Alexis Gilliland--23; Frank Johnson--25; Grant Canfield--26,27,29; Jay Kinney--30,31.

Cover is by James Shull. Bacoover is by Glen Brock.

Next issue will be a special issue devoted to work by neofans. Tentatively planned are articles by: Ted White on organic farming; Greg Benford on writing pornography in your spare time; Greg Shaw on his visit to the Helene Curtis Foundation; Jay Kinney has a six-page excerpt from an upcoming underground comic; Arnie Katz sent some book reviews I've rejected, but hopefully he'll come through with something; Torry Carr has a reprint from the first issue of Darrell Schweitzer's PROCRUSTINATION. And my mother will be writing the editorial.



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CHERRY BLOSSOM CLINIC REVISITED Forewarned is forearmed, so to facilitate the reading of the remainder of the issue (for those of you who turn immediately to the editorial upon receiving a new issue of BAB) I may as well let you know that this issue has been very down. It's been a chore to work on this fanzine, even though I've been putting words on stencils only for about the past week and a half, starting a few days after I started summer vacation. I haven't really wanted to spend the time on BAB. But I have

This is probably reminiscent of an editorial I wrote in BAB along about #10. (I haven't even the urge to get up from my chair at the moment and find out which issue it was. It doesn't seem worth the trouble. Then my complaint was about the uselessness of the fighting BAB had been at the center of, and how I'd been tired of that.

I think this is a less persistent attack of the fuckit syndrome, though, because as I've perched myself on top of a ladder, at work, and pumped my arm back and forth, in a whole-hearted attempt to apply latex to a moldy wall, I've let my mind roam over the possible causes of the present attitude. And I find it's not much having to do with fandom: more the result of apprehension of second semester grades, even though I'm changing schools within the university, combined with a bleak outlook for the summer ahead.



So the attitude running through the layout and placement of words and pictures in this issue of BAB will hopefully be suspended by the time the next issue is rolling off the Rex. As usual, those grades turned out well enough, the As and Bs I wanted, and the Merely Passing in Math I was hoping for. And the job doesn't have to be as much of a drag as it has been for the past couple of weeks during which I've been working.

There is one fannish cause of these doldrums, though. The response to the last issue, which I thought the best issue I had ever published, met with a lack of response not totally unexpected though still disheartening. I'd realized the trouble other fannish fanzines had had in getting a rise from its readers. Arnie Katz has long bitched about receiving few letters on QUIPS when he was still publishing it. Yet Joyce Katz's POTLATCH seems to be thriving very nicely, loads of letters greeting each issue as soon as it's thrown into the mails.

The people who did as much as acknowledge receipt of #15 usually did it with a quick and negative nod. The majority of the people who responded didn't like the reprint of the Scientology piece by Laney. Most people didn't like/understand Arnie Katz's article about his musical duplicators. A few are still asking if rich brown's story in the BoSh issue was really fiction, ignoring the words "faan fiction" at the bottom of the title page of the tale.

But mostly the response hasn't encouraged me. I know someone Out There must at least appreciate some of the changes I've instituted. If only you'd let me know about it...

The other stuff I can take care of, but Lehigh University's computer isn't at all liberal in the ladling of its egoboo.

IT'S ALL THE SAME Just after publishing the last issue of BAB I made the decision to cut the third-longest running department of BAB, and one that has satisfied a great many people, even while others have totally ignored it.

This issue's installment of Turnip Country will be the last for the time being.

I liked the last issue quite a bit, as I've tried to put across in the section immediately preceding this. But I thought the review section was totally out of place with the surrounding material.

And even more important, I probably wouldn't have read the reviews I myself were it not that I wanted to keep the absolute worst of all reviews out of print in BAB.

I read every review in YANDRO, and while I once thought the ultra-short reviews to be the worst types of judgments possible to pass on a book, I've finally





come around to see Buck's way of thinking. Reviews aren't really worth more than a few lines of effort, and most people reenforce that fact when they skip over a long review to go on to more enjoyable and better written material.

Dreadful thing about book reviews is that they're the type of material all new fans are trying their hand at these days. It's the Science Fiction Review influence. More than likely, the neofan of today has come upon fandom as a result of Science Fiction Review, and most think reviews are all people want to read.

I wouldn't exactly be overjoyed if I never read a review again, but I doubt that I'd shake in frustration at not being able to print one. So from now on, I'm not going to have a review section in BAB, and I'll be able to spare myself the task of writing letters of rejection to new fans who've sent me their latest effort they believe to be the equal of a Pauls/Delap/Walker/Geis/you-name-him review in any fanzine in the past decade.

If Science Fiction Review were still being published now, I'd tell everyone to stick to Geis, but really, Buck Coulson is doing a superb job of disseminating news of current books. And all within a few pages, with no plodding, rhetorical ventures into the unknown. He'll simply tell you whether the book is any good or not.

Or maybe you could go to Locus. Maybe....

Turnip Country will be no more. Savor it while you're able.

WOND'RING ALOUD As may have been inferred earlier, this summer I'm going to be painting houses. It's really a shitty job, but as with most things, once I'm involved, I'm too lazy to get myself out of it. (One exception is that I'm transferring out of the Engineering and into the Arts School at Lehigh. College, as a training ground, seems to be more important than getting out of a certain job over the summer.) You've never known misery until you've started scraping a literally rotten house of blistering and cracking paint...and found yourself downwind of your left hand.

I have found a consolation for wearing glasses all these years: if those panes weren't in front of my eyes I'd undoubtedly be blind by now as a result of the Dutch Boy infesting my portholes. And were I to pick up the desire to compete for the title of Mr. America, my arms could be built up beautifully by whipping the burhs back and forth.

I did have to cut my hair, though. I didn't have to, but even my shortened hair gets in my way more than I'd like it to. And so eventually I also cut my beard into little pieces. Quite an unnerving experience, though I've done it before. Cutting one's hair and finding one's neck at the back of one's head is nothing to cutting of one's beard and finding someone's face behind it. I've grown accustomed to the new person brought out by the scissors and electric shaver by now, but it did take me about a week to stop myself from looking at the new person visible to the outside world every time I passed a mirror.

But it is working outside, in the fresh air and 95 degree weather rather than inside, in the fresh air and 70 degree weather. I'm closer to nature, and all that.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED Plans go awry, and editorials get reduced to three pages.

For this issue. Depending on reactions by the readers. So I'm initiating the BeABohema poll. The question, the only question, is, "Should Lunney write an editorial in the future, and if so, what was the outstanding novel of 1970." Results will be ignored, and things will be back to normal next issue.

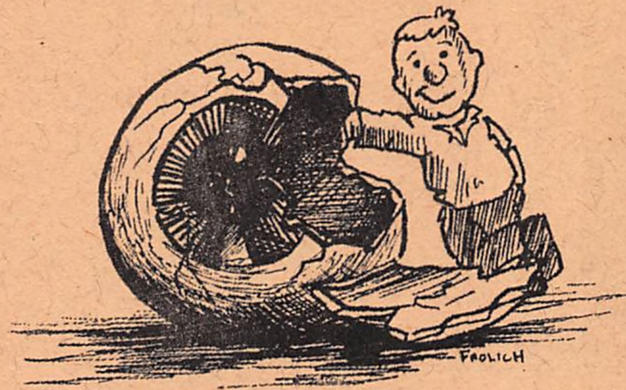






# THE CRACKED EYE

by  
gary  
n  
hubbard



"I gotta get out of here!"

One of the problems of living alone is being overwhelmed by your own ego. Living with yourself gets to be a drag. Your own hairs in the sink annoy you. Your unmade bed and the dirty dishes make you frown. Your reflection in the mirror disgusts you. That voice in your head that smugly makes excuses for you. That voice explains to you why you don't have any girls, or friends, or why it is that you never fulfilled any of your expectations. That voice that is always saying "I" this, or "I" that, and "I", "I", "I". That voice becomes a shrill whining that grates the nerves.

You start to read a book, but your mind isn't on Heinlein or Lafferty or Delany. You put on a record, then realize that the whole thing has played through without your having heard it. Anything you start to do is abandoned.



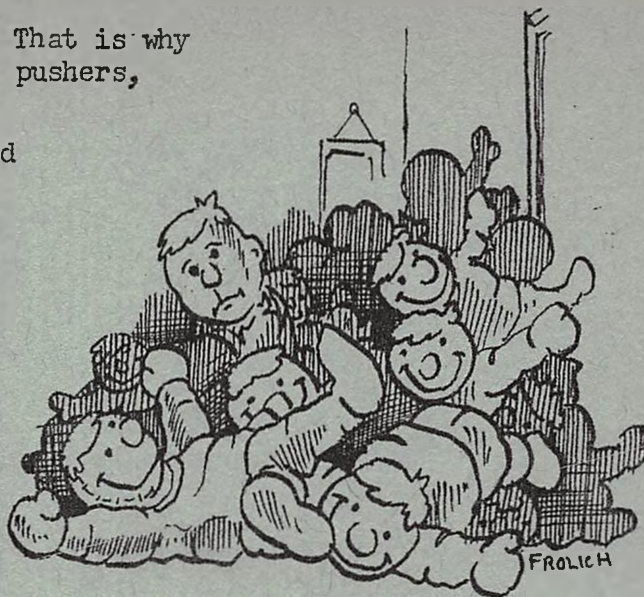
Living alone has bad side-effects. That is why computer-dating, lonely hearts clubs, bars, pushers, prostitutes and con-men thrive.

Fortunately, however, I have managed to avoid the above. When my life starts to press down on me, I go for a walk. I get away from the things that remind me of myself. I venture out into the hostile world. I risk potential attacks from muggers, killers, fiends, automobiles, birds, bats and women.

