

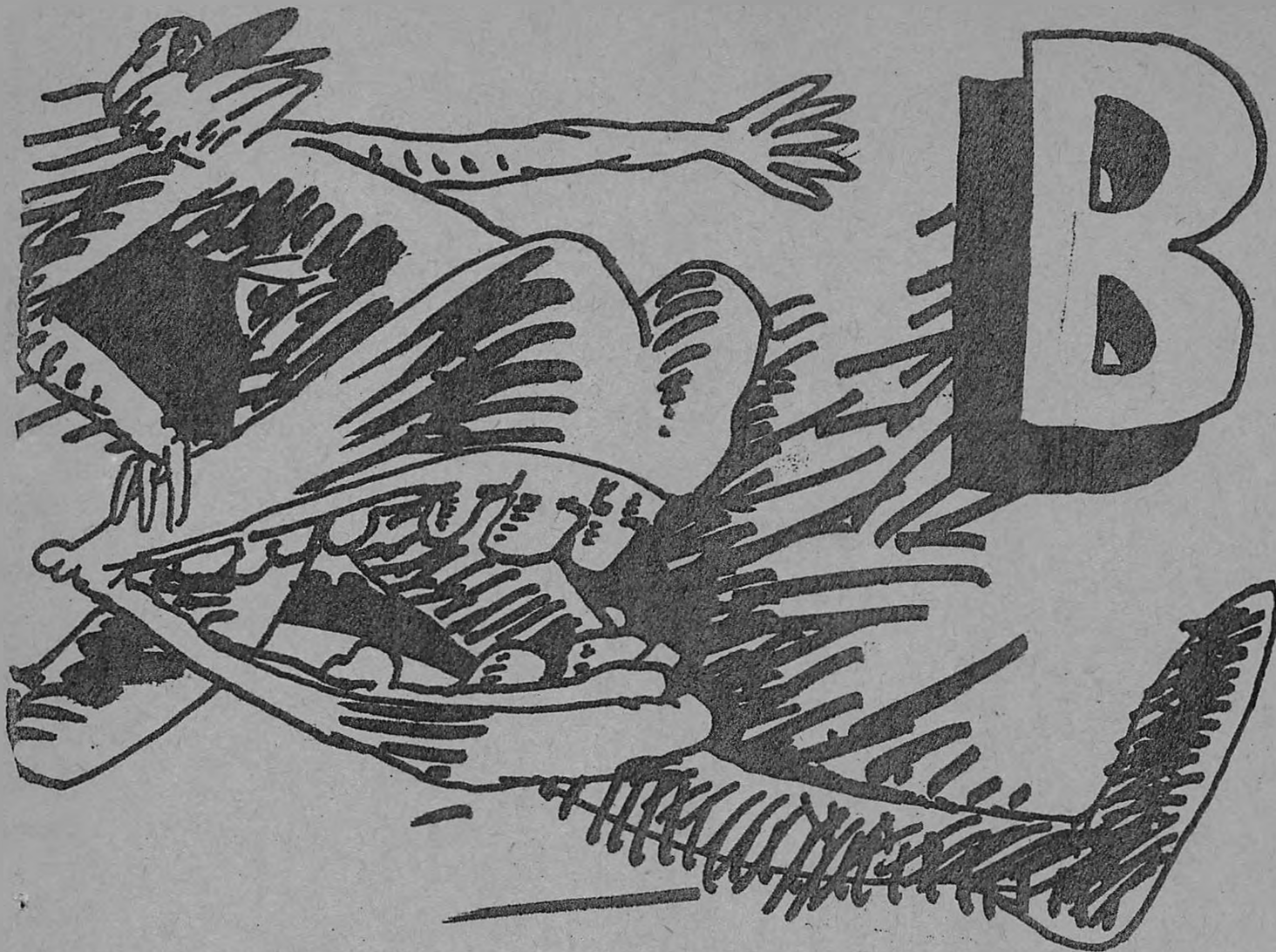
This is the 20th issue of BAB, the special We're Only In It For The Money issue. Everyone getting this issue will also be receiving BAB 19, so there's no need to go through the entire heel-and-toe.

Editor and Publisher: Frank Lunney

Date completed: Dec. 28, 1971

All artwork in this issue by Richard Flinchbaugh. Written material by Frank Lunney, Gary Hubbard, Jeff Schalles, and Jerry Lapidus. This was sort of an experiment. You understand.

--FL



faces of people as the elevator they were waiting for came filled with balloons proceeding to engulf them (nevermind that there were only 75 balloons).

So, we worked out all those details, and after about four floors when we lost the elevator we just sat down on a couple of couches and talked to these people and told them what was going on. (Not me, actually; already I'd had this terrible headache and was writing on the floor...)

But about five minutes later we heard a noise in the elevator shaft. There was a scream...the elevator came closer, the one we'd put the balloons in, and suddenly the doors flew open; it was about half-full, my sister and a girl she'd brought along to show the wonder of a science fiction convention, and this other girl was sliding on a balloon under her foot and my sister had about ten of them in her arms and she didn't know what to do with them, and everyone in front of the elevator started cracking up and rolling around and those bewildered people didn't know what was going on.

We played with the balloons for a while, and a couple of us decided to go downstairs and Dan Osterman picked up one of the balloons and stuck it between the cloding outside doors and the elevator started moving down...about 3 floors is as far as it got, because, starting as we were from the 21st floor, it didn't

ELLO

quite make it to the 17th floor; then it stopped, the doors didn't open, but using a bit of brute force, someone managed to reveal that our door opened onto a granite wall. The upper quarter of the door opened onto the closed outside doors of the floor just above, and we heard Jerry Kaufman and Charlie Brown asking if something was wrong, and people in the car started screaming "Run upstairs and pop the balloon, believing they'd fucked up the elevator by putting a balloon in the closing doors. I, of course, immediately got paranoid: Jesus, the 17th floor, that means we fall 17 floors (I thought I came to that through inductive reasoning at the time) and what if the cables won't hold. What if the balloons are eating away at the elevator cables and the car starts hurtling down the empty elevator shaft, nothing to stop us from hitting the bottom at a bone-crushing velocity. Do they have feathers down there to save everyone's life? I thought to myself.

And all the other drunks in the car with me were having fun while my will was crumbling.

Eventually the car got moving again: down exactly one floor, so it was halfway between the 15th and 16th; down another floor, so it was between etc. and on until we got to the 8th floor, where we were once again bale to join the real world.

