



PROJER 60 GAL

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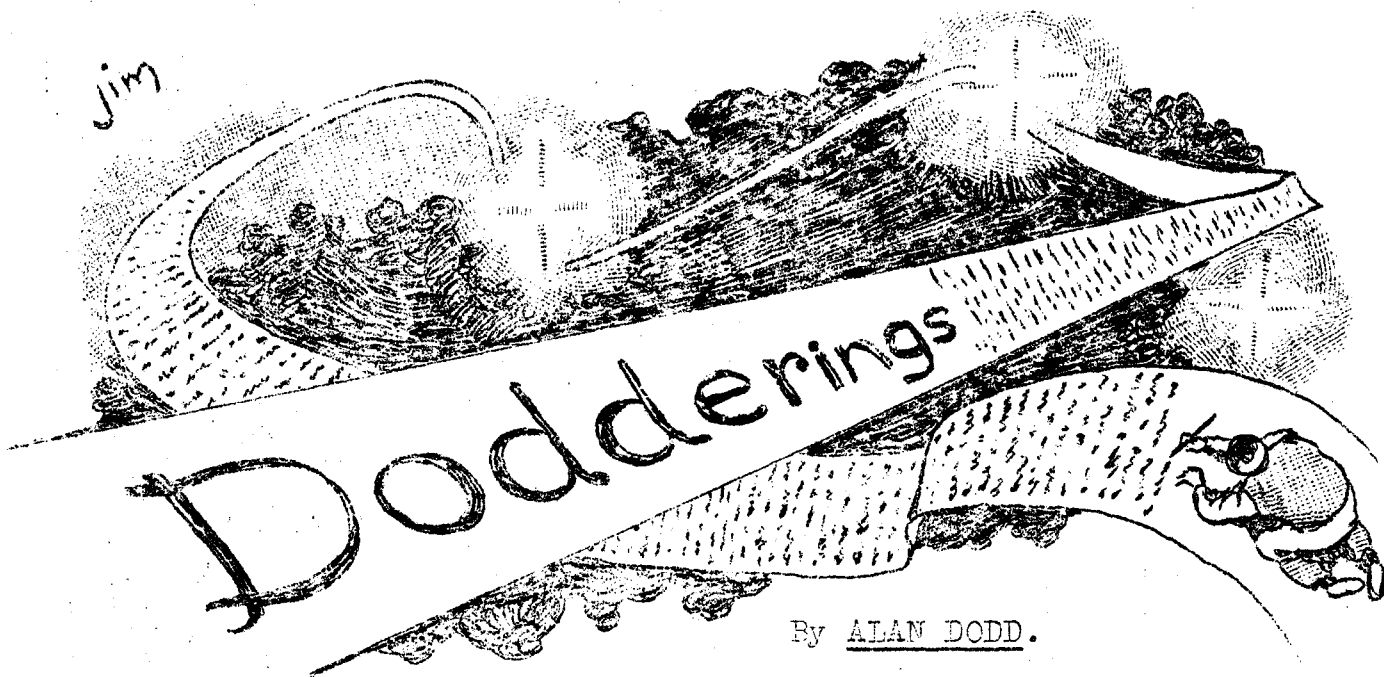
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And sells for 1/- (15¢) per copy and is produced with criminal irregularity and is thoroughly unreliable as to when it will come out. In fact any claim at a publishing schedule is not only highly improbable but is the best bit of an fiction appearing in this fanzine. My deepest thanks go to Jim Cawthorne for giving up so much of his valuable time to cut the artwork of almost everyone in this issue, to Dave Prosser for cutting so many of the difficult Metzger stencils that weren't done by electronic stencils as many were and to Terry Jeeves for coming in at the last minute to cut the remaining stencils' artwork that no one else could do for me. Without their help this issue, so long delayed would not have been possible. Thank you all. It has taken a long time and more work than ever has gone into this issue of CAMBER than any other in the past. I think the finished result was worth it. Contributions are invited for the next issue. -1-



I am trapped in the Double Circle. It starts like this you see. The first Monday I get a 14 page letter from Arizona which takes me to Wednesday to finish - which is all right - except that on Tuesday I get a letter 12 pages long from Australia which takes till Friday to answer whereas on the Wednesday I have had two eight page letters from New Jersey which carry me over to the weekend but to add to this in the meantime on the Thursday an eight page letter from Turkey has arrived which has carried me up till Tuesday of next week, but Saturday I have received a four page letter from Germany and and eight pager from Indiana which takes me to the next Thursday of next week, but on the Monday of next week I get an eight page letter from Illinois followed by a four page letter from Oklahoma, a three pager from Lancashire, a two pager from Australia, a one pager from London, from Essex, from the north of England. Then by dropping everything over the weekend of the second week I complete all my mail and I get up to date.

Then on Monday I receive a 14 page letter from Arizona...

I'm sure you understand how it is. I AM trapped. I keep going around in a squirrell cage from which there is no escape to do anything else. Make no mistake, I enjoy it nevertheless or I would build the bars for this cage -- but as you can see such a syst-
-em plus a number of other additions too numerous to mention make it impossible to produce a fanzine with any degree of regularity at all. This - and this alone - is the reason there is such a long delay between issues of CAMBER. I neglect the stencils to jump into the Double Circle of two week letter circles and it is only this time that with the moral support of Seth Johnson that I have been able to break out long enough to do this. And I used to laugh when Robert E. Gilbert called this "The Camber YearBook".....

WALT WILLIS is evidently getting very hard up for material.

On two separate occasions in the past year (In Gregg Calkins' INTERIM and Terry Carr's FANAC) Walt has stated he does not like Dave Prosser's artwork.

He has done this not so much from his own criticism of Dave's artwork - which might be honest in itself - but from MY REVIEW OF DAVE'S ARTWORK IN THE LAST CAMBER! If you can imagine that - the formerly great Willis is reduced to doing reviews of reviews now!

Notice how he employs one of the most cunning and despised tricks of the "yellow" journalist - implication by suggestion - one of the things Ray Thompson mentions in his article in this issue. Willis says - "Dodd has been to Spain" - before going on with his criticism of my review. Note the subtlety there. No direct accusation - merely the cunning implication that by mentioning my visit to Spain where I saw the original Goya works to which I compared Dave Prosser, that I automatically claim a critic's license to advise on artwork. Which of course I did not. Nevertheless if you were to read either of Willis' articles that is what you might be forgiven for thinking. I am most surprised to see someone like Walt Willis stooping to such low journalistic tricks.



REG

So Walt Willis doesn't like Dave Prosser's artwork.

So I imagine there was a man who didn't like the Paintings on the Sistine Chapel.

So there was probably a man who didn't like the Blue Mosque.

There was probably even a man who didn't like the Mona Lisa.

So what!

We remembers them. Yet the creators are remembered and so is their work.