So he comes forth from the womb-protection of the Ivory Tower. At first he is oppressed by the glare of the sun. It causes the good eye to squint and the light makes splattery prisms throughout the interfaces of the cracked eye.

But after a few moments he notices the clouds. Great big white and gray things floating against bright blue. When I was a kid, on a partly cloudy day the gray parts seemed to be flatter than the white parts. That's what it would be like if the world were enclosed in a glass dome with the clouds on the outside. If a cloud occasionally pressed against the dome, the part where it touched would flatten (like your nose against a glass pane) and maybe appear darker than the rest of the cloud.

And I remember flying into Detroit once. A rainy evening. Thunderheads were thick over the city. I remember looking out the window at what seemed to be a deep canyon surrounded by huge mountains of white rock. And in a way, that's







exactly right. The average cloud weighs 150 tons.

There are people in this world, you know. This fact has always been, to him, a perplexing philosophical problem. In his world-view, there shouldn't be anyone but himself and various supernatural forces. However, out here are people: old ladies yammering, gangs of teenage girls shouting insults at any masculine object, men in t-shirts-and-fat-bellies leaning on rakes or with little brown beer bottles in their hands, little kids sucking ice cream.

Rotten little kids! I understand that if an average human being is skillfully butchered he will yield enough meat to feed 40 or 50 people. But the meat has to be cooked for quite a long time to kill the various viruses that inhabit the human flesh. In fact, it should be cooked until it's crusty like an overdone hamburger.

On the other hand, there is a new magazine out called KIDS. A magazine written by children for children. It's not half bad. Children do well when they are allowed to act as children.

However, I remember my own childhood as being a period of waiting to grow up. Children are, after all, mostly treated as simple-minded nuisances by most adults. And a kid's entire waking life is filled with seeing how far he can go before an adult invokes one of the inevitable taboos that were designed to keep children in their places.

The only thing that adults have over children is that they're been around longer and know the ropes. They've learned how to act with each other. They've accumulated a little more knowledge. They're bigger and stronger. And they know how to lie convincingly.

But that really doesn't make them that much better than children. I'd compare them to the old guys who would intimidate the new kid on the block.

Maybe kids shouldn't be encouraged to grow up. Maybe the fact that they're waiting to become adults should be ignored. Childhood could be an end in itself. Children could have their own housing (the ideal of the "family" is given a lot of lip service, but everybody knows that we hated it. A family is a situation where some grown-up calls all the shots). Kids could have their own stores, theaters, bars, TV and radio stations, magazines, newspapers. Stuff like that. They could be paid for going to school. Learning could become a child's career. The kid would advance, grow and expand as much as he could as a child before retiring into adulthood.

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The wind rustles some poplar trees in the distance. Poplar trees are good at that sort of thing. Their leaves are just like those hunks of glass that old people and weirdos hang on their front porch. Except that the sound they make is a "whoosh" instead of a "tinkle."

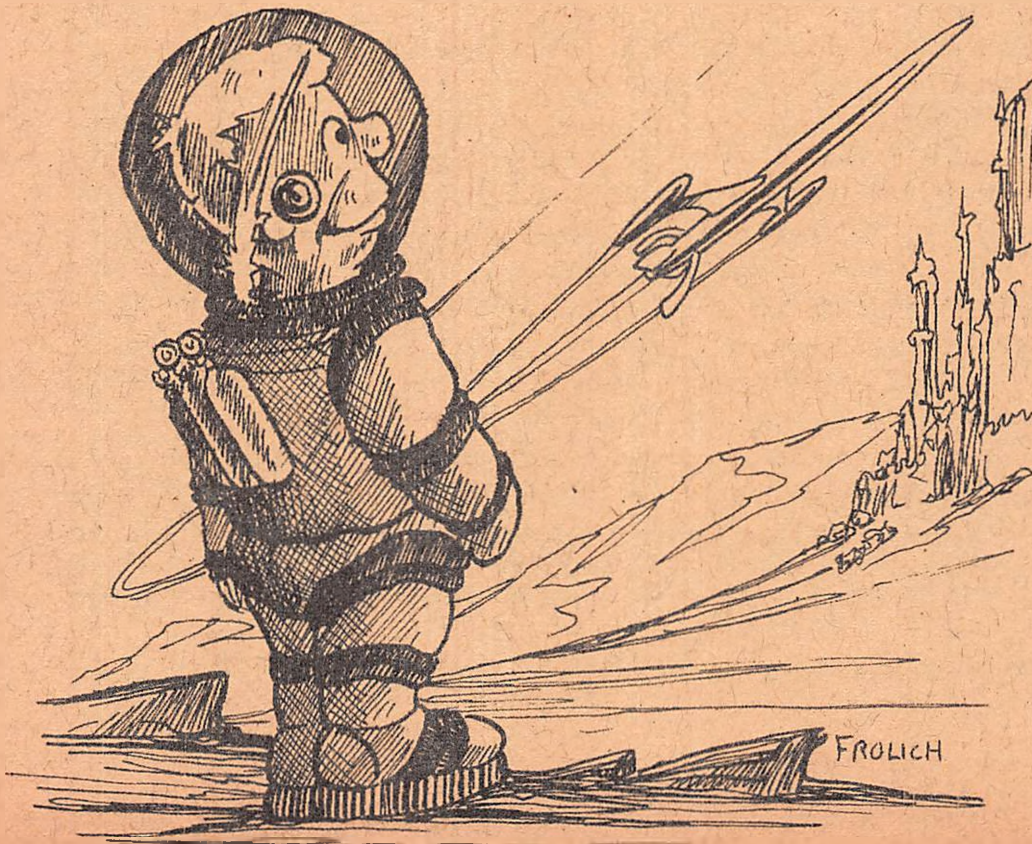
He looks up and sees a jet flying by, and pretends that it is a rocket on its way to Mars. He fell in love with Mars at an early age. And sometimes, in the winter, he pretends he's there. Because snow is a lot like sand.

Ah Mars. Fabled land of fantasy. For the Mars I know is certainly not the one that hangs 35,000,000 miles above our heads.

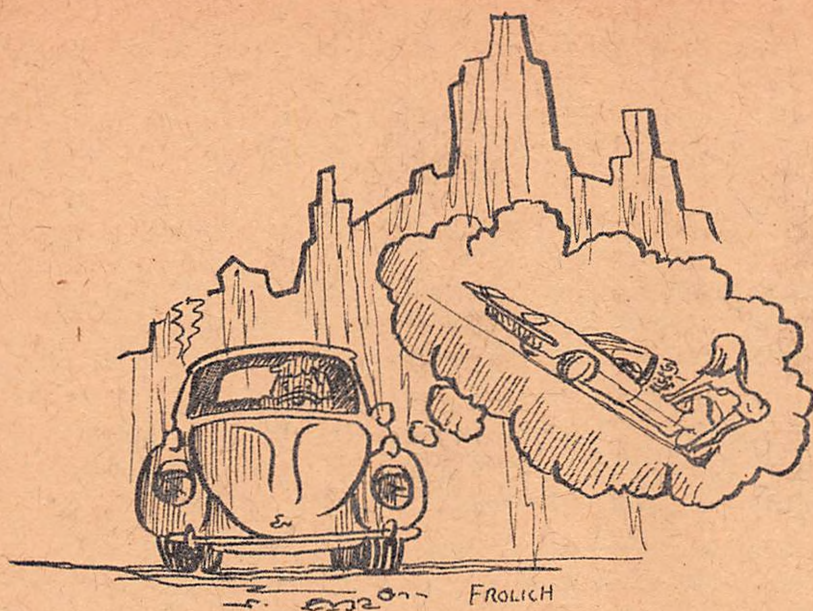
My Mars exists only in the imagination. A land of contrasts. Vast deserts alongside jungle forests. Gutted, crumbling cities (their owners gone with the dinosaurs) not far from the metropolitan splendor of the Earth colonists.

Mars, where Flash Gordon and Merciless Ming played their hide-and-seek game while Dr. Zharkov moved mysteriously about. Seemingly on Flash's side, but often aiding Ming. Unwittingly, of course, he would later say, but Zharkov was too pragmatic a scientist to be always on the Good Guys' side. Just most of the time.

Never could figure out Dale Arden, though. Nor, for that matter, any of her sisters. And, as a result. twenty-four years later, I am still single.







When you are single, you are a bachelor.

You are, presumably, wealthy and talented (bachelors never have anything as gross as jobs, you know. They are always self-employed or happened to have inherited something). You live in plushly decorated quarters filled with expensive items from PLAYBOY or ESQUIRE-oriented gift catalogues. Bachelors own one (or more) of several types of high-powered, foreign and dangerous cars. And they are usually surrounded by several types of high-powered, possibly foreign and dangerous women.

Of course, it's not REALLY like that at all, is it?

In most cases, if you're single, you're lucky if you can find an apartment at a reasonable price. And you usually end up paying your own utilities. Which means you go around turning lights off a lot and wear an overcoat indoors. You may or may not have much talent which may or may not do you much good.

In any event, in modern society, your position on the scale of things depends, in large part, on whether you have a family or not. Bachelors tend to start at the bottom and stay there. So you probably don't have too much money.

Which leaves out those Italian automobiles. If you own any kind of foreign car, it's probably a Volkswaken that's millions of years old and has a gear-shifting mechanism that changes its mind a lot.

As for those women...well...very few young ladies live much into their twenties without getting married. And in the natural course of things, young men marry at an early age, too. That's the way things are and, actually, that's the way things should be. Single people are not, by and large, socially useful people. They consume a lot less than it is necessary to keep the economic system going.