After leaving the elevator a longhair whose name I never got and his girl tagged along, cause after the experience on the elevator we were all brothers, and besides, they didn't know anyone else at the convention. At another party he really got off on some kind of word-flow, downing a gallon of hard cider someone found (I tried to drink some hard cider; I figured "Shit, if it's cider it must be ok" because a couple hours earlier I'd tried some of Dan Osterman's whatever...vodka, I think, and almost threw up; I don't see how anyone can stand the taste of alcohol, because that cider really made me gag):

"Yeah, me and the guy who lives with me...we were driving along the street and a guy in a Road Runner pulled ahead of us...in a set-up '57 Chevy, baby it was loaded, the quarter mile in 10.3 seconds, that was some baby, and this Road Runner pulled in front of us and while they were passing they started giving us the finger and things...and they pulled in front of us and pulled to a stop, so I was driving, it wasn't my car but I was driving, and we were doing around 70 or 75 and I slammed it into first..." "First gear, fuck you..." "Yeah, into first...and I left rubber on the road for about 100 yards, and this guy was pissed off, because we tore out of there going 150 and went home but he didn't follow us into the house...but this other guy on the passenger side had a chain in his hand. He was a mean motherfuck..."

THINGS..

"Boy, it's a good thing he didn't follow you into the house," someone said.

"Hah, that would have been ok...we've got armaments."

And later on the girl that came with my sister either got ODD or way too drunk and collapsed in a gutter outside the hotel, to be found by the cops. And then when they couldn't find another of my sisters a search party was organized (against the advice of my mother) and the cops and concommittee searched the hotel and kept calling me up with bulletins like "OK, Frank, this is Scratch, what's the story?" and I didn't know who Scratch was and I didn't know what the story was, and it was weird.

As could have been expected, she was found sitting on the floor at some party and didn't know what was going on...

Overall, I think this turned out to be the most enjoyable Philcon I've ever been to, which sounds like a joke, but it was even nice overall as a convention, considering that I don't go to the biggies like Balticon and the ESFA Open Meeting.

LIGHT UP OR LEAVE ME ALONE I've been taking a more lackadaisical attitude towards BAB than usual in the past few weeks, I think. This issue of BAB, #20, has taken quite a bit of work, and it doesn't matter that there's really no layout beyond the first page or two of each section of the magazine. I regard portions of this issue as failures in the experiment Dick Flinchbaugh and I were carrying out, but it did (for me) at least give me an attitude towards experimentation I think is healthy in fanzine publication: I've got a respect for my final product now, no matter how it turns out, and the failure of certain portions can only mean that one of these days the closer-to-perfect fanzine will be published by myself, and maybe the experience of that failure will breed success.

It also meant I was lax with BAB #19, published mostly at the same time as but a little after the Flinchbaugh issue. Some of the lack of "innovation" and averageness can be laid to this time span's energies used up on the first-published issue and on the weekend job I've got, plus some due to projects in school, finals, and usual shit. But there's also the fact that I've been pissed off with electrostencils which have been disintegrating for me all through this issue, plus stencil cement that won't dry (a new brand I'm trying), lots of things.

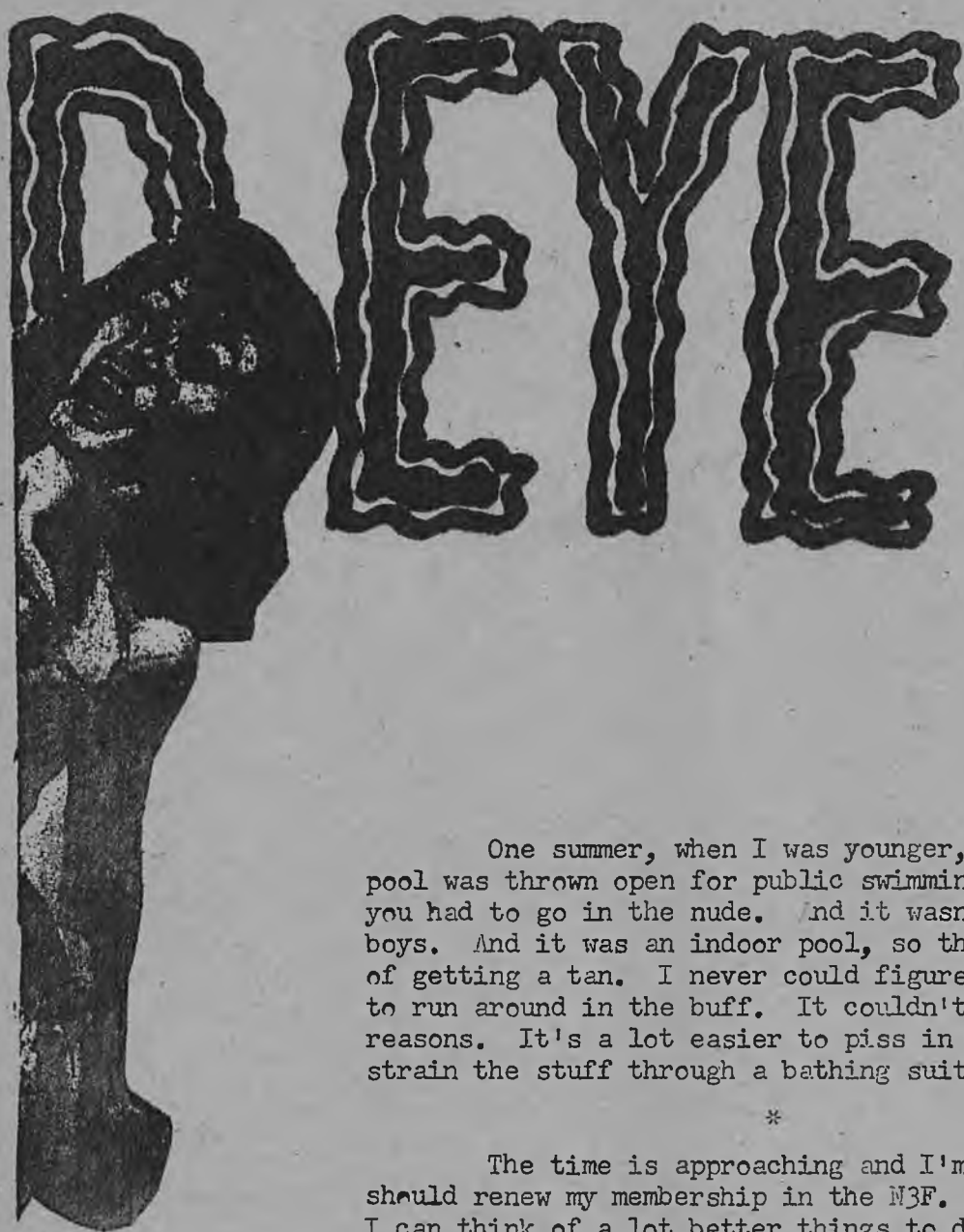
And I'm also lackadaisical, which is only to be expected before a rebirth.