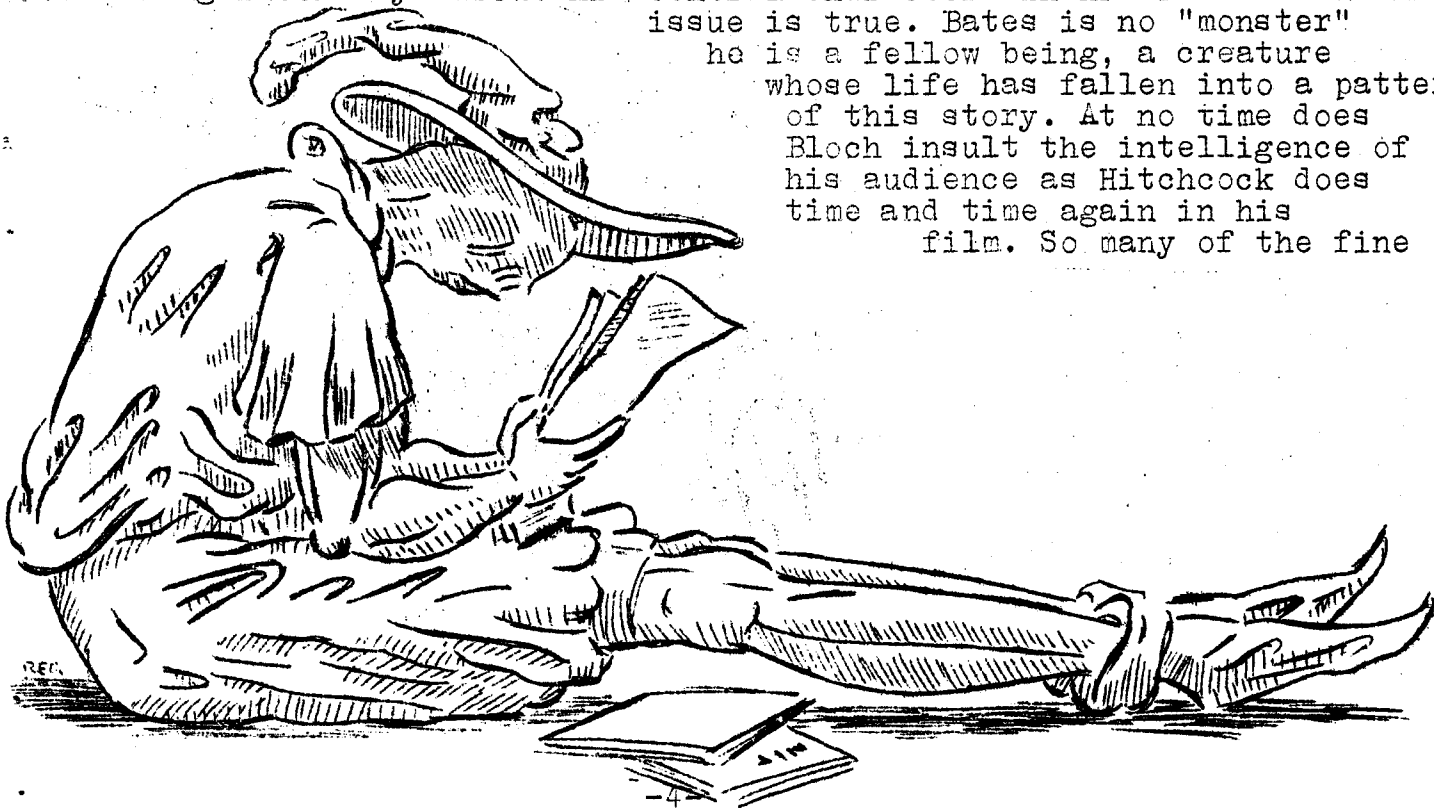
But it does seem a shame to see a once-great fanwriter like Willis reduced to scraping the bottom of the barrel for such dubious material.

Ah well - more next time no doubt. See you then.....

In a latter part of this fanzine you will see my various opinions on PSYCHO - the film version that is. Unlike the British film critics who thought the film hideous etc or the American fans who seem quite pleased with the film version of the book I must side with Rudi Gosejacob in Germany who found it one of the most disappointing films he had ever seen and with Wayne Dickey in Canada who found it one of the most boring he had ever sat through. I too, vote the film version of PSYCHO as the BIG BORE of the film year. The most over publicised piece of dullity I have seen in a long time. The fault lies squarely on the shoulders of Alfred Hitchcock as director - a man who should know better, and his film editor who should immediately apply for unemployment benefit since this would appear to be something he is much more capable of doing. The film is handicapped by the production code that makes most American films acceptable to adolescents - who I'm told make up the largest part of the cinemagoing audience in that country - but irritating to adults. The film has been a financial success - this due to the tasteless advertising gimmicks employed by Hitch rather than by any qualities of the film or of the screenplay by Joseph Stefano - who after this film and ANNA OF BROOKLYN is another who should also join the film editor in the unemployment line. One failure might be a mistake - two butcheries and back you go to RIN TIN TIN Mr. Stefano - that's more your mark.

You will notice I mention only the film - I read the book of PSYCHO after seeing the film and seldom have I been moved by the plight of a killer as I was by the unfortunate Norman Bates. Everything Bloch says about his central characters in his letters in this issue is true. Bates is no "monster"

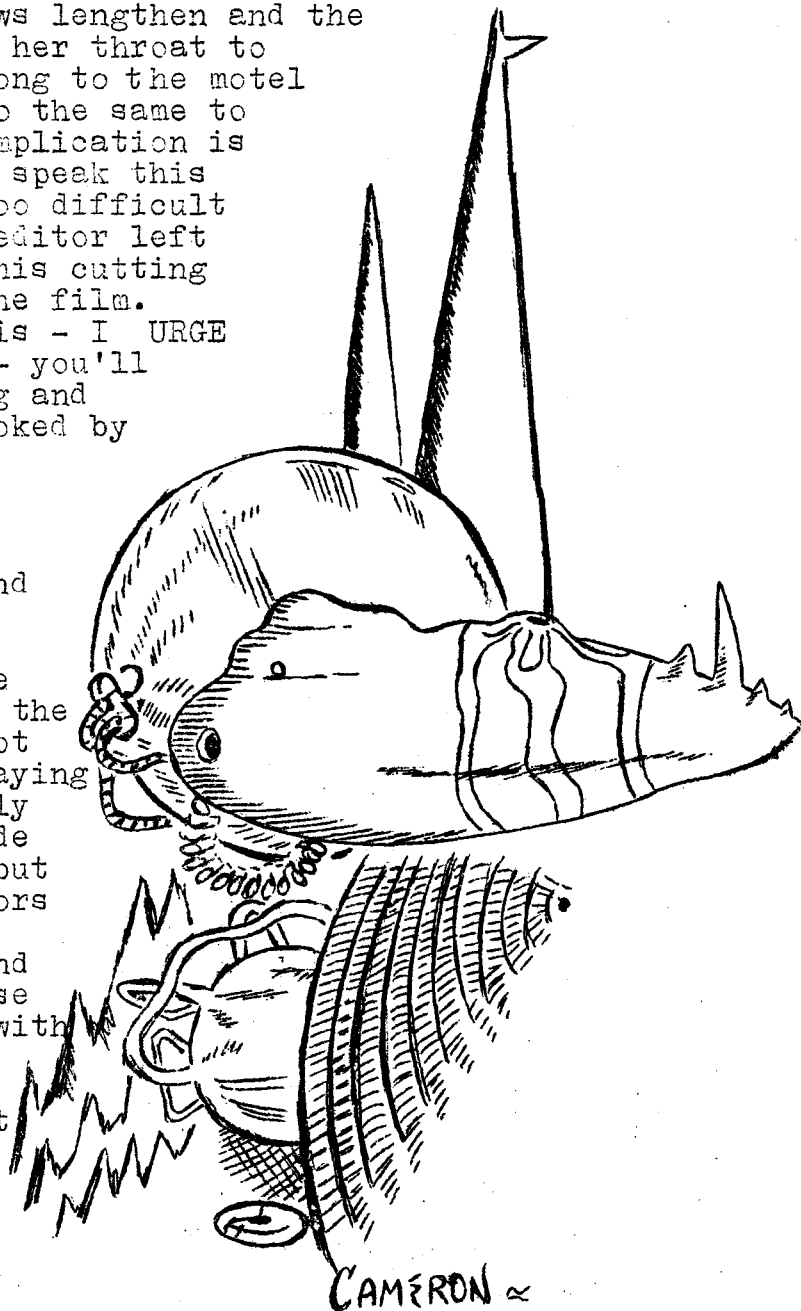
he is a fellow being, a creature whose life has fallen into a pattern of this story. At no time does Bloch insult the intelligence of his audience as Hitchcock does time and time again in his film. So many of the fine



touches Bloch has used are missing from the film. The sequence when Norman picks up a science fiction magazine left on the floor of one of his motel rooms to make some humorously disapraging remark about it. One sequence described by Bloch is pure visual - cires out for the cinema camera - yet Hitch ignores it. The sister looking for her murdered sister, stands near a Civil War statue carrying a bayonet as she does the shadows lengthen and the shadow of the bayonet crosses her throat to suggest that when she goes along to the motel the man with the knife will do the same to her as her dead sister. The implication is all visual - the camera could speak this perfectly. Evidently it was too difficult for Hitchcock - or maybe his editor left the sequence on the floor of his cutting room along with the rest of the film. We'll never know. All I know is - I URGE you to read the book PSYCHO - you'll find in it skill, human feeling and emotion that will never be evoked by the film version.