Families consume much, much more than single people. And produce new consumers.



Anyway, if you've managed to stay single this long, it's probably because you've had nothing to do with women. And they not much with you. This could be because you are physically repulsive, or have some deformity, are diseased, homosexual, you have some sort of mental disorder, you get hurt easily, or you have an odd and unrealistic attitude toward women.

I once found out how much it would cost to have myself matched with someone by computer. I decided I was better off staying the way I was. Happiness costs much more than it's really worth.

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They're putting in a sewer along this part of the road. These huge tubes of concrete are stacked along the chewed-up remains of people's lawns. They look like giant hair curlers. I expect to see a monstrous broad with stringy hair show up at any moment. But what I do see are: a steam shovel (steam? Maybe not) digging a deep ditch alongside the road, its big splayed teeth digging into Mother Earth. He takes her rough.







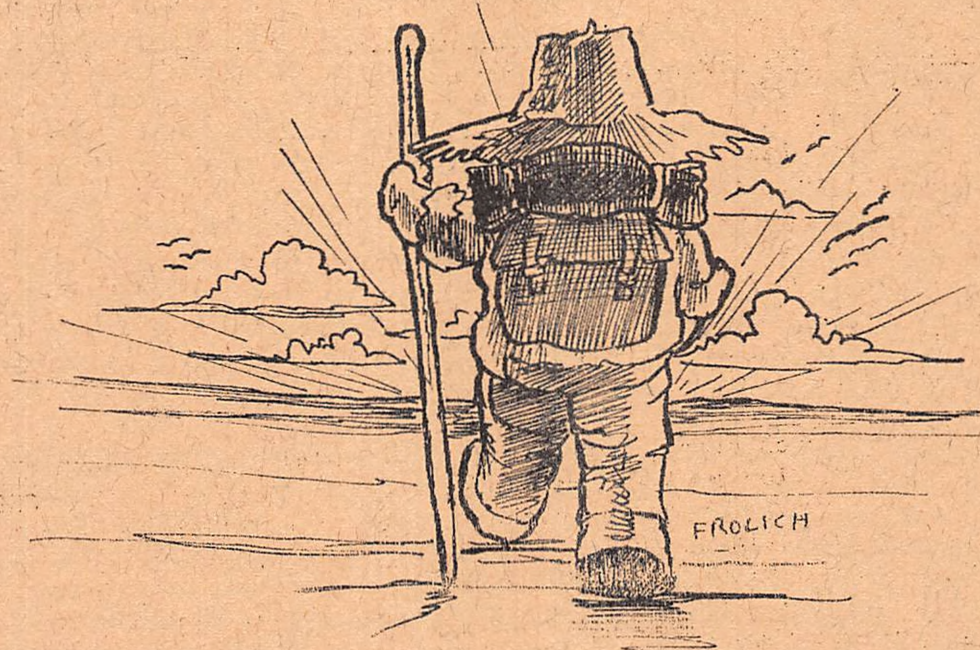
I see a big tub of burning pitch. I suppose they need the tar to coat the joints of the concrete sections once they've gotten them set into the ground. But that stuff sure does burn messy. Big, black mucky clouds of smoke billow and billow into the air. I think about the Indian Rope Trick where the rope is made to rise into the air and hang suspended without, it seems, any support. Then a little boy climbs the rope and disappears into thin air.

There are several men gathered around the burning pot, but none of them seem inclined to climb the smokey rope.

Out in the road there is another man. He holds a sign that looks like a giant lollipop. It has "slow" written on its face. He's directing traffic around the construction site. He stands there in his coveralls and shiny steel hat in a classical pose like a statue by Michelangelo.

I wonder if I should be getting back home? Why? There is not anything there for me. But, then, there is nothing for me out here on the street, either. It's perplexing to live in a world that doesn't have anything in it for you. But, of course, I have never offered it anything, either.





So he decides to walk around for a while longer.

--Gary H. Hubbard



# terry carr's ENTROPY REPRINTS

Everybody knows David R. Bunch for his Modern stories in Amazing, Fantastic and F&SF, and no doubt everybody has a pretty strong opinion about them. Science fiction bibliographers in the audience can probably even supply the information that Bunch's first sf story appeared in the December 1957 issue of If, which puts him considerably ahead of most of the new wave writers in terms of precedence in time.

But Bunch was writing extensively for fanzines during the earlier fifties, a fact of which most people are unaware. He appeared, naturally, in the fanzines that leaned toward more serious material, even those that published fan-fiction (as opposed to fannish fiction). But there were some good fanzines in that group fifteen or twenty years ago: Bunch appeared in TELLUS, a simple crudzine of the mid-50s, but most of his fanzine stories were in ORB, NEKROMANTIKON, FANTASTIC WORLDS and INSIDE, all good fanmags. (ORB was sort of the OUTWORLDS of its day: very impressive graphics that dominated the written matter; NEKROMANTIKON was a fiction fanzine that was so well done it placed first on at least one poll of the top fanzines of the year; etc.)

The following story, from INSIDE (which was surpassed only by SKY HOOK as the best serious sf fanzine we've ever had), isn't science fiction or fantasy. It's a "mainstream" story in much the same vein as those Bunch had appearing at the time in the literary reviews: New Mexico Quarterly, San Francisco Review, Nexus, Shenandoah, Southwest Review, etc. It's a very angry story about The American Dream, and about children who are so innocent they conform to nobody's ideas but their own; in a sense it's about a meeting of reality and fantasy. I think it's the best piece of fiction I ever read in a fanzine; and I think it's the most bitter indictment of our country's values that I've read in a story... all the more bitter because it's told in such a homey, matter-of-fact way. This story was written fifteen years ago, remember, before there were any dropouts except a few beatniks, and before anyone was leveling heavy charges at eo-Amerika except Philip Wylie. If you've ever wondered how in the world this country got into the various messes it's in today, maybe this very short story will give you some insight into what the road to Amerika looked like.

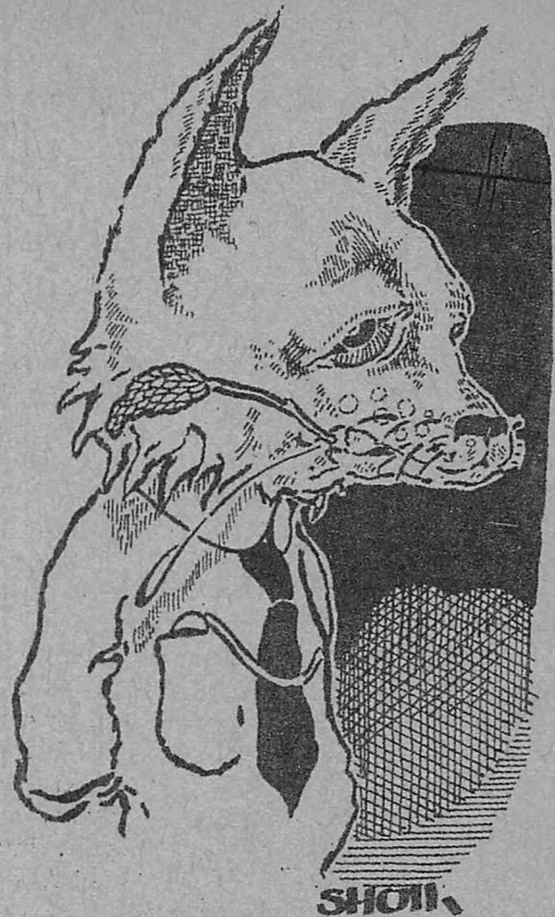
Following the Bunch story, for lagniappe there's an advertisement for the Society for the Abolition of Life, reprinted from Ken Potter's BRENNNSCHLUSS. It seems like an appropriate epilogue to the story, and something of a relief from the deep darkness of David Bunch. Ken Potter was a fannish fan in England in the late fifties, a close friend of Mal Ashworth, and one of the wittier fan-writers we had then. There was often a quality of madness in his writings that transcended wit, too -- I remember in particular some drunken letters he wrote to INNUENDO, and the rambling editorials he did in BRENNNSCHLUSS itself. Anyway, it seems to me he had the properly insane attitude toward the world of which Bunch's story was a part.

-- Terry Carr



# HOW THEY DID FOR THE DOGGIE AT THE CURBSIDE

BY DAVID  
R. BUNCH



They had this knife and this pup. The knife was a very sharp looking, shiny and new butcher's knife, with a blade about half as long as a kid. The pup was a \* 1-looking little black and brown doggie with more-than-the-average ears, which hinted at hound-dog, and a stocky body that I thought didn't quite go with his spindly legs. But he had been cute enough, I'm sure, and many a kid has loved just such a mutt.

The boy was about four, and his sister -- I took it to be his sister -- must have been at least a year younger, both of them beautiful little physical champions. They both had yellowish hair and blue eyes and very sturdy straight-legged bodies that just seemed to shout, "These kids have had the vitamins and the pabulum and the milk and the teething biscuits right from the very start. And look at them now!"

He was playfully thrusting at her with the long knife -- nothing malicious, I felt sure -- and she was jumping up and down and screaming. But her face registered ecstasy. "Let's cut him right in two," she screamed, and then she laughed, a little-girl high chortle. The boy glared at her, hating her for her ignorance, I supposed, and the pup lay as still as, and did not move any more than, a shiny-and-bright larger-than-dinner-plate-size hub cap that lay tilted at the curbside directly across the street from them, glinty in the noon sun where a Cadillac had thrown away part of its glamor. "We'll quarter him first, silly," said the boy. "Which means we'll cut all his legs off right up to his belly, and then we'll rip him up just about any old way. I saw all this in a butcher shop show on the TV. You wanna help?"