--FL

Gary Hubbard's

THE CRACK





One summer, when I was younger, the high school swimming pool was thrown open for public swimming. The only thing was, you had to go in the nude. And it wasn't even mixed. Just boys. And it was an indoor pool, so there wasn't much chance of getting a tan. I never could figure out why everybody had to run around in the buff. It couldn't have been for sanitary reasons. It's a lot easier to piss in the pool naked than to strain the stuff through a bathing suit.

*

The time is approaching and I'm considering whether I should renew my membership in the N3F. No doubt I will not. I can think of a lot better things to do with two bucks than throwing it down that chuckhole. It no longer makes much sense. Nor does this fandom business. I was a fine thing during the Fifties. Society mainly consisted, then, of small in-groups and private clubs. There was much more of a barrier between the classes then, and America was well on the way to becoming a kind of caste society like they have in India. But a generation of television viewing and the Russian's launching of an orbital vehicle destroyed all that.

Notice that the civil rights movement (which had been going on since 1900) didn't get anywhere until the development of high quality videotape that could be quickly reproduced.

Getting on a bus to go watch the sun rise has got to be the dumbest thing. Watching that evil thing crawl over the horizon sounds about as appealing as drowning babies. Now watching the sun go down is something else again. Watching it rise is sort of anti-climatic, because after it has there's still the rest of the day that you have to live through. But that big, red, bloodshot eye slowly closes, turning the clouds into crimson tentacles that strangle the trees, now that's something. Big finale.

After which you can go read a book or play a record until it gets too dark.

*

I got myself a cat.

Do you remember how last October I found the decaying body of a cat lying in a gutter? Well, I was hoping to get at the skeleton of the thing as soon as it had sufficiently decayed. But it occurred to me that if I left it lying where it was, someone would come along and take it away. So I stuffed it into a paper bag and carried it off to a place where I thought it would be safe.

Well, the place where I put it was under a mound of sod next to a tree on this vacant lot, but then some clown came by and mowed everything flat and built one of those lawn and garden stores on the spot. I was out one cat.

A couple of weeks ago, I was sitting around, not doing anything, as I usually don't, when I got an urge to buy a cat. Sure, why not? I could raise the little beast, and when it died, I'd have a complete skeleton and a few fresh vital organs to play around with.

Not a bad idea.

Unfortunately, it was easier to think about than it was to do. There are over 25,000,000 cats in this country (not counting strays and very strange dogs), but there's never one around when you need one. There's always someone coming around offering to give away a free kitten, but you always say, "Thanks, but what would I do with a kitten?" Then, when you want one, it seems like all the cats are practicing birth control.

Okay, the nearest pet store is about a mile away. But that's not too bad. I can walk that all right.

So I did, but when I got there I found out that all they handled were tropical fish, gerbils and birds. A check through the yellow pages showed me that very few pet stores carried anything except tropical fish, gerbils or birds. Only a couple of them carried dogs and only one carried cats.

And that one was down at the Wonderland Shopping Store. That's about six miles away. And man would be a fool to walk six miles there and six miles back just to buy a cat. I mean, only a real dunce would do a thing like that.

Have you ever tried to walk six miles with a squirming, screaming kitten in your arms?

Anyway, I've got a cat now. Cute little thing. Black with white patches. She mostly eats, sleeps and pees on my couch. Originally I had intended to let her grow to a ripe old age before I started messing around with her innards, but she punched me in the eye yesterday and chewed up my toe. If she keeps up that sort of stuff I may open her up before Christmas.

*

The bank account has been getting pretty low, so I've been looking around for a job. A couple days ago, I went down to the McDonald's drive-in. The lady

there was friendly, but discouraging. I think they want mostly part-time kids and women. These types, presumably, work cheaper. Anyway, she took down my telephone number and showed me some movies. Christ, did she ever! Three hours worth of little zingers like, "How to Clean the Milkshake Machine," "How to Operate the Coke Dispenser," "How to Make a Hamburger," "How to Make a Big Mac" and stuff like that. Actually, the one on how to make a Big Mac was pretty interesting. Did you know that they had to invent two new machine to merchandise the Big Mac? Yes, a special oven to toast the over-sized bun and some kind of gadget to dispense the "special sauce." And the bun is divided into three sections called the crown; the club and the heel. Isn't that something? You or I, without special training, might mistakenly call those three sections the top, middle and bottom.

Can you imagine? I sat through THREE HOURS of junk like that.

One film was of particular interest. It was about this clod in a fatigue shirt who applies for a job at McDonald's, but they--in no uncertain words--make it plain that they don't want "his" kind. He just wanted to "do his own thing," but, at McDonald's, you can do your own thing only as long as it's their own thing. Oh well.

I don't think they're going to offer me a job, but if they do I'll probably take it (cause a buck's a buck).

*

Last April, a small band these things colonized a corner of the bookstand of the Bi-Lo Drug Store. Over the summer, they've exhibited a fantastic sort of fecundity. They've completely taken over the book rack and spilled over into a space behind the cosmetics counter.

Cosmetics and crotch novels.

You know, I don't really mind. They seem to be making good money for the store, but I have to hike a mike or so to this other book store to get any kind of worthwhile literature.

A big, fat glossy SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN full of beautiful pictures and information on man's latest achievements only costs one dollar, but one of these little pulpy paperbacks badly written with all sorts of gross typos and a crude cover picture is usually one twenty five.

And God, the things that go in in these books. They all portray sex as a foul, degrading sick activity. Not once do the characters screw because they enjoy doing it.

There is the girl who is beaten into performing fellatio on this fat old clod, the girl who makes her lover lap the scum up around her toilet bowl, the man who turns on with used Kotexes.

Not so hot.

One other thing.

How come the wives or presidents and congressmen and other politicians are so sexless? How come they are all so bland and lifeless looking? How come it is that they can all find dresses that end exactly at the knee (no more and no less)? Is there some special mail order catalog for politician's wives featuring fashion guaranteed not to provoke? How come I never saw a picture of a mayor's wife in a bikini? Hasn't a governor's lady ever been caught in an act of bipartisanship? Why are the daughters of presidents homely morons who seem to have grown up in a vacuum?

It seems strange that we allow these men to run our lives, yet, if their

tatoes in women are any indication, their own lives are barren and sterile.

*

I don't like black lights or posters. Incense gives me headaches. James Taylor doesn't impress me that much. I shave every day.

Head culture isn't Hubbard culture, I'm afraid. Mostly because I'm too old to be a hippie. I grew up in a world where hippies didn't exist, and was isolated from the growth of head culture while I was in the Army. My heroes were like James Dean who didn't care for the Establishment, but didn't have any argument against it either.

Thing is, head culture is really a religion. That's true of any society or company or group. You accept the beliefs of the people you associate with on faith. If you question those beliefs you turn people against you, so you either have to go back to Middle America or you have to be left to yourself. And if you're left to yourself, you have to face the facts that your personal motivations are petty. Things like greed and fear and lust.