In the book the chief character of Norman Bates was middle-aged, paunchy, balding and bespectacled - contrast that with Anthony Perkins playing this role!! Why? Because, like I said - only teenagers go to the cinema nowadays and they've got to have one of their idols playing this role - even though totally miscast. Had the film been made in the Thirties I can't help but feel that one of the ugly actors who could act like Laughton - might have played the part, and character too. But who in these days would pay to see a film with a middle-aged, bespectacled, paunchy hero? Certainly not those thousands of people that made PSYCHO the financial success it was.

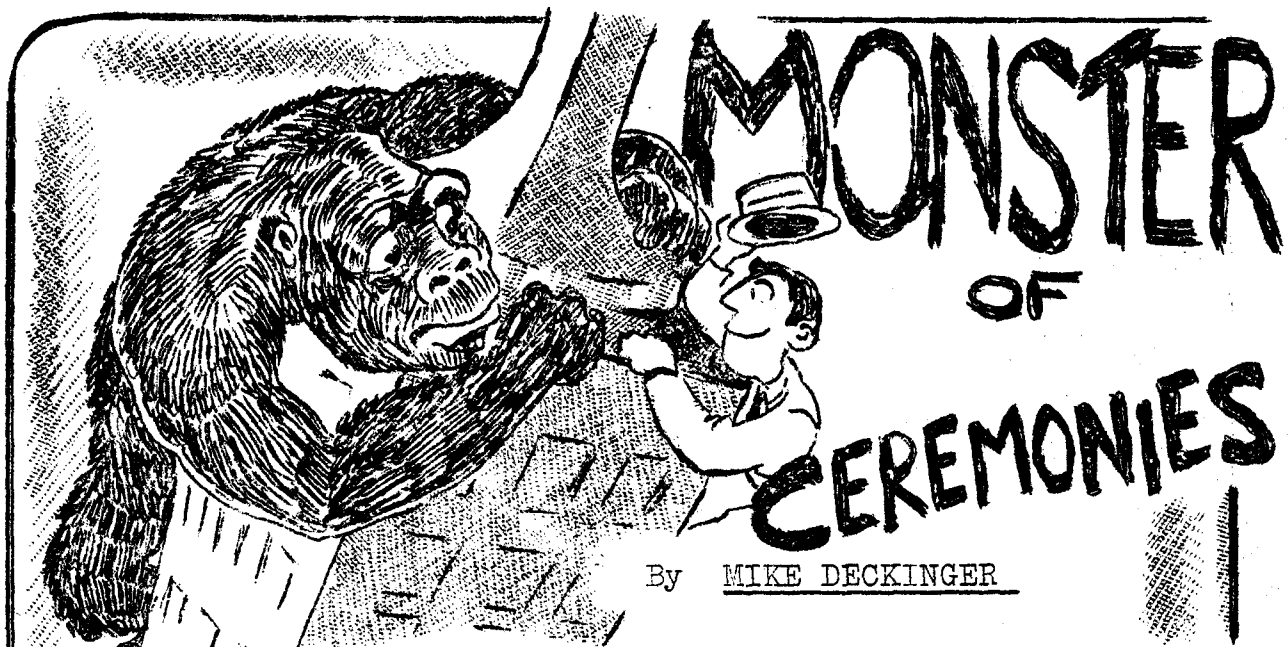
As for me - I'll stick to Bloch and to the book, you can KEEP the film.



CAPTION:-

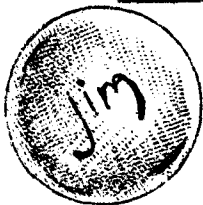
"WHAT DO YOU MEAN --- NO CHILI????"





Television audiences, American TV audiences, that is, have always been fond of two types of shows: horror films and westerns. The westerns have been around for a long while, and chances are they'll be infesting the stations for a long time to come. But horror films are in a different class. Very rarely have there been any concerted efforts to present them on TV. One exception to this is the New York televised film series, MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE, which presents a different film each week, with showings twice a day. KING KONG was an immediate smash when shown on this series, first in 1956 and repeated about a year later. Following that came GODZILLA, a poor Japanese monster film, that nevertheless appealed to the masses, and THE THING, The butchered version of John Campbell's noted story; WHO GOES THERE. In the case of the latter film though, much of the effect was lost when seeing it through the medium of a small screen in the comparative safety of one's home. Shown at a big theatre, THE THING generated a large amount of suspense and shocks, but on a small screen the action was decreased. It was still a fine film though, and it does prove TV is in the right direction.

But lately, a newer type of show has been seen to intrude on the TV screens of numerous homes; a show featuring a genuine Monster of Ceremonies. There have been many, out West there was Gorgon and Doctor Meridian and Marvin, all ghoulish characters emitting an aura of sick humour, in some cases.



But probably the most famous, and the most successful Monster of Ceremonies is a man who first became endeared to the hearts of many Philadelphia viewers as Roland, along with his Isobel and his familiar, Igor. Roland's chief job was to show the old Universal-International horror films which TV had bought in a package of 52 films ranging from the original FRANKENSTEIN and DRACULA to the numerous MUMMY epics, as well as a number of poorly done mysteries. In addition to introducing the films, Roland occasionally performed little experiments, utilising such items as bats, snakes, frogs etc.etc. In reality they were poorly simulated imitations of the actual things, but nobody seemed to care really.

This took him a little time to realise just how popular he had grown with the audience when one night, half in jest, he said, "Seems that my wife, confound her, needs a new pillow.. If each one of you fans out there could send in three hairs, we could probably do something about getting some confounded stuffing." This was said by Roland in a jest remember, never dreaming that the TV station would be swamped with 23,000 letters from his viewers, each containing a few strands of hair, surely enough to stuff at least a dozen pillows. What was done with this treasure of hair is not known.

Then there was another time when the station announced an Open House Day would be held for fans of SHOCK THEATRE, and invited everyone to attend. Official expectation was 2000 fans at the most, yet everyone was astounded to find over 14,000 fans showing up, completely deluging the studio, causing traffic tie-ups everywhere, and proving without doubt that this ghoulish young man had definitely attained a level of popularity.

But who is this Roland? His real name is John Zacherle, and when he moved to the New York area, and began to appear on WABC-TV (First show was on September 22, 1958) he became Zacherly, which you must admit is easier to pronounce than Zacherle. Why he was first picked for the job of Roland in Philadelphia remains a mystery to many. He had practically no acting experience before then, except for a minor part in a TV Western called ACTION IN THE AFTERNOON. He had never made any movies, nor done any big parts on TV. Yet he was in! He even admitted that he knew hardly anything about monster films before he began watching them on his emceeing jobs of Roland and then Zacherley. Whatever it was that caused him to be chosen as Roland, it skyrocketed him into almost national fame.

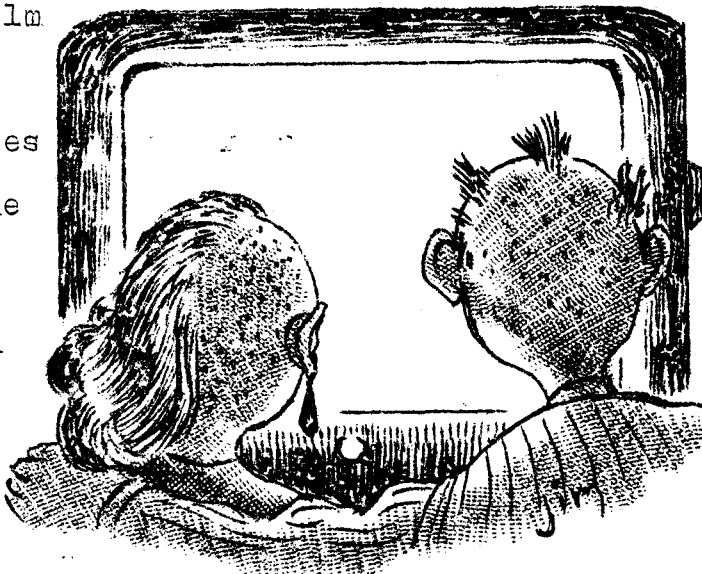


Radio has long had such persons like Raymond Edward Johnson of INNER SANCTUM, Miriam Wolfe of THE WITCHES TALES, Maurice Tarplin as THE MYSTERIOUS TRAVELLER and John Gallup on the old TV show LIGHTS OUT. These unfortunately, are all gone from the air now, relinquishing their holds to Zacherly.