"Yes," she squeaked, probably somewhat dominated now by the boy's firm tone and abrupt question. "I wanna."



"Well, grab hold. Hold his legs. She'll be yelling pretty soon. Or the sitter may wake up. Mommie's too excited now, thinking about the car."

So the little girl grabbed hold and they fell to cutting the dog, the little boy ~~wielding~~ the knife, for the most part. And I had to admit that he was quite expert for his age. He carved at the hips and shoulders and hacked at the bones and worked at the joints, almost as well as I could have done it myself, until soon he had the dog in five parts. The legs all lay nearly equidistant from the body -- it just happened that they fell that way -- with the feet farthest out, until you could imagine that the parts of the dog would soon bridge the small distances between themselves and right soon they would all jump up and say Bow Wow! And yes, it made an arresting scene there, the dismembered black and brown doggie lying rearranged on the white street in his own dark-ruby blood, and the two sturdy, tanned children who had certainly had all the vitamins that anyone could wish for them, and the shiny butcher's knife stained red now, and the glinting Cadillac hub cap looking a little silly and unnecessary off its wheel, and the fine green lawns in front of the new red houses all around this development area. And all this seemed somehow usual and almost all-right-American under the warm noon sun in outer suburbia at this neat place.

"Here," the boy said; "you cut his tail in two, if you wanna. You didn't get to cut much." So the girl took the knife and hacked, a little awkwardly I must say, at the dog's long dark brown tail, her face as screwed up at the effort of it all as a young demon's might have been. But since the knife was very sharp and new, very soon she had the tail in two parts. Then the two kids stood and looked at their little friend, a bit sadly, I hoped, but presently the boy started to hack again at the body, saying, "We haven't finished yet. In the butcher shop show on the TV they did lots more." So he hacked on there until he had the guts all scattered on the street and the heart out, and the lungs like big pink flowers over on the lawn. "See what's in 'em," he said. "Did you know that's what's in 'em?"

"Nah," the girl said; "I just thought maybe they's like my dollies. I ripped 'em up. But my dollies didn't have any juice inside of 'em like him."

"Heck no, silly," the boy said. "They weren't alive like him."

Presently, after a bit more hacking and slicing, the two tots fell happily to tossing bits of the dog across the street. "See who can hit the hub cap Mama lost," the boy said. So they threw at that, the little girl very awkward and never coming close and the little boy coming quite near with a piece or two and finally close enough with a leg that a streak of muddy red fell across the hub cap. "Almost give 'er a good hit," he said.

Just as he was throwing the last piece of the dog -- about a two-foot length of intestine it looked like to me -- an example of good grooming up the street, in high-heels and nylons, and a girdle I presume, jumped up and down and let out a scream and disengaged itself from a knot of suburbanites staring at a Cadillac that had just recently tossed a hub cap, jumped into the curb, wrenched a bumper, scratched a fender and possibly tilted its forward wheels out of alignment. The two tots' well-dressed, pretty mother, whom I judged to be about twenty-seven, came running down the street awkwardly in her high-heels, the calves of her legs making a nice little play, that I enjoyed watching, in her nylons, and she screamed, "Tommy, Susan Elaine, what on earth are you throwing?"

"The dog," they said quite simply. "Just throwing the old dog away. He's no good now."

Then this fashionably dressed young mother took one look at all the blood all



around, and even a streak of it on her shining Cadillac hub cap across the street! and she just collapsed where she was, a moaning heap of nylons and high-heels and perfume and good grooming and not much else right there on the sidewalk.

But it all turned out not so bad in the end, because the caretaker and some maid-type cleaning woman saw her and came out to carry her in to her cool clean ranch-type home with the big antenna on the rooftop and the breeze-way on the side. And the baby sitter woke up about that time and came charging out to demand that the kids come right in and get ready for the TV, now! As for the other people, they were still too busy staring greedily at the wreck of the Cadillac to help much, talking damage, thinking insurance and congratulating themselves that it wasn't any of their cats or dogs or cars. But finally they tore themselves loose too and came over to help some, and someone called up about the car and a man came to take it down to the shop, and really her husband wasn't so terribly angry when he came home from doing the western district in the business auto and found out. He hadn't liked that pup much anyway.

But yes, out of some deep-seated need to do the average thing they got the kids another dog next week, hid the butcher's knife better after that, lectured the baby sitter sternly and traded the damaged Cadillac in on an unblemished spick-and-span-new-model as soon as they got the chance. And things went right along month after month cozy as you please, and almost all-right-American, there in that neat place in the new development area in outer suburbia.

## SOCIETY FOR THE ABOLITION OF LIFE

The influence of the Society is spreading, and we feel justified in hoping that we will very shortly constitute a major political force.

No less an aim than world peace motivates the Society. It requires only a moment's thought to realize the great advantages which will be conferred on all nations when we have the upper hand.

If we may be forgiven for plain speaking, humanity is a scabby lot, really. Ask yourself frankly how many of your friends are wretched scoundrels. Is it not true that practically everyone you know would be better off dead? Why prolong the agony? Why not die today, while there is still time?

The president of the Society, Mr. M. Ashworth, and his few worthy assistants have gladly accepted the martyrdom of remaining alive so that everyone else can be efficiently exterminated. We cannot all have this noble position, but you can help in small but essential ways, such as keeping a couple of pounds of arsenic on the premises, and handing it round to your visitors.

Remember, when you have got rid of all your friends, you can have the final thrill of arranging your own demise!

-- Ken Potter, for the Society



# PAPER TIGER

## ARNIE KATZ

It had been going on for weeks, even months, before I realized it was happening. I was lying on the bed reading, while Joyce sat at the desk and typed POTLATCH stencils.

"I wonder why I'm eating paper?" Joyce called to me. I looked up from my copy of Hockey Illustrated and saw that she had the remains of a sheet of paper in her hand.

"I dunno." The fact that I was reading Hockey Illustrated should have given her the clue that I was in one of my mindless moods and not a good source of perceptive observation.

"Doctors say that if you chew paper, you haven't got all the vitamins and minerals and things you need in your diet. People chew paper to make up deficiencies," she said between mouthfuls of a particularly succulent bond.

"I wonder what your diet lacks, Joyce?" I asked, as my mind returned to the real world from its journey across the line with Bobby Orr.

"Paper, probably," she said, taking another bite.

From then on, I began watching her more carefully, endeavoring to stop her from eating paper. Once, when I let down my guard, she ate most of a copy of PLAYBOY belonging to a visitor, before he or I could stop her.

Generally, I contented myself with snatching the paper out of her hands before she could wolf it down, following with an admonitory lecture on the evils of eating paper. This didn't do a lot of good as far as stopping her peculiar eating habit, but it made me feel very righteous.

Eventually, though, there came the Showdown.

I looked up from my bowl of popcorn to see Joyce stuff a scrap of paper into her mouth. She chewed contentedly and then, with the automatic gesture born of such repetition, she ripped off another corner from the sheet she was holding and gobbled it down, too.

"Joyce, you're eating paper again!" I shouted at her.

"So?" she said with the nonchalance of a felon caught in the act of rifling the safe.

Paper isn't exactly the healthiest thing you could be eating." I pointed out that paper is made with all sorts of chemicals, and bleached white with other chemicals, that probably don't belong inside anyone's body.

She countered with the argument that this was Nature's Way of bringing her diet back into balance and that it was not for mere humans to interfere in the cosmic process. As we exchanged point and counter point, she ate her paper all the while, and soon a second sheet replaced the first.

"Wouldn't you like some nice...popcorn?" I offered. "It's good and cold



now, just the way you like it." Joyce prefers to have her popcorn age a day or two before eating it.

"I want paper!"

"How about some nice rainbow cookies?" Rainbow cookies are multi-colored rectangular solids iced with chocolate, with each different colored layer separated by a band of marmalade or some such allied substance. We love rainbow cookies.

"I want p-a-a-a-a-a-a-per," Joyce wailed.

"Don't eat paper, it's not good for you," I insisted. I was even ready to tell her she'd poke her eye out, if that would help.

"You don't love me," she pouted. This was, in fact, an untruth. "You got all those free books in trade for FOCAL POINT, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"Why can't I eat just one? I'll even take an Ace Gothic."

But I was resolute and wrung from her the promise that she would try to control her mounting craving for paper.

After all, I have a whole defenseless fanzine collection to protect.

--Arnie Katz

Good Luck, Terry!







Frankie here. Since this is the last time Turnip Country will appear in BAB (at least within the foreseeable future; there's no telling what will happen should BAB ever die and be revived and should I ever find myself wanting to print reviews) I thought there should be A Celebration to note its departure. For that reason, this installment will be graced by not one but two! logos, showing that however sad some people might be in not being able to read reviews, they can always look at the pictures. Also, I had both these pieces of artwork electrostenciled before I made the decision to end this section of BAB. --FL

Nine Princes in Amber by Roger Zelazny, Doubleday, \$4.50

Some of you may recall the title of this novel from a note in F&SF way back in the April 1967 issue (with "Dawn," a portion of Lord of Light). It was stated there that Zelazny had written 40,000 words of it, and regarded it as the first of a series.

Now, more than three years later, here it is. It is the story of one Prince of Amber who awakes in a hospital with amnesia, and his attempt to regain his memory. This first half is superbly done, about the best Zelazny has done in a while. He unfolds the necessary information very slowly and carefully, and the reader becomes more and more excited as these lovely vistas of fantasy open before him.