That's what makes religions so popular. They give people thing that are much more noble to strive for than their personal ambitions. Love of God, patriotism or oneness with nature always sounds better than greed. To say that you make friends because you care for your fellow man sounds better than saying you're afraid to be alone. To say that you love her sounds better than to say that you just want to get your rocks off.

*

Yesterday I said to myself, "Well, I guess I'll see what's on the FM station," so I turned on WRIF. You see, I wanted to see if they were still playing "Fire and Rain." Well, I sat there and listened to a pants commercial, the Plum Shop wanted to sell me a pair of red, white and blue suspenders, this girl used "Tackle" to clear up her skin problem, The Festering Turd were giving a concert at Riddle, Dakota jail, and Lady Stella can solve your problems (yes! yours). Ten minutes worth of commercials! And then the news came on. Man, I wonder if they have time to play music any more.

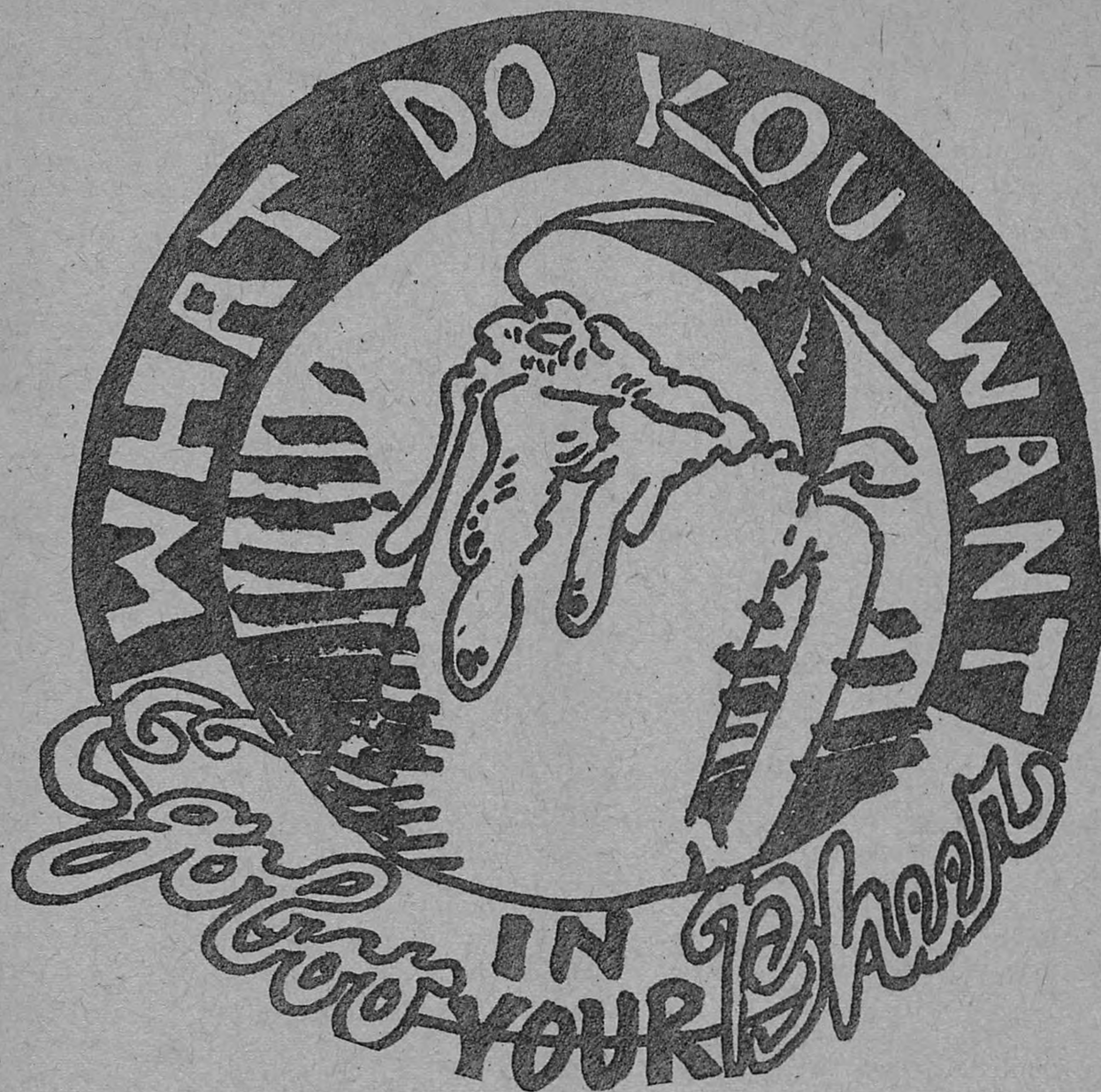
Now, when I was a kid, the only commercials you ever heard on FM were from Volkswagen and some people who planned trips to Vermont. There used to be this problem called "Saturday Night." It came on about nine o'clock, and they played folk music and some of the stuff that was going to become hard rock. And they played a lot of special things: Tom Lehrer, Peter Sellers, excerpts from a recital of "Lady Chatterly's Lover," a little Lenny Bruce, Jean Shepherd, and a thing by Louis Nye called "Barry's Boys." It went: "We're the bright young men who want to go back to 1910/We're Barry's Boys." Oh, and there was Stan Freberg, too. Ever heard the one about the advertising werewolf that turned into a man?

*

Sam (the cat) is sitting on my desk watching me type this. It's really fascinating how she can be so cute and innocent and vicious at the same time. Her favorite activity involves ripping and tearing at things with her claws and teeth, and usually the things she's ripping and tearing at are attached to me. She's found out about the tender skin between my thumbs and fingers and makes it a point to get her teeth into them if she can. She's scratched up my arm so much that I look like a junkie.

Shit on my bed, too.

--Gary Hubbard



"Fifteen men on a dead man's chest! Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of..."

"Hey! You guys are keeping the whole damn hotel awake! It's almost dawn for Christ's sake. Why don't you get off that poor guy's chest and go to bed? Besides, it's supposed to be sixteen isn't it?"

"Yeah, but we needed someone to sit on, didn't we?" said one of the bheer-filled neos. "Why don't you go mind your own karma..."

"You stuffy old BMFs never want to let us have any fun!" said another.

"Yeah!"

"Wow!"

"Right On!"

"Listen kids, there's a time and place for everything. Why, back when I was a little neo we would have thought shit like this was nothing!"

"Yeah? Tell us about it, Mr. BMT!"

"Well...er...uh..."

"Come on! Tell us a First Fandom Story!"