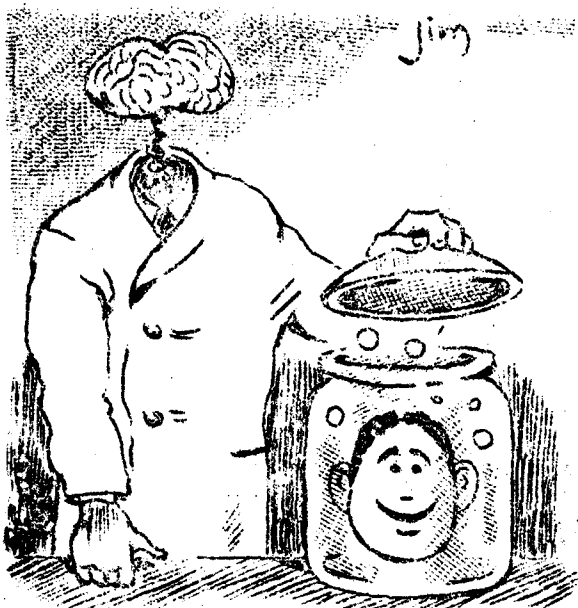
When his show first began in New York he was little more than just an emcee. He appeared in his dungeon, along with a table, his wife (in the coffin), and any others that may have come by. He introduced the films, was present at the intermissions, and very little else. Occasionally he'd deliver some type of "scientific" lecture or tell anecdotes about his wife or Gasport, but that seemed the extent of his act. The name of the show was first THE NIGHT SHOW, later changed to SHOCK THEATRE, and he was present as an accessory rather than a star.

But then, he began to appear more frequently, not at the beginning or in the middle of the films, but actually in the films themselves, through the use of excellent co-ordination between film and live subject. For instance, on screen a man would look up as a door opened, and then Zacherly would walk in, say hello to everyone and sit down. Or else a man would push someone off a cliff, and then you would see Zacherly sitting under a ledge when suddenly a dummy tumbles onto him. Here he was practically unlimited in devising new methods of co-ordinating himself with the filmed actions, and his hilarious interjections were without a doubt some of the funniest things ever performed on television.

Similar tricks may have been performed before, but if they have, I haven't seen them. And one must really become absorbed in a film story, and then have it shattered by an intrusion of Zacherly to get the humour to it. Usually he makes use of every strategic part there is. Wherever there is a phone call and a star in the film is talking with an unknown party, you can bet that Zacherly is on the other end of the line. To expand this trick, he now simulates newspapers and pictures that one may point out. For instance, in the film a character may walk over to another, hold out a paper, and tell him to read it. There is a close-up of a newspaper then, with a headline reading ZACHERLY DONATES BODY TO SCIENCE or some equally outrageous and hilarious statement. And the same may be done with photographs, a monkey photo that one scientist was showing to another became a caricature of Krushchev (Very fitting too).



Other incidents that come to mind include the scene from the beginning of UNKNOWN ISLAND where everyone crowds around the front of the boat that is approaching a new and uncharted island as Richard Denning (the hero, naturally) stares at it through a pair of field glasses. "It's horrible," he says, "I've never seen anything like it," referring to some prehistoric monster dinosaurs seen through the field of vision. Yet what do we see? A man (obviously Zacherly) wearing a very silly monkey mask and sitting and chomping away at a banana. Or again, there is a film starring Bela Lugosi as the villain who kills his victims by blowing poison darts at them, and is known as "The Cobra" (This will give you an idea how old some of these films are). He is hiding in a radio station and as two performers walk out, he fits a dart into his hollow cane, blows it, and nothing happens. "What is this," he demands of his assistant, "I could not have missed." Then we see Zacherly wearing the headphones of a radio technician with an arrow protruding through his head.



Bela fits another dart, blows, curses, and Zacherly appears with a second dart in his head (Actually arrows on a wire that can be bent to fit over a person's head, but from the right angle give the disturbing illusion that is is going through his head instead of around). Again the performance is repeated, and again Zacherly re-appears with three darts through his skull, and Bela hopping mad that he's missed his victims, and wondering where his darts have gone to.

At first, Zacherly did not confine his interjections to the films, as he does now, but actually dared intrude in no-man's land: the commercials. There are several he interrupted that bear mentioning, such as the commercials for an anti-acid mint, Roliaids. To demonstrate its effectiveness, a doctor takes a large beaker of some liquid, pours it over a handkerchief and as the insides of the handkerchief are eaten away proclaims: "Did you know that concentrated stomach acid can burn a hole in this handkerchief?" As soon as this is over Zacherly appears in a doctor's outfit, picks up a similar beaker filled with a watery liquid, eyes it curiously for a few moments, and then drinks it. However, this and other practices have long since been abandoned, no doubt by a grouchy old sponsor.

One may think that even the film interruptions would serve to detract from the enjoyment of the pictures, but the sad fact is that they don't.