Then, about the middle of the book, the protagonist regains his memory through an intricate ritual. But the reader does not benefit: he gets only hints as to what the whole business is about. Then Zelazny throws his hero into a series of adventures which occupy the remainder of the book. They are interesting and exciting, but fail to live up to the promises made in the first half. The world of Amber is hardly realized at all, a bad flaw, and the workings of "magical" gadgets of the situation are not fully explained.

I would be willing to bet that Zelazny wrote the first half three years ago, while he was still working, and put it aside. Then, recently, needing to sell something, being a free-lance writer now, he picked it up and finished it. In his haste, he compressed the second half too much. The book should have been half again as long, or longer, with more attention paid to detail. If the second half had been as carefully crafted as the first, this would have been a great fantasy novel.

It looks as though this is only the first as a series, because the book ends without settling any issues. I hope Zelazny takes his time to write the sequel(s); I am willing to wait a couple years to see the job done well.

Despite all this, the book is worth reading. Zelazny is, as always, a brilliant writer, and the book is very good. My only regret is that it could have been much better. Read it. (And also look for his soon-to-be-published Jack of Shadows, which according to reports looks to be excellent.)

--Donald G. Keller

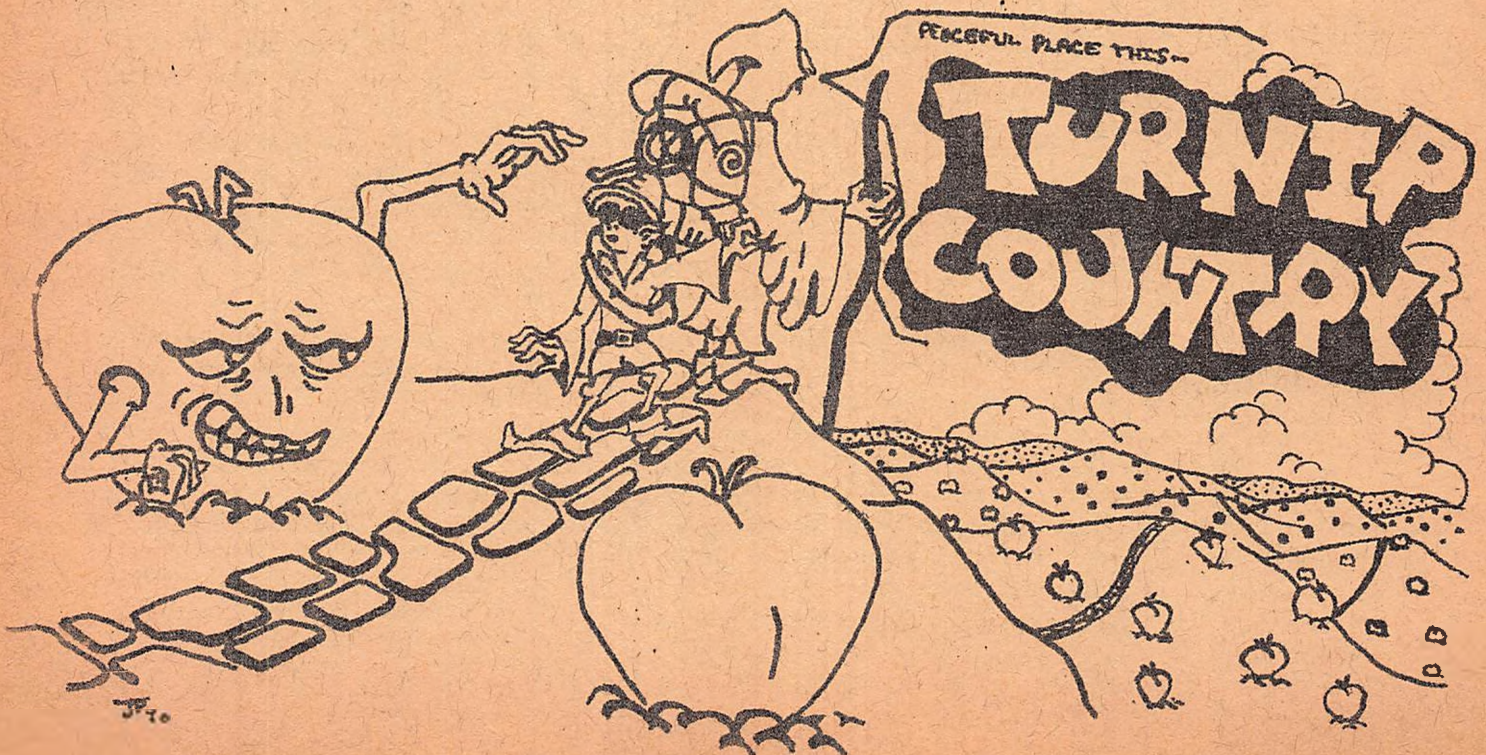
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Kothar and the Conjuror's Curse by Gardner F. Fox, Belmont 75¢

When I first attempted to read this thing I was convinced after struggling through the first few pages that Frank Lunney must hate me. Why else would he send me such utter crap as this? I immediately conjured up a mental picture of him laughing sadistically as the thought of one of his reviewers desperately





trying to finish this little epic. Then I realized that he must doubt my abilities as a reviewer and is sending me the easy stuff. Really, I don't have to condemn this book at all; I can let Mr. Fox do it. All I have to do is quote a few passages and my task is completed.

Actually, there was no need for me to even read it. The section quoted inside the front cover is enough to scare anyone off. But there are even wilder things within, so I'll present here a few of my favorites.

For example, how's this for a stirring opening, in which Mr. Fox not only demonstrates his wizardry with words but shows us his tremendous creative imagination as he presents his heroic fantasy world? Mr. Fox:

The rider on the grey horse was a mere midge on the vast sea of sand between Kor and Alkarion. The big warhorse walked slowly and with effort, kicking up puffs of sand with its hooves. Like its rider in the mailed shirt, it was worn with exhaustion and its mouth was swollen with thirst.

The man in the high-peaked saddle turned often to stare behind at the dancing sand demons that crept after him, their red eyes glistening with a hunger for human blood that chilled the spine. These were the yemli, the spirits of the desert which were dreaded even by the Mongrol ~~/sic/~~ horsemen who sometimes rode this way to raid in Phalkar to the north or Makkadonia to the east.

No other than those dreaded Mongrol horsemen and this rider out of the Haunted Lands dared use this corner of the sandy wastes. Bleached skeletons of men and animals along this trackless trail to far Alkarion told of other men at other times who had travelled these pathless sands, and what had befallen them.

If you are not sufficiently intrigued by that piece of sheer poetry in prose, there's more. Thrills, excitement, passion, as Fox develops his character to the depth of a piece of cardboard. Like all good Conan imitations, he is noble and heroic and loves to save fair maidens in distress. Look at this spectacular scene:

Men and women were piling underbrush and small logs about the girl's bare feet, carrying them from a nearby wagon. The girl was sobbing, her head down, her long brown hair drooped below her breasts. Her brown dress was half-rent from her body and bare skin glinted in the light, revealing swelling, rounded breasts and slim bare legs. (oops. --FL)

Suddenly her head lifted. Her terror and fright were less than the stark fury of her anger. Boldly she screamed, "Beasts of hell! Torturers! You know Zoquanor was a good man. He fed you when--"

A man stepped forward and smashed her mouth. Her head banged into the wooden pole. She strained at her bonds as her blazing eyes raked the faces of the men and women who paused to listen.

"He fed you when the caravans came not! He caused the water to flow in the fountain when it ran dry! He shared his wealth with you in times of need! Yet you--"

Again the hand clipped her cheek. The burly man who swung it turned to the men and women. "She lies! She is a familiar of the sorcerer! She deserves to die as we have killed Zoquanor. Burn her as we burned her master, and good times will come again to Sfanol!"

The other voices agreed.

"Burn the witch!"

"We must not suffer her to live!"

"Slay Zoquanor, slay Stefanya!"

Kothar scowled and lifted his blade free of its scabbard. His



quick wits saw these men plotted to burn the girl alive for reasons he knew not.

There, doesn't that make you just want to rush out and buy a copy of this little masterpiece? I'd never pay 75¢ for something like this, or 7¢ either. It's below the level of most fanzine fiction and even though short sections are good for laughs simply because the book is so bad, but in 156 pages it can be pretty boring. Like I said, below the level of fanzine fiction.

In closing I'd like to say that if Mr. Fox ever submitted a story of this quality to my fanzine, he'd be wasting his postage, because I'd reject it immediately.

--Darrell Schweitzer

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Kothar and the Wizard Slayer by Gardner F. Fox, Belmont, 75¢

First, let me say that I am a fantasy fan, and this colors my judgment on any book I read. And I would much rather read fantasy, even bad fantasy, to most science fiction (excepting the very best).

This Kothar book, the fifth and latest, is not really bad; Fox is a competent and often quite good writer (his two Llarn books are among the best Burroughs pastiches around), and he did pretty well with this one. Its best moments are very well done, and its worst merely irksome.