"well...Ok. Let's see now--I remember once back during the '44 Bheercon when we decided we wanted to see how many bheer cans it would take to fill up the elevator shaft. We were sitting up on the roof with cases all around us and guys started going downstairs and bringing other people's empties up and pretty soon we had a couple million cans. 'Fingers' Flanigan picked the lock on the elevator shaft door and we started dropping them in one at a time.

"There was only one elevator in the hotel, and it was stuck between the 5th and 6th floors with a party going on inside. The trick was to drop the cans so that they'd fall down the space between the elevator and the wall and make it all the way to the bottom. We couldn't see much down there in the dark, but we could hear the party and the cans made a beautiful noise as they went down the shaft. Some of us were pretty blasted and it seemed like an awful lots of cans were landing on the roof of the car. A couple even managed to get caught in the cables and shit that were hanging around in the elevator shaft.

"Our can supply was running low and we started sending more people downstairs to find more cans. They ended up by bringing all the parties (except the one in the elevator) up to the roof. It was really a nice summer night and we had maybe 150 people and about three million cases up there. Everybody was drinking as fast as they could so they could drop their cans down. The competition was getting pretty stiff, and all of a sudden the little escape hatch on the roof of the elevator car opened and somebody stuck his head out to see what the hell was going on. So we started aiming for the hatch and all of a sudden the game changed to How Many Cans Does It Take To Fill An Elevator Car. They were falling so fast that the people in the elevator couldn't even climb up to close the hatch, and everybody was drinking twice as fast as ever...

"A couple people were throwing half-full cans down, and the bheer was getting all over the machinery. Sparks were coming from somewhere and we were really enjoying the light show. I heard someone yelling something about someone drowning in the bheer, but it didn't strike me as anything important at the time...

"The hotel detective was still downstairs trying to find out who was putting the peanut butter in the keyholes, and he was getting pretty tired of having to wipe it out of his eye so often, but at least he was leaving us alone...

"The circuit breakers blew somewhere and we couldn't see any lights down in the shaft. People were still throwing cans down and the clanking was drowning out the screams from below. Someone had started a bonfire out of all the empty cases over near the ventilators and the smoke was getting sucked into the air-conditioning system. It didn't really matter to us because every fan in the hotel was either on the roof or in the elevator. But the mundanes downstairs started calling the desk to ask if the place was on fire.

"The only staff that was in the hotel was the 80 year old night-clerk and the peanut butter-covered detective. They ran into each other in the hall and decided that the trouble must be in the basement, so they ran over to the elevator. When they heard the bheer cans going clanking down inside, they realized there must be some funny business going on and they did the first thing that came to mind. They went down to the bar and started drinking...

"The bheer was almost all gone, and we'd already bought out every distributor and bar in town. A lot of people were just sitting around with glazed looks on their faces, while a few diehards were still trying to plunk a last can or two down through the open hatch. I was over by the fire singing old fireside songs, and the sun was coming up on us pretty fast. All of a sudden fire engines were screeching to a stop in the streets below. Thousands of people appeared from nowhere, and I saw a newsman scrambling up the last rungs of the fire escape..."

"We really pulled a fast one there...we told them we were holding an American Legion convention. A cop came up and looked around a bit and left shaking his head. Someone had the elevator lowered to the floor below and they dragged half a dozen half-drowned drunk fans off of it. They were swearing that if they ever caught those American Legion guys in a dark alley they'd ram bheer cans down their throats..."

"I ran into the hotel detective and the night clerk and I was walking down the stairs, and they were arguing whether or not they should call the fire department. The news man was running around repeating, "I never knew the American Legion read science fiction..." and asking everybody for their autograph. Mundanes with watery eyes were staring at us from partially opened doors as we finally crawled off to go to bed. All in all, it wasn't a bad con. About average, I'd say..."

"Ge, Mr. BNF...it must have really been something back in those days..."

"Yeah..."

"Far out..."

"Groovy..."

"Well guys, I think it's time for bed. OK? No more singing in the halls at 6 AM?"

"Oh no, sir. That isn't any fun any more!!"

"Yeah, we want to be just like you were!"

"Wow..."

"Fantastic..."

"Neat..."

"Yeah...hey guys! Let's go buy some bheer..."

--Jeff Schalles, 11/11/71



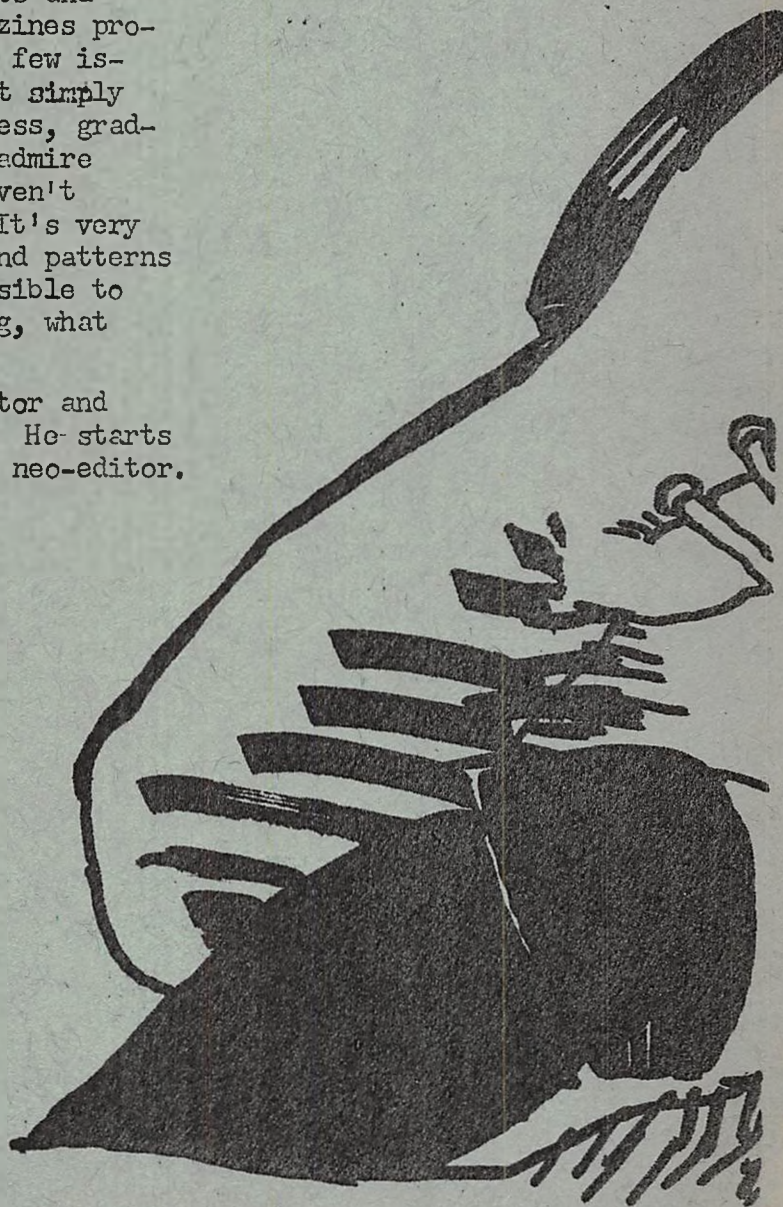
"If You're So Good, Why Ain't You Rich"
Energumen and Cranfalloon

Let's take off immediately from where we stopped last time. Then, you'll recall, we'd just finished a discussion of BeADohema itself, and looked at my Brand New Theory of active and passive faneditors. We'd examined the theory that in editing BAB, Frank moved from a passive to an active editor, and so produced a much more interesting magazine.