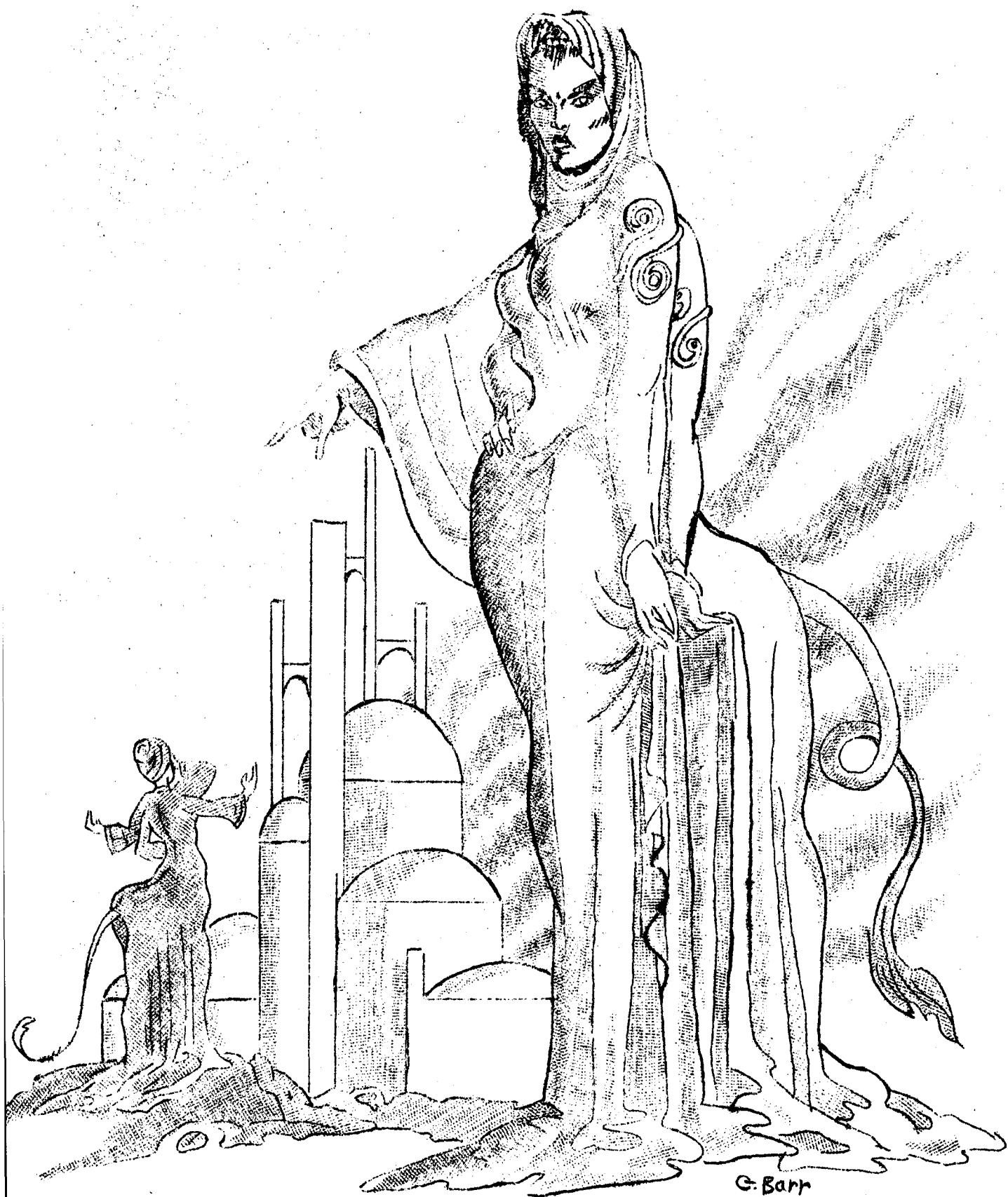
Of the 52 films in the Shock Theatre package 18 of the pictures are what would be called genuine horror and fantasy films. They are not all particularly good, but they are all horror pictures. The rest of the list is composed of low budget Grade C mysteries which, it appears, were sold to TV in desperation, because Universal International could think of nothing else to do with them, except burn them, which would be the best idea. The majority of these films feature Karloff, Chaney or Lugosi. To give you an idea, Lon Chaney Jnr. stars in 10 of these films, Bela Lugosi in 9 and Boris Karloff in 7. Others who appear more than once in this bundle include: Lionel Atwill, George Zucco, John Carradine, Edmond Lowe, Brenda Joyce, Robert Lowery, Claude Rains, Turhan Bey, and even Vincent Price is there. My motive when this series first came on was to watch the show SHOCK THEATRE mainly for the films. I was interested in seeing the old horror films, and regarded Zacherly as an added bonus. Now however, values have shifted, all the films have been run at least 3 times, some even more so. About a year ago the show underwent a change, moved to another network and became ZACHERLY AT 12. This in turn was changed to ZACHERLY AT LARGE, and now a simpler title has been decided on, just ZACHERLY. And it is Zacherly's show. The films he runs now are some of the older mysteries that the studios have around their lots, cluttering up space.

Nobody watches the show to see those antique films. It is Zacherly's show, his and his alone. One night he may perform in an opera, the next time he may give a lecture on brains (With floating brains yet). Since the show is still a low budget one, expensive props don't appear too often, and it's been found that heads of cauliflower and cabbage make extremely realistic looking brains when viewed on TV. And what's more, these are lively animated brains. It isn't surprising to see them bounce off his table and go dancing around the wall.

The films are really unimportant. The only enjoyment they provide is that they give him an opportunity to do some more of his hilarious injections, some extremely clever, and others not so hot. Of late, the quality seems to have been lagging, but I have confidence that it won't be long before Zacherly regains himself in delivering some of the funniest, in a bizarre sort of way, humour ever seen on a TV screen.

For after all, he is Zacherly. Who else can make that statement?

*****THE END*****





By RAY THOMPSON.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For those of you who can remember back to ECLIPSE and to BIBBILTY the name Ray Thompson needs no introduction and after a gap of several years no one could be more surprised than I to suddenly find him turn up at a USAF base some thirty miles from here. In fact I still haven't recovered from the thought that someone I knew in Norfolk, Nebraska is now so near to me. Ray of course, has changed as do so many people who enter the military but underneath the vast elaborate security curtain under which he now hides is still the same Ray -- somewhere...

To a few of you, this byline may be familiar. If it is, may I say, after an extended absence, it's good to be back. To you who have entered fandom in the past two years, permit me to introduce myself: My name is Ray Thompson; Presently I am stationed with the USAF in England, about fifty miles north of London. My last active period consisted of the publishing of a fanzine called ECLIPSE. I have been drawn from "retirement" by the efforts of Alan Dodd, in whose CAMBER -- I hope -- you will be reading this.

Introductions over, I proceed.

Alan will be, I am sure, quite surprised -- and perhaps a bit annoyed -- to be getting this, instead of the short article I had promised. I'm not even sure he's prepared to take on another columnist. I only hope he doesn't decide to make the trip here from Hoddesdon, to take personal action. ((If you think I'm going to cut my way through that pine forest to get to that bunch of oil well derricks that you call a radio station you're crazy!))

At any rate, the conductance of this column; for the time being, it will be just a general column, in which I write about anything that comes to mind. ("But what's it got to do with fandom"?) If there happens to be a fanzine around, and something in it has attracted my eye, I'll write about that; short of an actual fanzine review, I'll be carrying quite a bit of that, I hope. And, if you should find anything here that I have written, with which you disagree, let me know about it, and perhaps we can start an argument. ((Having seen a picture of Ray this is something I wouldn't advise though...))

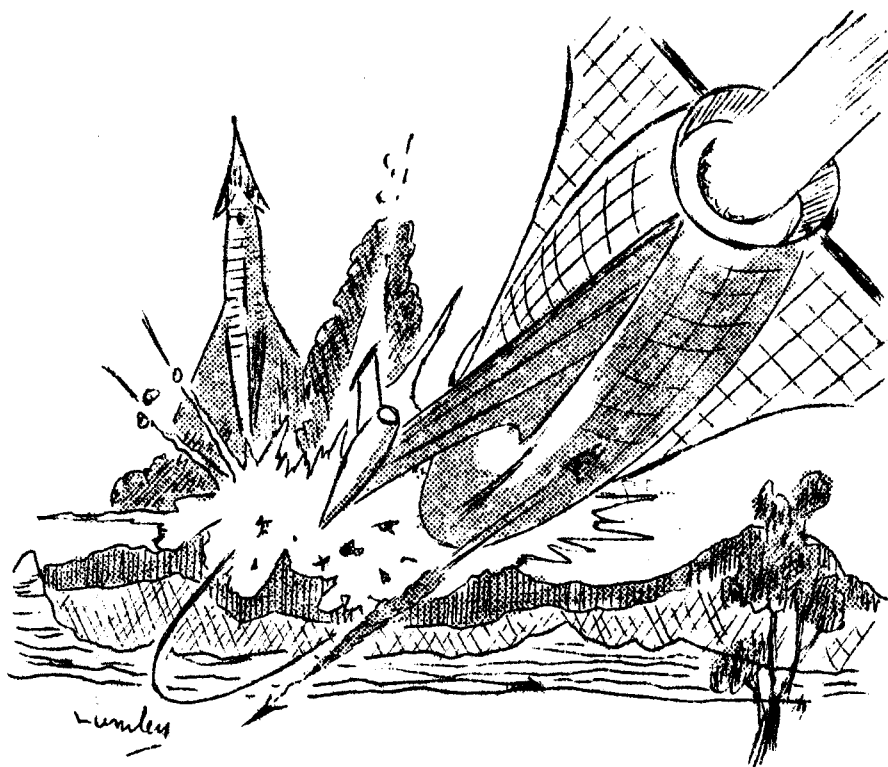
Anyone who has given the least mental effort to the problem will realise that the basis of our society is communication. Radio, television, newspapers, and a hundred other media; they are the engines that keep our civilisation going. They take the form of words issuing from loudspeakers in every house, office, and shop in the world. Words from our mouths, in every newspaper, every book and magazine. All these, attempting to communicate.

And how effective is this communication? How well do we make our desires and needs and feelings known to each other? How can we be sure that there is no misunderstanding? How facile are all these words we're using, and how well do we use them?