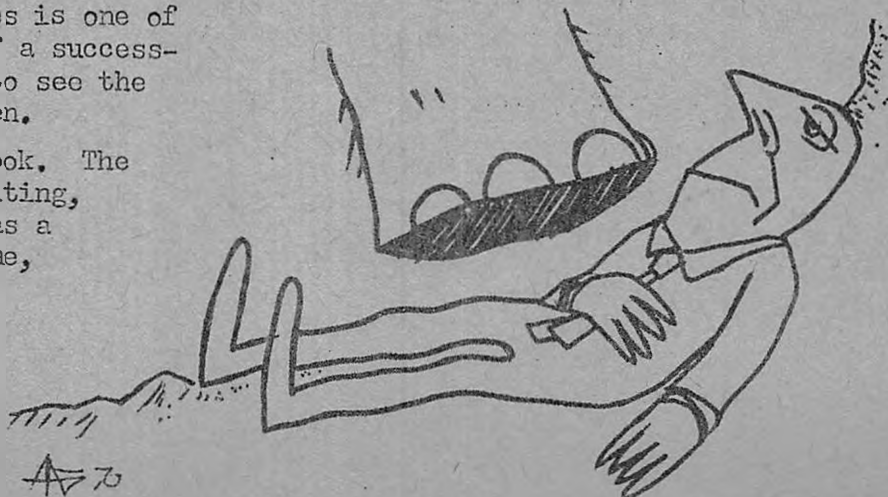
In this particular book Kothar's task is to somehow stop the mysterious power which is killing off all the wizards of the world. He is roped into this by his sorceress enemy Red Lori who gives him her body to persuade him. Eventually they of course destroy the killer, but not without a great deal of effort.

The best part of the book is the final scenes wherein Kothar and Red Lori are not only trying to cope with the killer but also with tenuous smoke-demons with sharp claws. This part is very well written, as are a number of other, especially the opening sequence in which several wizards are killed and Red Lori performs some sorcery.

Despite the good points the book has, its weaknesses are annoying. Worst is the one place where Kothar is in a very tight spot and is saved by a metaphorical rabbit out of a hat. This happens again at the end, but since it was set up near the beginning, it is difficult to object.

The other annoying thing is Fox's use of names. He takes existing names and twists them to suit his purpose. Like, the whole world is called Yarth (=Earth?), and one other place is called Makradonia. This always bugs me. The naming of names is one of the most important facets of a successful fantasy, and it is sad to see the job botched as it is so often.

But I enjoyed the book. The adventures are somewhat exciting, the fantasy elements (such as a map on human skin intrigue me, the characterization of Red Lori is well done, the ending is eminently satisfying. It is a good sword and sorcery novel.





This is the first Kothar book I have read, and I intend to read the others.

--Donald G. Keller

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This Perfect Day by Ira Levin, Random House, \$6.95

It's always interesting to see how a basically mainstream writer tackles (or fails to tackle) a sf theme. This Perfect Day seems to be in the "fails to tackle" category; it is yet another anti-Utopia novel to add to the ever-lengthening list of anti-Utopia novels, and doesn't say a thing that hasn't already been said countless times before.

The book takes place some time in the future when there has come about a "unification of nations," when God has been replaced by Uni (a giant computer), and all people have a sort of Chinese countenance and a golden-color skin.

Everyone is programmed for the good of "The Family," but few deviants from the norm are still produced. Chip, the hero of our story, is one of them.

In his childhood, Chip is influenced by his deviant grandfather, and hears stories about the "incurables"--deviants who have escaped and live on mountain-tops, in caves and other far-away places. Later on in life, Chip contacts a group of deviants who meet secretly in an old museum, but otherwise live outwardly "normal" lives. They are forced into opposing Uni because each has a "deviant" characteristic. Chip has one green eye; Snowflake has incredibly pale skin; Karl is a gifted artist who cannot make his artwork inoffensively bland, etc.

Chemistry and the computer control the Family, programming everyone to feel friendly toward one another. Each person receives weekly or monthly injections of a drug which tranquilizes and passifies them. Everyone also has a little bracelet to wear, with their "number" on it; whenever they want to do something, they have to touch their bracelet to a scanner plate and ask Uni's "permission." The most profane words are "fight" and "hate" and anyone who feels aggression of any sort is "sick, sick, sick!" and must be treated immediately. But Chip and Lilac finally escape to the Island of Liberty, where other incurables who have escaped live.

Here Chip is amazed to learn that "fight" and "hate" are acceptable words, and that whiskey has replaced the Uni drug treatments of white-grey liquid. Chip resolves to destroy Uni since he believes that any kind of self-determination is better than the non-life of "The Family." He organizes an expedition to blow up Uni's computer center, but just when his trusted accomplice puts a gun in his back and tells him to face Uni, he is officially informed that the Family is interested in enlisting just such non-conformists as himself as computer programmers for Uni. As a programmer he can live luxuriously, with rich food instead of cookies and little cakes, with silk clothes instead of rough coveralls...

This Perfect Day may be the same old pot of stew stirred just one more time, but the book still has a basic power that can't be ignored, and is both skillfully and suspensefully written. Toward the end, however, the book starts to go downhill, and the climax seems rather predictable. We've simply read the same thing too many times for it to make any kind of lasting impression. But for the greater part of the novel, Levin keeps you sitting on the edge of your seat--an artistic success it is not, but for sheer entertainment This Perfect Day is hard to beat.

--Cy Chauvin





WE WILL NEVER KNOW WHY LUNNEY CALLED HIS  
LETTERCOL

**JIM BLOATUS!**

BUT WE CAN BE SURE IT WAS GREEK TO HIM, TOO.

Harry Warner Jr. Just this once, I want to start with commendations for the art-  
423 Summit Ave. work. Moreover, whoever ran the electronic stenciling machine  
Hagerstown, Md. should get some locs all for his own self. It isn't often that  
21740 you find so consistently black, sharp lines all the way through  
a fanzine as in this BeABohema. If I had to pick a favorite  
out of all the artwork, it would be Kirk's for the book review section, but that  
said, I immediately feel the keenest possible pangs of guilt over saying it to the  
detriment of all the other wonderful illustrations.

The records that have been nominated for Hugos this year might encounter some vote-getting difficulty among the fans who remember the definition of what is eligible in the dramatic presentation category. A phonograph record isn't, a situation that I've suggested changing several times in the past without attracting any attention. It will be interesting to see how the records fare this time in the voting, because a few years back Jim Blish proposed nominations for the Columbia recording of Anlara as the first major science fiction opera (which it wasn't) and it didn't get nominated. If the records make a good showing this time, it will show that more fans nowadays dare to ignore a bad rule or that youth-oriented music is better liked by fans than serious music or, most probably, both. That entire set of Hugo category definitions should be rewritten by a special committee for other reasons: for instance, make those two Hugos go for the best writer and best artist whose work is published in fanzine, to end the perennial nitpicking over what constitutes a fan and who is a pro.

The Laney article was a fine choice for reprinting. It's curious how this reprint appeared at just about the time that a van Vogt letter was distributed through the last Science Fiction Review, in which the pro talks about Dianetics and its relationship to his fiction. Now, the obvious next step would be for Bergeron to have in the mails the collection of Laney letters that he was compiling. But I've been afraid to mention it to him, lest I inadvertently cause that enormous Willis issue of Warhoon to suffer yet another delay. Besides, I haven't dug out my own batch of letters from Laney as I promised Dick I'd do. Laney as a letter-writer was just as entertaining as he was when he wrote formal articles for publication. The style was basically the same, the letters bore little evidence of their first-draft nature, and Laney was even franker in correspondence than he was in fanzines. One other thing occurred to me while re-reading this article. It symbolizes the change in FAPA, the vast decline in quality in that organization, which has occurred so slowly and imperceptibly that some members still insist FAPA is as good as ever. It's impossible to imagine any FAPA member today lavishing an important article like this on a FAPA publication. Yet



nobody felt surprise when it appeared in FAPA because so many other articles and stories of equal brilliance were being published in that organization regularly. Of course, there was one slight difference two decades ago: fanzine fandom was smaller than it is today, and a greater proportion of the people interested in fanzines would see an article distributed mainly through FAPA than happens today.

I liked Arnie Latz's article, even though it seems to be quite similar or identical to something he wrote for Log. One of the things I miss badly about fanac today is running a mimeograph. I haven't done it for the past ten years,

because I just don't have the time to do all the extra nuisances that bob up when you use a mimeograph only once every three months, and because it's hard to find the large hunks of spare time that permit running off a fanzine most efficiently. Maybe some people can run off two pages in one-sixth the amount of time it takes to run off a dozen pages, but I can't, usually needing an hour or longer to get everything operating just right, and then producing copies of stencils at a great rate for as long as I go uninterrupted. My job and other obligations haven't granted me the desirable long consecutive hours for mimeography, and as a result I miss the operation that makes a fanzine peculiarly your own.



Can we really compete with Russia on the pollution problem as Dave Hulvey half-seriously suggests we should? I don't think we can do it as we competed on the race to the moon. The only way to put men on the moon, until some radically different and superior power source turns up, was to do as both nations did: pay for everything out of tax funds as federal programs, under federal

control from the word go. It's a different matter where pollution is concerned. The only way to attain this type of moon race victory in the United States would be complete government takeover of control over every form of pollution. Politically and morally and practically, I don't think it's going to be practicable. Even if a person feels that the government should have complete charge of how U.S. Steel and Consolidated Edison handle their waste materials, pollution control goes much further than that: it could mean stringent rationing of gasoline, no more bottling of soft and hard drinks (bring your own container and fill it at



the store from the vat and carry it home and fill smaller containers when you get home), no more home darkrooms (developer and hypo get poured down the sink when worn out and they add to pollution), quite possibly an end to the fruit industry (if the scientist wasn't lying when he wrote an article recently, he made a convincing case for the theory that the sprays which have been substituted for banned sprays for peaches and apples will kill off the bees that pollinate the trees), and so on and on. I don't think that the most dedicated ecologist would hold the faith if the federal government gets as determined to end pollution as it did to reach the moon.