Okay. Now if you think about it, you'll realize that it's generally far more difficult to do an in-depth, analytical review like those I've been trying to do here of an active fan-editor than it is of a passive one. For with a truly active editor, you won't be able to do much in the way of predicting movements and changes. Since he influences his fanzines progress himself, you have to sit back a few issues and watch what happens--you can't simply discuss things in terms of slow progress, gradual improvement, etc. So although I admire Bill Bowers's Outworlds greatly, I haven't tried seriously to discuss it here. It's very difficult to follow specific trends and patterns in Outworlds. It's also almost impossible to figure out where the magazine is going, what Bill is planning to do next with it.

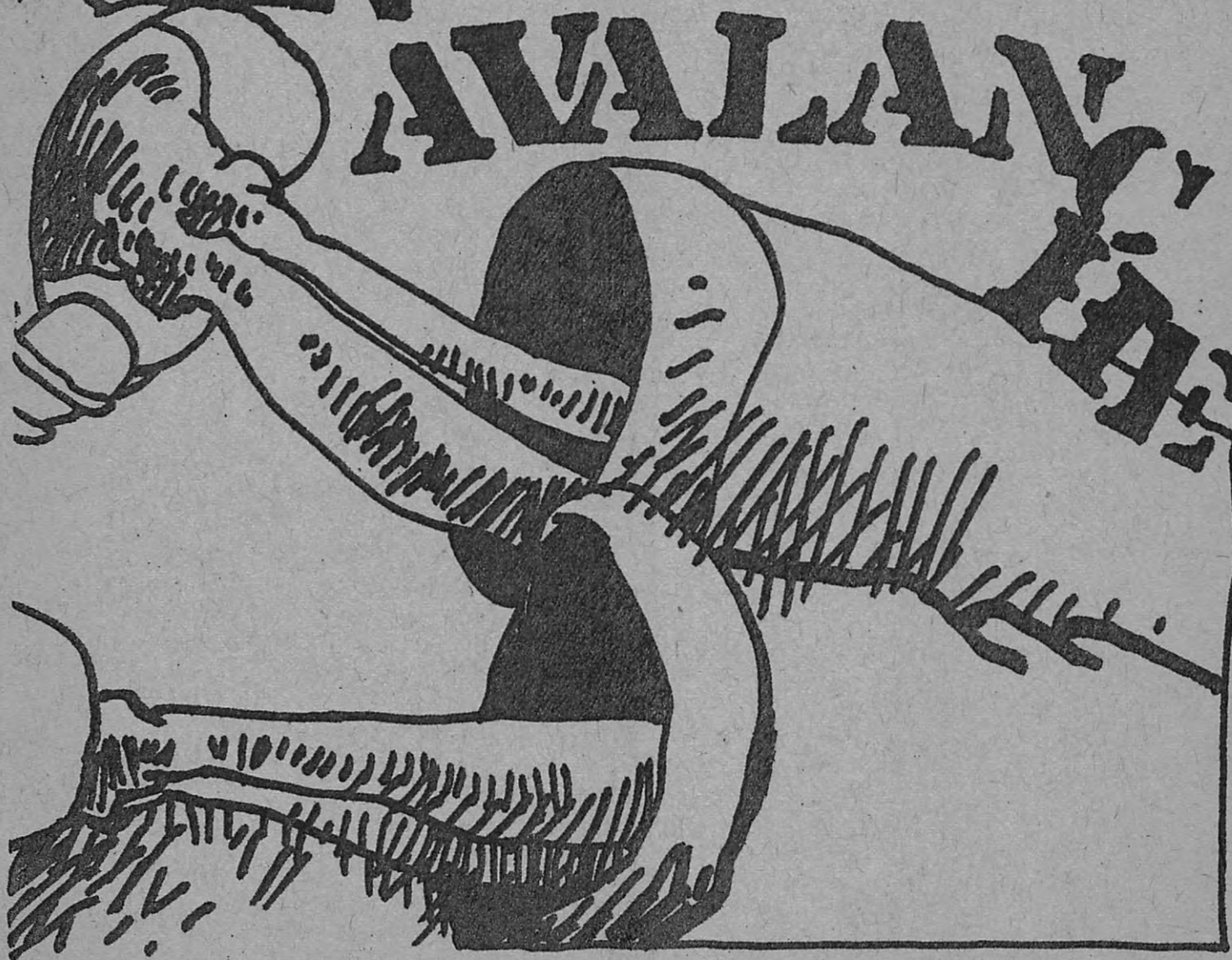
The career of the passive editor and his fanzine is much easier to follow. He starts out, perhaps as a neo, certainly as a neo-editor.

JEL



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He produces a couple of pretty bad issues, with most of the material written by his friends. If he has halfway decent reproduction, he'll begin to get some outside contributions. Good reproduction and regularity will bring in more and more outside material. Now he'll be able to reject the worst of it, to make a few decisions on what he wants to print, to start asking some of the better writers and artists for material. Soon, he'll be getting good contributions from all over, and most like will be producing a pretty good fanzine. Of course, the rate at which all this happens depends on a lot of factors. Being an established fan who people know and recognize can speed the process up considerably. Living in or near fan centers or simply other fans, particularly those with established reputations, gives you a ready source of good material, and accelerates the magazine's growth. Particularly good reproduction in early issues will bring in high quality material quicker, too--everybody wants to see their material appearing in the best looking manner possible. And even in the case of the passive editor, his own ability to pick and choose material will have a great influence. If he very early decides to print only the better material he gets, he may have shorter issues for a while, but he'll gain a better reputation much sooner.

Energumen, edited by Mike Glicksohn, and Granfalloon, edited by Linda Bushyager, seem to be the leading current exponents of this form of fanzine production. Both strike me on the whole as very passively edited fanzines--which doesn't mean to imply the editors don't spend a lot of time and money on them, but rather reflects the amount of editorial control of the magazine. Both fanzines are total genzines, printing a great variety of material by an equally great variety of people. Currently, both are publishing a great deal of good material, some of the best writing and artwork around. Both are quite competently reproduced, with better than average visuals and graphics. But if this is all true, why am I generally unsatisfied and a little bored with them?