Language and word usage is a matter of convenience, of social arrangement and agreement. We have agreed that an arrangement of letters forming the word "danger" will be used to indicate immediate or potential peril; therefore, on seeing this letter arrangement, we put our conditioning to work, and turn away.



What almost amounts to a separate culture has grown up around certain segments of the world population who are directly responsible for some of the social conditioning that we undergo. They are those who use words in their daily pursuit of living; writers, newspapermen, radio announcers, editors, advertising men -- all contributors to the "talk-er" society. Members of this "society" may be limited to only one point of view; a party line, or a dictator's whim. Others can be members, whatever their point of view or purpose. It is not easy, nor sometimes very comfortably, to be a member of this group. Membership carries with it the custody of a great power -- the power of the word, to influence human opinion and direction.

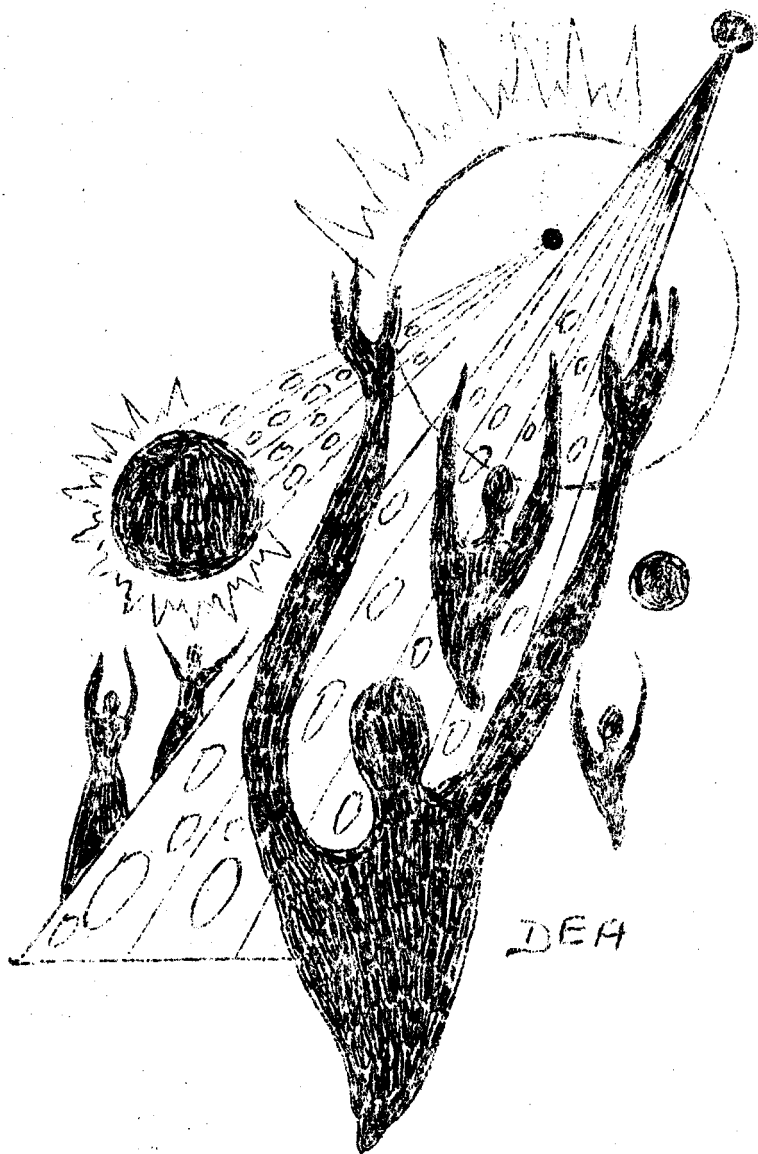


And make no mistake, the word is a device of great power. And like other devices of power, it must be guarded against evil influences; for the evil exists, not in the device, but in the user. In the event of this power being used for the cause of evil, it is an evil hard to fight; for the battle takes place in that most private of arenas, the human mind. Propagandists, purveyors of malicious gossip, those who would ask you to lay aside your skepticism and belief, those who would have you accept them and their ideas without more than blind faith; these are the most vicious of enemies, for they

move in ways difficult to detect. Their weapon is the word, used in insinuation, in harangue, in half truth and outright falsehood. The only defence is their own weapon turned against them.

To this end, some of the most inspiring literature has been written. Thousands of millions of words have been used, testifying to the need for each man to live his own life, to decide his own fate. Millions of more words defending his rights in the common business of everyday living, and outlining his responsibilities to his fellows. We are warned at every turn of the dangers of gullibility; we are cautioned to keep an impartial mind, and to be sure our final decision is a good and valid one.

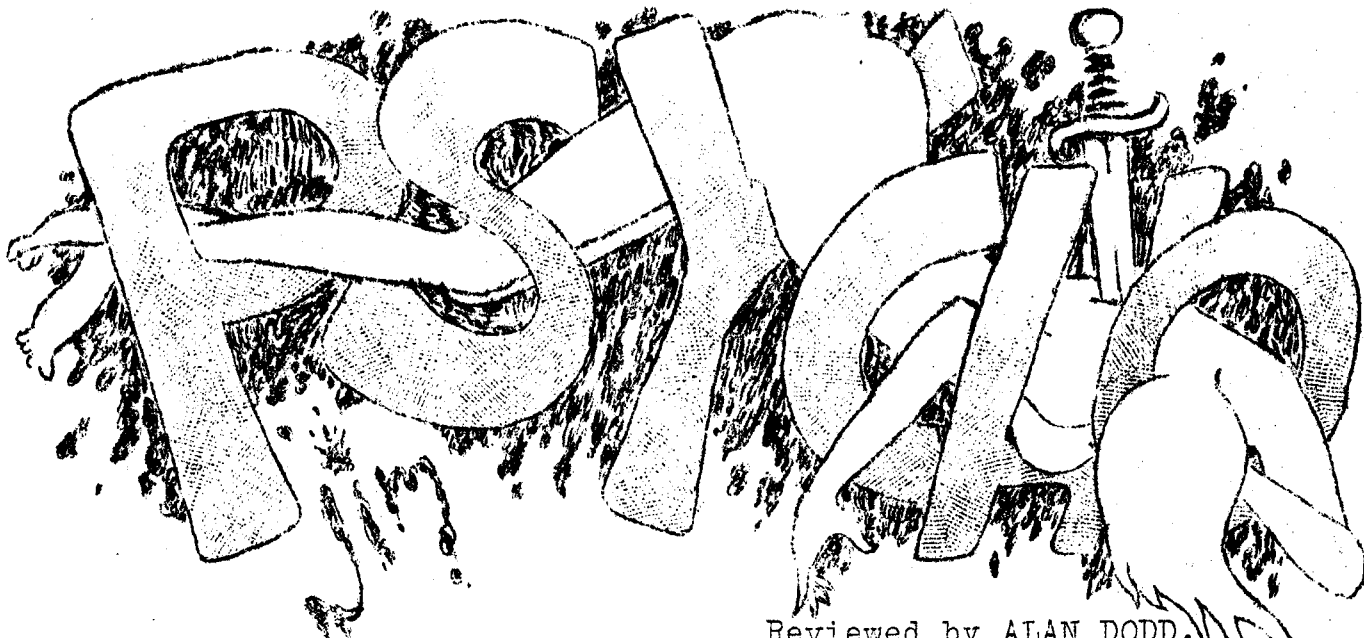
This is never easy. In our modern world, we are beset by words from every side. We are overwhelmed with the power of the word. We are smothered in talk, drowned in declamation. No single human can possibly read all the newspapers and pamphlets, all the books and magazines, available for his examination. No person can watch all the television shows, see all the movies, hear all the speakers, monitor all the discussions, clamouring for his attention. We are subject to a thousand and three pressures, from every angle. We are conditioned to accept these pressures as a normal and necessary part of our existence. We are conditioned to accept without reason, believe without proof; we are conditioned until we can hardly breath without the proper direction. It is up to each individual who, after all, is still "Captain of his soul, master of his fate", to make himself able to accept all of this for what it is worth: it is up to him but if for a single moment he abandons the questioning spirit, he betrays humanity. *****



CAPTION:-

" ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE FROM THE SHANGHAI
SCIENCE FICTION CIRCLE?? "





Reviewed by ALAN DODD.