I wonder if it would do any good for every fanzine publisher to demand a hearing with his congressman over the mauling fanzines get in the mail? TV Guide has the flimsiest cover stock imaginable, but every week my subscription copy arrives in the mail with cover intact, rarely even dogeared or creased. I don't understand why a fanzine with 24-pound or heavier paper on its covers can't go through the mail in equal safety.

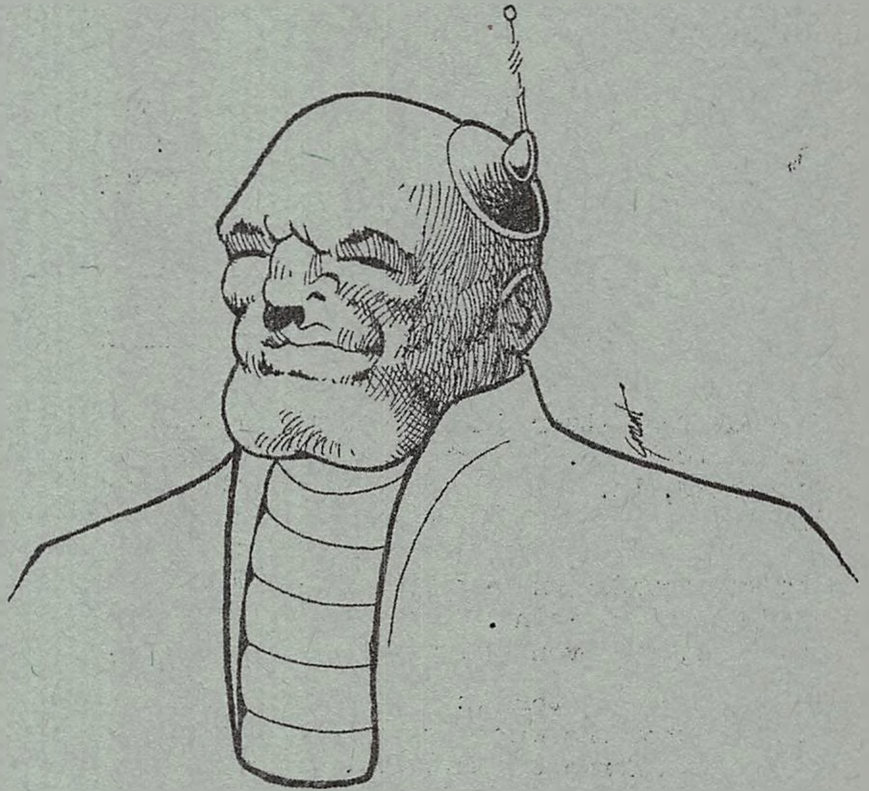
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Perry Chapdelaine    I  
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Franklin, Tenn.       ed  
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ers, as usual. Your "Bel-lowlings" was interesting, but I don't understand the andy offut comments. I have no knowledge of what he said, you said, he said you said, you said he said you said... Hard, therefor, to follow. If it's a good fight, I'd love to read it all.

I suspect, like most other fan things, it's just misunderstandings. Writers, like yourself and andy, are most sensitive people. Trouble is, writers are generally more sensitive toward themselves than toward the other guy. Why is this? Seems to me if you rev up the system to be sensitive to the fine shadings of motivations and words, you'd also screw it up to better understand your fellow man, even when he's wrong. Hell no. Everybody is a fugghead. How come we all believe in the right to private opinion and speculation, but not also the right to differ? Some sort of complex there. Gee whiz! I love a damn good argument. I usually consider it a weakness, however, when simple words cause real human to human relations to founder. Maybe that's why I have so few friends.

((There won't be any big fight. I just wanted to tell andy what to do and get him to fuck off, and I think the explanation just explained it to everyone else.))







"Dianuts and Dianetics" only moderately interesting. I wrote to you long ago that I'd provided Dr. Chris Evans with about 50% of the material he needed to tear Hubbard's Dianetics apart. I suppose Chris's Twentieth Century Myths (if that's still the title) is out in England by now. I'd like to get a copy. Everyone ought to read a copy.

Nonetheless, F. Towner Laney was damn objective for the age and religious society he was in. I couldn't have been that objective during that period. Looking at Laney's stuff now, I can draw pencil lines exactly about the falsehoods. I guess I should write a book on my experiences working directly for Hubbard. The Allied Scientists of the World is one of his brainstorms that I was temporarily in charge of, yet I'll bet damn few today know about it. Yea! I believe when I get done with Hot Buttered Soul!, my non-sf 200,000 word monster shaped like Brunner's Stand on Zanzibar, I might go searching for a publisher of those early years. Man, I got stories to tell that would fascinate hardcore and gullible--.

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Darrell Schweitzer  
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Laney doesn't impress me as being all that good a writer; he's competent but nothing really to get excited about. He has to depend on his subject matter to keep the reader interested. A really good writer can write about anything. For example, in the current (#5) issue of INTERPLANETARY CORN CHIPS, James Wright provides an absolutely anthralling essay on the rather unlikely subject of greight train riding. Fandom has seen lots of better writers than Laney, even recently, and even in BAB (like Gary Hubbard, f'rinstance).

Your editorial: I would just ignore Offut if I were you. He's just a minor author who wants to boost his status by making friends and building a reputation in fandom. After all, fandom controls the Hugos, and if Ellison can walk off with an armload of them by sheer personality, why can't andyoffut?

When I think of big time SF writers I don't think of offut. I have no real desire to read his works, tho I guoss it is saying something that I clearly remember the two stories of his I have read ("Population Implosion" and "Defendant Earth") but he's nothing to get excited about.

One question to David Hulvey: What's wrong with a song/poem/story/any kind of work being defeatist, nihilistic or anything else you don't like? It would seem to me that anything can function and have value as art regardless of what it says. It is essentially useless to reject anything on philosophical grounds, no matter what they are, because then criticism becomes even more subjective and futile than it is and a bad work of art is defined as an I Don't Agree With. (Of course here I differentiate between didactic art--i.e. propaganda--and the real thing. The former becomes obsolete and useless with amazing rapidity.)

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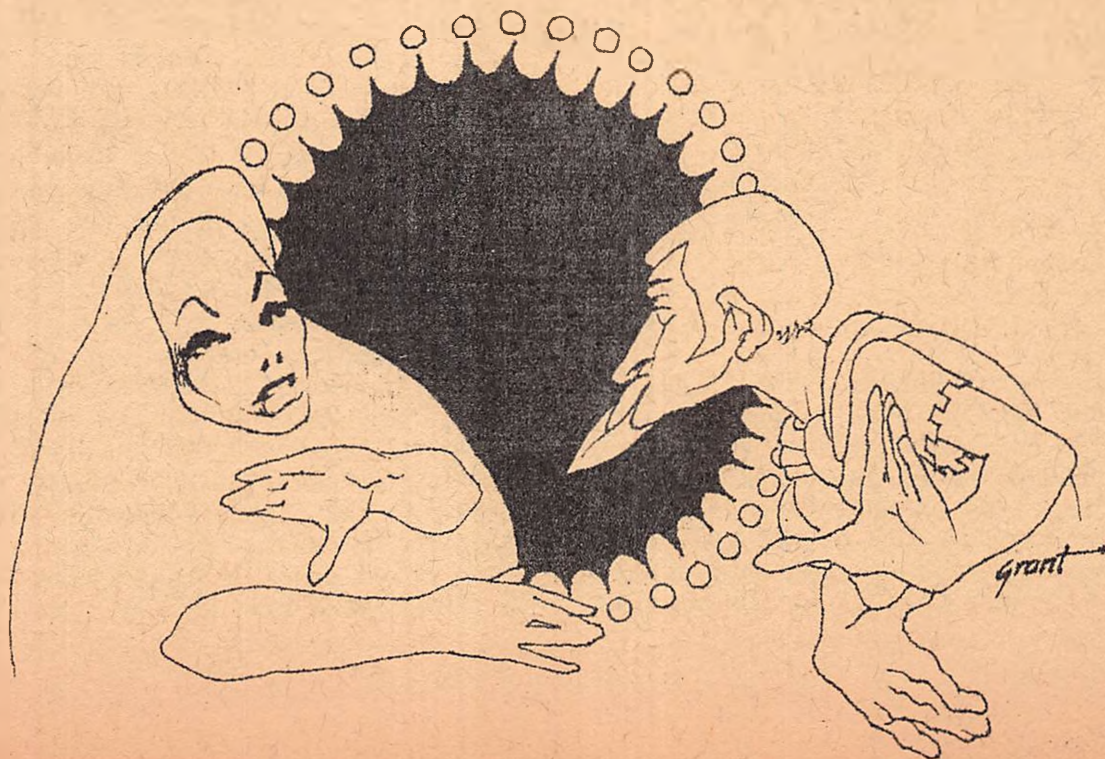


((A Science Fiction Foundation has been established in England, with people like George Hay and James Blish and Kenneth Bulmer and Arthur C. Clarke involved. From a press release sent by George: "The aims of the Foundation are first, to collect together in the /North East London Polytechnic/ various existing bibliographies and private libraries together with, wherever possible, original manuscripts and authors' personal papers, and to make this valuable source material available to writers, students and academics. Serious studies of science fiction, selected new texts and some audio-visual material will also be collected."))