A lot of this has to do with a general lack of personality and involvement in the current versions of the magazines, which all comes down to the active/passive editor thing I've been through before. In its early days, Gf did project an enjoyable personality that pervaded the magazine--the klutzy, slightly askew, female, Pittsburgh girls feeling. A bit of this was neoish, but I remember really enjoying a lot of it then, and rereading, I can still enjoy some of it now. This has long since vanished, as the magazine's contributions got better and better. Today I get very little if any overall feeling from the magazine; I rarely see the editor's hand anywhere, whether in choice of material or design of the magazine. Material is generally quite good, and the most recent issue features several outstanding written features. Reproduction is very good mimeo, with a little color work, but the magazine is very tired visually. Layout and graphics are competent but very pedestrian, very uninspired and uninteresting. Artwork is generally good, but seems to stand alone; there is little if anything to differentiate this fanzine from two dozen others, except the material here is better. One nice touch is the continued use of interlineation-type quotes and comments on the bottom of each page, but that just isn't enough. I find no excitement, no interest, no joy, no involvement in Granfalloon on the part of the editor--it may be there, for all I know, but it certainly isn't communicated to me through the fanzine. Granfalloon may be a fanzine that a lot of people like, but I doubt it could really be anyone's favorite fanzine.

Energumen strikes me in much the same general way, although a bit less so. Although it suffers from the same problems in my eyes, none are as serious; I see much more of Mike in his magazine than I see of Linda in hers, and largely for this reason: I seem to enjoy the magazine more. Mike had the advantages of being an established fan when he started his magazine (I'll get to more on this in a while), and of having more immediate contacts. But in only nine issues he has managed to establish a few basic "traditions" in the magazine, and some distinct overall feel-

ings. The magnificent offset covers, some of the best large-scale artwork around. That same awful--I think--yellow paper. Slightly distinctive layout. Regular supplements to each issue. A regular core of contributors, something Linda has largely lacked--Richard Delap's excellent book review column has been one of the few continuing features. But the differences here are not great enough to take it out of the same class as Gf. Even though I see more of the editor's hand here, I still don't see nearly as much as I would like to see. Aside from the covers, interior graphics are very competent but also very uninspired; layout is basically pleasing, but very standard and repetitive, artwork is almost always good but, with the very strong exception of the last issue, generally minor, filler work. The material ranges widely, covering many bases, but with no definite focus.

That, I would say, is the major flaw in the two--a lack of any focus. Both, right now, are enjoyable fanzines as far as they go--but they aren't going anywhere. I don't see any goals, any aims, any drives, beyond that of producing a good fanzine. I don't see why the editors are publishing this fanzine, rather than another one. To you, this may not be a great loss; if you can simply enjoy the material and not feel the lack, more power to you. I'm afraid I can't. Particularly in fanzines which have access to material this good, I ask for more.

I think I can show you this last bit by doing a little of the history game, and showing you by example. In a single sentence, what I'm going to try and show you is the lack of significant change, aside from improvement to a level; for me, this is indicative of the point I'm trying to make.

Energumen 1 is perhaps one of the best first issues I've ever seen, and it promises even better--if a man could produce this much in a first issue, you ask, what will he be like when he hits his stride? The issue features a magnificent offset Austin cover, good to very good interior mimeo, and good written material from Mike, Sue Wood, and Rosemary Ulliot, not to mention good-to-excellent artwork from the likes of Austin, Gaughan, Barr, Carter, etc. The success comes, besides from Mike's own hard work, from those early advantages I talked of before--Mike was an experienced fan when he started the magazine, and he had access and contact with other fans. The material from Austin and Ulliot--the first by Rosemary anywhere--came because these were fellow area fans. His fanzine review column (with Austin illos) and Sue's articles were done for another Canadian fanzine, Hugin and Munin, and then used here. Much of the rest is forgettable, but it didn't matter. Mike produced a first issue with a relatively large amount of good material, and produced it well. Contributions were bound to come.

Obviously, they did. The next few issues followed the pattern I outline at the beginning. Each had a few more outside contributions, each generally had a better ratio of good material to forgettable than the previous. Covers continued to be superb, and interior art generally improved with the rest of the material. Unsurprisingly, these early issues were generally fairly serious in tone--SFR was still very popular, and the fannish movement was just beginning to make noise. Also unsurprisingly, the non-serious material was generally the best in the issue. Although the emphasis was on serious material, really good extended work didn't appear until Sue's piece on Avram Davidson in 4; prior to that, it all tended to be very dry and/or extremely surface. At the same time, Rosemary's columns were something fresh and new, something fandom hadn't seen for a while, and the accompanying Austin illustrations added a whole second dimension and made them doubly enjoyable.

For me, Energumen 5 marks the point at which Mike began to fulfill early promise, and really produce a good, solid, interesting fanzine. The issue features some of the best serious, fannish and visual work to this point, and combined the

collection into a very strong package. Covers by Carter and Austin, with a supplemental folio of illustrated limericks by George Barr. Serious work included Sandra Miesel, one of the best critics active in this country, writing on Tau Zero (the fact that I strongly disagree with this article is entirely irrelevant); Ted Pauls, beginning an enjoyable column (which unfortunately seemed to lead to the Ted Pauls/Joyce Katz feud, but that's later); and Avram Davidson, writing a very entertaining and informative discussion of his writing. On the fannish side, there's an unfortunately short column from Rosemary, a short-but-interesting bit on fan centers by John Berry, and a particularly good fannish editorial from Sue, now Sue Glicksohn.

Energumens 6 & 7, issued together, are simply magnificent. As an experiment, Mike split the serious and fannish material down the middle, produced two full size issues together--and featured the best material from either camp he ever had, before or since. Almost everything in each issue is good, and several in each are outstanding. The "serious" issue includes Canfield covers; a superb Canfield tongue-in-cheek article about "art," illustrated with Canfield illos; a good short article on fanart from Mike Gilbert, illustrated by Gilbert illos; a fine piece on professional sf art from Jack Gaughan, and a nice little piece from andy offut. Only a mediocre article on the space program and a bit on math (which you may have liked, but I didn't) from Sue mar the issue. The "fannish" issue is very nearly as good: matched Gaughan covers; good fannish editorials from Mike and Sue; the first installment of an Arnie Katz fanhistory column, providing both fine Katz commentary and a beautiful Willis reprint; an original Bob Shaw article, fine; a Rotsler folio; and good regular columns from Rosemary and Pauls.