It should at first be stated about any film, the conditions under which it was viewed and these I intend to list first of all. In the first instance let me say I do not at all approve of the blatant and arbitrary method under which this film has been shown. The "No on, not even the manager's brother will be allowed in after the start of the film" or in America the even more distasteful (To the English anyway) "No one, not even the Queen of England (God Bless Her) will be allowed in after etcetc." are to me just vulgar, expanded barnstorming features of the advertising of this film. Okay - so it's better to see the film from the beginning - so name me a hundred other mystery films or who-dunnits that this couldn't apply to? Hitch's REAR WINDOW for example - on indeed any film it's better to see it from the beginning. What makes PSYCHO so special that it should get this treatment? The answer is - NONE! It's just a stunt to bring the customers in.

Having the film shown by this method has placed upon the public the necessity of queuing outside the cinemas on often cold and chilly nights (Can you wonder why 400 cinemas closed here last year?) in addition to which certain cinema owners have deemed it necessary to place outside their cinemas a notice board stating:- "This is a separate performance film which means the cinema will be cleared entirely at the end of each performance" (The underlinings are my own) to which my reaction towards the cinema, Hitchcock and Paramount in general is - "Go to hell!"

However after a two week general release it eventually came to a local cinema which was showing continuous performances but still enforcing the "No one will be allowed etc etc.." and I thereby managed to see the film and at 3d less than it was shown for a few miles up the road.

So I sat down. I sat for 15 solid minutes waiting for something to happen then eventually a film came up - STRATFORD ON AVON which interested me about as much as a treatise on the Flintchippers of Iceland. After twenty tiresome Technicoloured minutes it finally finished to be replaced by FIDDLE FADDLE a cartoon proving how superior the average POPEYE cartoon is in animation to these "modern" efforts. Next came an advertising film for Senior Service Cigarettes. Then a five minute battery of advertisements which differ only from television commercials in that they are in wide screen and colour. Then a further five minute interval came by about which time I had forgotten the name of the film I was supposed to be seeing if indeed there WAS going to be a feature film that night.

PSYCHO finally started and the first immediate surprise I had was in finding the film was in ordinary black and white and not in colour and Cinemascope like the previous number of Hitchcock's films had been.

The opening sequences showing John Gavin and Janet Leigh in a Phoenix hotel room are so badly dubbed and post synchronised that they are worthy of any Italian epic. In fact whenever John Gavin appears the register of his voice and those of supporting players in the scene drop suddenly as though the sound were recorded after the filming of the lip movements thereby giving the impression that the cast is talking loud yet only a whisper of dialogue is to be heard. Perhaps the truth may be that John Gavin, like Steve Reeves, has such a lousy speaking voice that another fellow dubs his lines. The sound certainly doesn't match the volume of the lip movements that I do know.

The background music of the film does all it can to create suspense by employing the hackneyed method of deep up-and-down crescendoes of string sounds, throbbing and pulsating. It may have created suspense for some viewers but only indigestion for me. Suspense with the motion picture is created in the picture of what is seen and not by superimposed sound that drowns out everything else. Do Ford car doors really close that silently? Somehow I doubt it.

Bob Tucker in BANE 2 says of the Janet Leigh murder in the shower sequence - "The editor employs fast dizzy undercutting with deliberately out of focus shots" while Vic Ryan says "I favour to think that the film editing and not the filming itself makes the movie a real standout" to which I say - "RUBBISH! All you saw were the mangled remains of some fine original shooting of Hitch's the majority of which remained on the cutting room floor. The best sections of PSYCHO were thrown away needlessly and only go to prove that a film editor can ruin a film far more effectively than any director."

Note too, the childish methods employed by Hitchcock to avoid showing the more intimate portions of Miss Leigh's anatomy on the screen, after all kiddies we mustn't offend the Legion of Decency, The Catholic Daughters of America, The Daughters of the Revolution, The Breen Office, The Johnston Office, The Ancient Order of Hibernians etc must we children? So Miss Leigh is photographed from the shoulders upward - my, my - aren't we daring in 1960. Can you imagine that - actually bare shoulders, Tsk, tsk, my maiden aunt would be surprised at this. Even when she is dead the nude body is effectively concealed by Tony Perkins' body as he drags it onto a shower curtain. Effective yes - but how puerilely obvious at what Hitchcock is trying to conceal.

The murder sequence is not the Brilliant piece Tucker would have you believe. It is a mass of heterogeneous shots slapped together in rough order of sequence with all the skill and care of a butcher chopping up meat for his sausage machine and with about the same degree of accuracy employed.

There are to my mind only two moments of true and very brief horror in PSYCHO. The Leigh-shower murder is rulled out automatically since most of the sequence has been thrown away by the film's cutter. First one shows Martin Balsam as an overbearing private detective who forces his way into the private house of the motel owner, climbs the stairs and as he reaches the top, without warning as to the direction, the figure of the murderer appears to the right of the screen and a stiffly raised hand carrying a hideous knife plunges it into his chest.

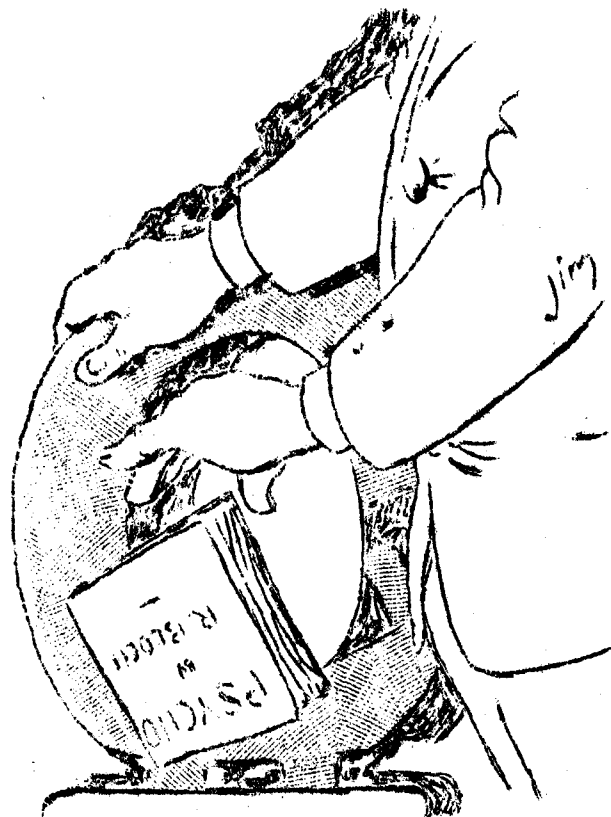


The knife enters the chest yet the immediate sequence close-up following shows blood on the face. Then the stumbling of Balsam down the stairs backwards to the repeated stabbing and the completion of the act showing the raised knife falling again and again on the body. This all happens, as does most of the action in PSYCHO "below camera". So much so that one begins to wish the film had been made in vertical Cinemascope. That way we might have been able to see at least a portion of what was going on.

As it is, half of PSYCHO happens "Off camera" and almost anything could be happening - it's rather like one of those cheap budget horror films where they can't afford to have

special effects and so they have all the cast looking off-screen and saying "Oh, how horrible" and you never see what happens. PSYCHO is practically all composed of this cheap gimmick.

The other sequence of horror is only near the end where the killer makes his appearance in full dress armed with that sickening looking knife and the impact of who and what he is is rammed home clanging chords of strings, swinging light bulbs, slanting shadows - the whole works. And just in case you are so dense you can't see then what is happening Hitch switches to close ups of the murderer, the wig, the dead face. Everything is shown as though you were pointing out to a stupid kid what was happening.



Some of the dialogue is to say the least somewhat uninspired and when Tony Perkins utters the words "My hobby is stuffing things" it evoked many unintentional laughs as the expression in England has a somewhat -ahem - different meaning.