George Hay           BAB 15 at hand. My only comment on contents relates to the 78 Downhills Way   Laney article. As the former Secretary of the British Dianetic London N17 6BD   Association, I am naturally interested! From my own experience England   in this field, I'd say the picture he gives is a very accurate one. My connection with dianetics Stateside was mainly through correspondence and scuttlebutt; the confusion arising around the whole subject was something to behold. Some of this confusion was due to growing pains, some of it malice aforethought. Of latter years the Hubbard Organisations have run in more shipshape fashion, and, over here anyway, they are growing fast. Dianetics itself has had a big comeback within the larger sphere of Scientology. Of course, as I think Laney said, the original book on the subject was out-of-date as soon as it was written; as far as techniques go, things are very different now. When I think of the hours and hours and hours we ground through in those old days, I sure envy anyone coming fresh into the subject now--they have it made for them.

Enough on that. Immediate news here is that the Foundation is to go ahead with a series of documentary films on British sf writers; this will be handled by Philip Strick, late of the British Film Institute, who is an Advisory Board member of the Foundation. We have finally managed to link up with James Gunn, of the University of Kansas, and I understand the films on U.S. writers he has made over there will be shown at the B.F.I. this coming October. Naturally, we hope to make this a joint project.

The Foundation is discussing publishing plans at the moment; we will be





issuing a Journal from September/October, and we hope to link this with other projects. Finally, we have agreed to have a Summer Conference at the N.E. London Polytechnic in 1973 on "The Peopling of Outer Space," and it's seen as the start of a 200-year project for getting Man off the earth and settled Out There. The Conference will deal with the long-term strategies and the actual technologies that will be involved.

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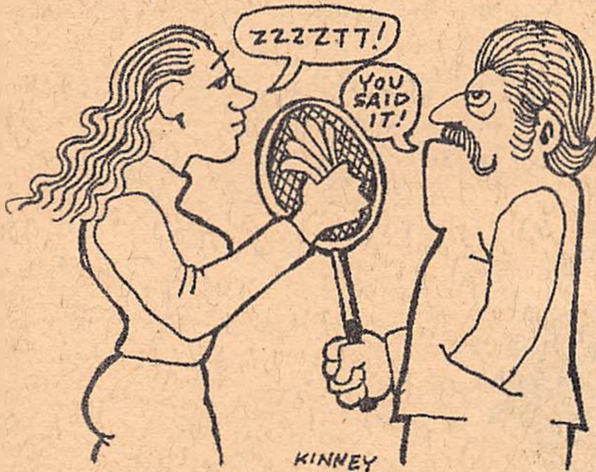
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Mike Glicksohn  
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I'm delighted to see "Entropy Reprints" starting up in BAB. As far as I'm concerned, Terry can't place this fine column in too many fanzines to suit me. The more places it appears, the more classic pieces I'll have a chance to appreciate and this suits my growing interest in the history of fandom just fine. The Laney piece is the most ambitious reprint to date and provides some fascinating insights into both the question of Dianetics and the personality of the immortal Laney. I found it a most revealing article and thank both of you for the chance to see it. Hey, Terry, how about printing part of "Ah! Sweet Idiocy"?

Hey there, Paj, stop and ponder a while. Doesn't the amount of "time, energy and love" I've devoted to my "fabulous fanzine" tell you something about my ideas as to the importance of various life-styles and issues "on this planet and energy plane"? It should. As I've said, someday I'll be delighted to talk to you but until that day I'll refrain from exposing myself (verbally, of course) in Frank's pages. If for no other reason than I just don't trust my mastery of the written word to put my ideas across. In conversation, I can instantly reword a clumsy phrase to eliminate a misunderstanding. Here in BAB, such a correction would take months. Too damn risky for me, I think.



Uh-uh, Jeff, I'm not denying anyone's right to be whatever they want to be. All I was saying was that to me, a critic is someone whose word I will either put faith in where the purchase of new books, the viewing of new movies, etc. is concerned, or someone whose word I shall not trust since my experience has told me that our viewpoints disagree. I may have great love for someone as an individual, but if I know that person thinks the Thongor books are the greatest achievement of English literature and he strongly recommends a certain new novel, I'm not likely to rush out and buy it. Far from

denying anyone his individuality, I'm glorifying it; but I'm separating the man from the critic, that's all. Glad you realize I was being partially facetious, but I do work that way. I weigh my evaluations of books against those of leading critics and select those critics whose tastes and critical standards seem to parallel mine. And on occasions I have bought books on the strong recommendation of someone whose word I have found to be reliable in the past. In general, I buy whatever comes along that strikes my fancy but there are certain writers and certain publishers I tend to ignore. It is in these areas that I'll listen to my favorite critics/reviewers in case my blind spot causes me to miss out on a minor masterpiece.





Gary Hubbard  
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Oh! Another BAB. Not much article-wise. But I'll get back to that. Now, the first thing that struck me when I pulled it out of the cover was the picture on the front. Carter's drawing was a departure from those vague black and white things that have dominated the front of BABs for a while. Not that that particularly gives me a thrill. In general, there were lots of good pictures in this issue (no naked broads, unfortunately, but that's all right). You have a lot of talented boys, Frank.

There seems to be a general theme running through fan art nowadays. Like that cover on BAB. Two warriors on funny-looking animals fighting each other. The sword bit seems to be more popular for fan artists to draw than, say, dogs or old ladies. Although, now that I've said that, someone will probably draw a picture of an old lady with a sword killing a dog.

But it seems like a few years ago pictures of rockets and extraterrestrial scenes dominated fanzine illustration. Obviously, there are trends in illustrating. If one had a sufficiently large collection of past fanzines so that he could trace the trends in art, it might be interesting.

And that brings me back to something else. Now, this issue of BAB has a long, boring article on Dianetics. But it's a reprint from another fanzine. Significant. A while back BAB did an article about a mythological fanzine collector looking for a copy of a Heinlein fanzine. I took it to be pure bullshit.

But do people collect old fanzine? Is it possible to get back issues of the Rhodomagnetic Digest, or Cry, or Lunatic, or Marion Zimmer's Astra?

One of the interesting things about fandom is that it doesn't take itself seriously. There are, of course, a lot of sercon elements in fandom, there are feuds and there are great idealistic movements. But, for the most part, we realize how trivial fandom is in the greater scope of things. So we go to it for fun rather than to find the True Way. Fandom is not a religion or a political movement.

Yet fandom has been able to absorb every kind of cultism there is. It took in socialism in the thirties, communism in the forties, dianetics in the early fifties, John Birch in the late fifties, the new left in the sixties, and the freak-hippie-dope-whatever. All of those other sub-cultures have died out or are in the process of doing so, yet fandom lives on. It even survives the periodic slumps in the science fiction business, like the one we're having now. Sf could probably die out altogether and fandom would live on.

Really, if there is such a thing as a counterculture, fandom is it.

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Just a word to David Wm Hulvey re:  
Jefferson Airplane/Starship. It is  
unfair to use a quote from an earlier  
album to pan a later album. The Jef-  
ferson Starship and Blows Against the  
Empire is not an Airplane production. It is a Kantner





production. It is completely distinct and separate from anything else. And don't say that people have set in on airplane sessions before and all that. The new Crosby album is virtually the complete Starship crew and it sounds nothing like the Starship flight. It is also important to note that the album is probably the least political album Kantner or Slick has been associated with since Surrealistic Pillow. ((???)

One more comment. This one is to Alpajpuri. He always seems to get things together into some sort of perspective I can identify with in some form or other. His comment on Benford's column is a typical example. The choice--outward into mass socio-political movements or inward to myself or my close friends--is one that most of us, I think, have to make. And most of us take the inward, non-involving path. This isn't a putdown. The result is that I have no close friends and when the movement dies as it surely must someday, then I will have nothing. I already regret my choice but I cannot bring myself to become uncommitted. So I'm stuck. And alone. But it isn't the first time so I suppose I'll make it.

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Alpajpuri does write very interesting locs. It's so highly personal that I'd feel like an intruder to comment, but his final paragraph draws me in with a few observations. Paj has reached a point in his philosophical system that I arrived at only after a great deal of struggle. I'm basically inward oriented in my thinking at the present time also, yet it was a long time before I came to the conclusion that I'd better do that or lose my mind. In fact, I think I was insane considering some of the things I did from '67 to late '70--the age of my greatest political involvement. I was rather fucked-up, as I'm sure you could tell from my earlier locs, in the leftist fringe. Orwell, I didn't want to mention that again, because I'm trying to pretend it was a different person who followed the Pied Piper to oblivion.

Now, though, Paj has a good point, especially about wanting to be/do something. It reminds me of this piece of junk mail I got a few days ago from the Democratic National Committee. It has a pledge card with the usual place to mark if you're a Demo diehard, but also there's a slot for Republicans only which reads: "I happen to be a Republican so don't send me a Membership Card. I am sending money anyway because I want to do SOMETHING!" Or the Independent's slot: "I am an Independent and do not want to be listed as a Member and do not want a card. I am sending money in hopes that you will do SOMETHING to get us out of the mess we are in." The operative word is something. But what? End the war reduce tax stop pollutionenddrugabuselaw-in-orderendthewardendthewardosomethingaboutunemployment, but do SOMETHING, SOMETHING.

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WAHF: I was planning on printing parts of a few other letters, especially ones from Charles Adamek and Rick Stooker (missed again, Rick) but I'm near the bottom of the 32nd page and I feel no great urge to extend this issue any further. I particularly liked one line from Charles's letter concerning the now-resting Science Fiction Review: "SFR does not require defenders--its circulation figures suggest something about the quality of the magazine." OK.

And I want to thank Larry Propp, Ed Connor and Mike Glicksohn for supplying me with the address of Jon and Joni Stopa.

Letters were also received from Piers Anthony, Vincent di Fate, Cynthia Goldstone, Terry Jeeves, Jim Shull, Alpajpuri, David C. Piper, George Senda, Glen Brock, Donald G. Keller and Darrell Schweitzer.

--FL