Frankly, I thought these issues marked a change in Mike's policies with the magazines. I'd noted all those factors I talked about in the beginning of this column, and thought I saw a pattern developing. Then Mike came out with these two issues, and I wasn't quite so sure; not only was the material in each excellent, but the very idea of producing this double issue was something new, particularly for Energumen. Things had been competent but so standard up to this point, I hoped this break with tradition might signal changes in Mike's head. But from the evidence in Energumen 8 and 9, it seems I was wrong. Both issues are enjoyable, featuring good material with some highpoints in each. 9, in fact, features generally better artwork than most previous issues--less filler art, more "major" work from both serious and comic artists. But I still see the same patterns. Right now, Energumen seems to me perhaps the best regular genzine, with a high standard of material in each issue. Particular recent highpoints have included Sandra Miesel's work, a couple of excellent pieces from Ted White, and Arnie's two columns. Actually, his have for me been a bit more interesting than Terry Carr's similar "Entropy Reprints" in most cases, although of course Terry has done considerably more. But Arnie has done an excellent job of presenting the background of the fanzines he reprints from, and has also presented superior reprint material.

But with all this, I'm just not satisfied.

The current Granfalloon is essentially the same; each issue has been a little bigger, on the average, than Merg, with the extra size primarily mediocre material, and consistency has been a bigger problem from issue to issue. With Gf, much of the difference lies in the beginnings.

Linda-then-Eyster and Suzanne Tompkins started the magazine in early 1968 in pretty much a fannish vacuum in Pittsburgh. They started the magazine a couple of comparative neos, with their major contributors having similar fannish backgrounds. Indeed, it wasn't until the sixth or seventh issue they really began getting contributions from the better-known writers and artists around; until then, the magazine was filled with work by a lot of the younger fans, contemporaries of Linda and Su-

zanne--people from their local group like Connie Reich (later Faddis), Nancy Lambert, Ginger Buchanan and Sunday Jordane, and outsiders--Jerry Kaufman, Richard Delap, a very early Jerry Lapidus, and others. Not all of this was bad, of course--Richard Delap's book review column was always excellent, and Ginger's "I've Had No Sleep and I Must Giggle" (a Baycon report/Ellison pastiche) was one of the best pieces of faan-fiction I've ever seen. But the general level was rather low.

Fortunately, a lot of it didn't matter. As I mentioned earlier, there was a good feeling about most of these earlier issues. A free-wheeling, let's-just-have-fun, lack of formality and seriousness that made each issue a real joy to read, no matter how mediocre individual sections might be. Linda played on this, calling Gf "The Klutzy Fanzine," and for quite a while this worked well. It enabled them to get a chuckle out of the correct spelling of "oi vey," to label a typical female alien "Isaac Asimov," to title a convention report "Don't Read This, Buck Coulson," etc. Sure, there was a bit of neeness in it--but even rereading it now, it brings a smike. It was much fun, and Ginger's piece in 5, although better than most of the rest, came from the same feeling.

So--coming up with five enjoyable issues in less than a year, Gf finally began to get outside contributions in bulk. Not necessarily good, but at least there. 6 is the amish, 63 pages long, pretty good to very good mimeo, and a whole host of contributors. There's noteworthy material from Bob Tucker (The First Annual Faan Poll), Piers Anthony, Richard Delap and Jack Gaughan, and forgettable material from a bunch of other people. A tighter editing would have brought it down to 40 really fine pages. This same situation continued--and more or less still seems to be happening. From the seventh issue, October 1969, until the current issue, August 1971, I don't see a hell of a lot of difference. Some issues have been particularly good--8 and 9 are better than average, 10 is pretty good, and 13 contains some of the best writing yet--while others are notably inferior. What's particularly annoying is that even the best issues have had some surprisingly poor material, and even the worst some really nice work.

Visually, the comparison with Energumen is particularly interesting. Though the normal layout is standard in both cases, the average layout is better in Energumen; on the other hand, there are more interesting and unusual layout experiments in Granfalloon. In general, the overall level of artwork in Energumen is a bit higher; but--again--there is usually a bit more really good artwork, and a bit more really bad artwork in Gf. Energumen has had magnificent covers, plus a few pretty good fillios, foldouts, and supplements; Gf has had generally good covers, and both magnificent--Kirk and Austin--and mediocre--Faddis, Miller, Fabian--folios. I'm not sure what the cause of all this is. I'm inclined to believe it's because Mike is a bit more conservative in editing, and people feel that through the magazine. Thus, although his layout sense is quite good, he never produces anything particularly interesting. Linda isn't quite as good at it as Mike, but she is willing to let go a bit more. I also think Mike is probably a bit more discriminating in material, and this shows in both written and visual material. There rarely is a piece of writing or artwork I would call really poor in Energumen; I could point to such material in almost every issue of Granfalloon.

In other words, then, I can summarize. Energumen seems a bit better edited, with more control of quality in all phases of production; on the other hand, Mike seems to be more reluctant to break with established forms, and a bit more conservative with the magazine. Linda, with Granfalloon, is not as discriminating, and thus prints poorer material; she also seems more willing to go out on a limb, and so the magazine is a bit more visually exciting. From what they each print, it would seem that Linda gets more "major" artwork than Mike--at least, she seems to print more.

It's interesting to speculate on the reasons why Energumen is generally considered to be so much better than Granfalloon. Issue for issue Nerg is probably almost always superior, but Gf for the past four or five issues has managed some really outstanding material each time. I might even go as far as to say that with the exception of the double issues, most of the best material in Gf has been better than the best in Energumen. Apparently, people tend to admire consistency in quality over extremes. Something else I'd rather not mention is probably also a factor in this. It's a little hard to say in so many words...the fact is that Linda is something of a klutz at times. She has a very unfortunate habit of putting her foot in her mouth in print; if she's not careful, she can get into a writing style that tends to say, "This is the way it is," and when she expresses an opinion, it can tend to sound like a pronouncement from above. I know the problem well; I suffer from it myself, and you might notice my constant attempts to qualify my remarks here, to make it clear to you I'm only trying to speak for myself, to tell things the way I see them. Anyhow, this tendency to speak out, indelicately, has gotten more than a few people mad at Linda over the years; you probably remember all the nasty words in Focal Point over the most recent flap concerning the Egoboo Poll (whatever happened to that, anyhow?). But I don't know anybody who doesn't like Mike--as I've noted, Mike tends not to go out on a limb, at least in print, and he doesn't tend to get people angry at his words. I'm friendly with both, and have been since we were all neos together--but I can't help the impression that personal feels have something to do with it all.

(I suppose I should mention that neither magazine makes much of an effort to integrate visual material and text, except in occasional and isolated features. I probably should have mentioned it, before, but since hardly anyone else does it, I guess there's no reason to expect them to do it either.)

Wanted, I guess--editors, rather than publishers.

--Jerry Lapidus

November 27, 1971