The credit titles of PSYCHO are in the "Man With the Golden Arm" tradition, all modernistic, flashing black and white lines and almost submicroscopic print. If you have poor eyes you certainly won't be able to read half of them including "Based on the story by Robert Bloch" which needs a 16" telescope for a 20-20 vision man even to see.

The final sequences of the film after the PSYCHO has been caught involve the most lengthy explanation of a series of crimes that has ever been seen. The police psychiatrist hammers home, points his finger and in general lectures the room (and the audience) in such detail that at the end even the most stupid simpleton will be able to understand WHO ! HOW ! WHY ! "You understand now don'tcha stupid, after I've explained it five times" is the general trend of this sequence. I sympathise with Bob Tucker at being the one to project this film for two WEEKS, I'm sure by now he must at least have understood HOW, WHY WHO did it by now - he's heard it enough times.

There is about this film - dare I say it? an air of old-fashionedness. These dragging chords in mounting crescendos as the murder or victim comes near, the dark house and scudding clouds, the

mysterious lights, the masked murderer, the shadows, the close ups (There is even one sequence showing Janet Leigh's fingers counting out notes which will give you an idea of the trivia left in and the rest left out), the faces in pain or screaming, the swamp where the cars go in - I thought all this went out with high button shoes!

The truth of the matter is that behind the facade of blanket publicity and stern photos of Hitch ordering this and that, is that there is underneath just a tired little story of the kind that you read in BLACK MASK about twenty years ago. I mean no criticism of Robert Bloch's original story here but rather of the treatment the story has been given by Hitchcock, the film editor and the sound editor that have turned this into what Wayne Dickey at Pittsburgh after the Con called "The most boring two hours I ever spent in a theatre."

Well, it isn't QUITE that bad, but the film is very slow, and the treatment is dated, there are no new techniques employed unless you care to count a sequence photographing an eye in close up that adds nothing to the impact, in short the film is around twenty years behind the times. The English film critics found it without exception "sickening, revolting, horrifying, bloodstained" etc and the comments ranged from "Hitch How could you sink so Low" to "Don't Worry if you can't get in" but that isn't the truth at all. You will get precious few nightmares from PSYCHO unless you happen to be of a very nervous disposition. PSYCHO is a small time thriller with two brief moments of horror boosted up by the biggest publicity gimmick since Barnum and Bailey. It has paid off though for as Bloch himself so rightly points out, this is the second largest paying release Paramount Pictures have had since THE TEN COMMANDMENTS - which only goes to prove what a load of rubbish this film company has been producing lately.

PSYCHO is a financial success. That's very important. It would be more important to the fact that in the future I hope we see the author also receives a percentage of the profits since he contributes more than many of the other contributors to a film.

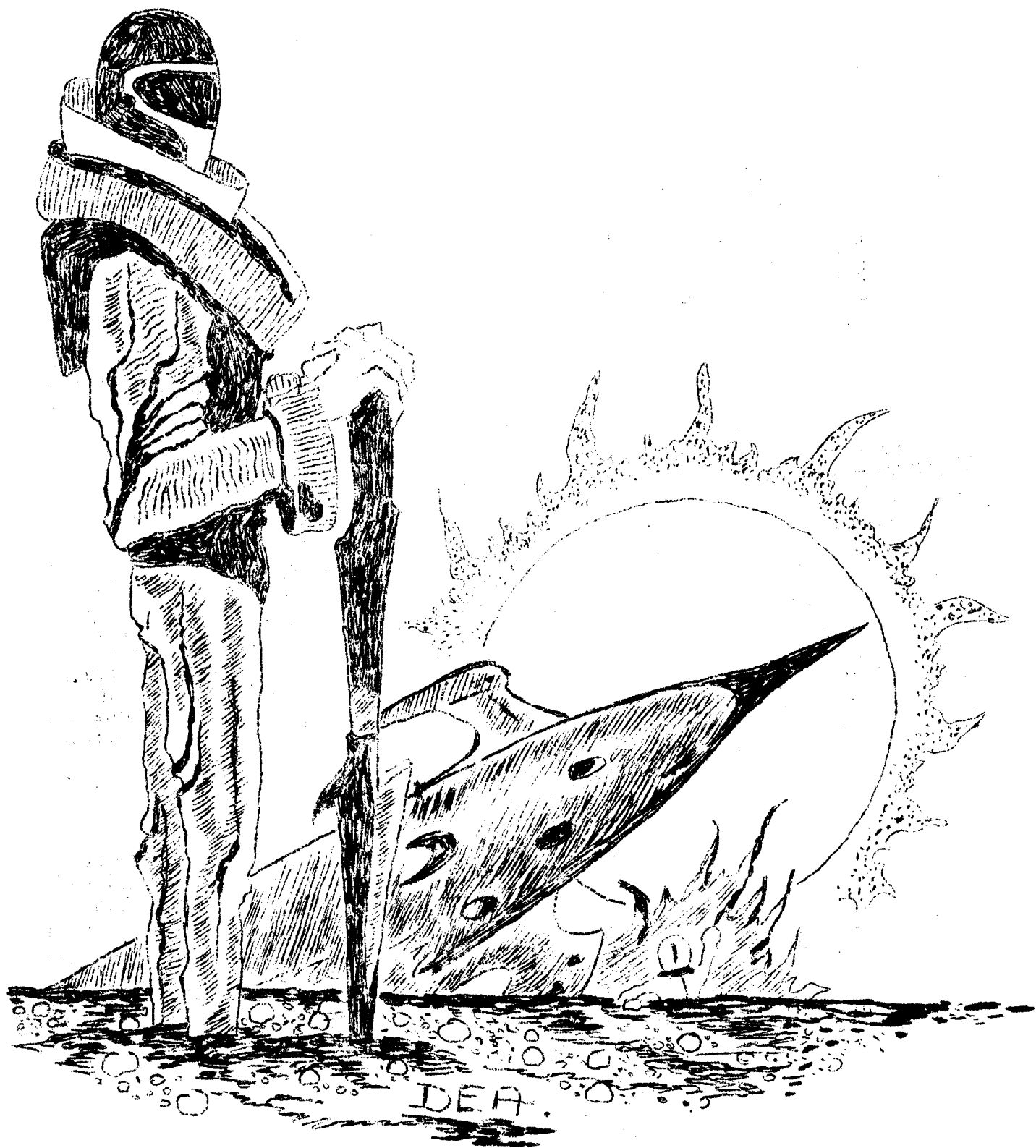
I have seen PSYCHO.

I have one question I am left with after all has gone.

WHAT WAS ALL THE FUSS ABOUT HITCH??

WON'T SOMEBODY TELL ME???

*****THE END*****



THE STORY BEHIND PSYCHO

By ROBERT BLOCH.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm sure most of you will already be aware from various fanzines and from film reviews that Robert Bloch's story PSYCHO was recently made into one of the most financially successful films in cinematic history by Alfred Hitchcock - you will also be aware of the kind of publicity Hitchcock has used on this film. I felt somehow there was more to it than most fanzines have mentioned. So I photocopied the reviews which left me with a copy plus a used reverse copy "negative" which could only be read in a mirror. These I sent to Robert Bloch with the English film critic's reviews ranging from "Hitch How could You Sink So Low" to "Don't Worry if You can't Get In". Almost by return post I had a letter from Robert - which in view of the amount of work he has on hand was quite remarkable in itself, I cannot imagine many authors doing the same - one of the many small facets showing the type of person the real Bloch is---

Many thanks for the reviews -- which I read handily by holding them up to a window-pane, when I wasn't nodding my head and muttering to myself. I'd seen a couple (plus PUNCH etc) and am as baffled by the British re-action as I am by the American. Over here, you know, it's the other extreme: with the exception of NYORKER and TIME the reviews have been fabulously good, and the film itself has broken box-office records in virtually every major city -- will make more money than anything Paramount has released since THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

As far as I'm concerned, neither extreme -- of critical appraisal or of box-office reaction -- makes sense. Unless one bears in mind that, perhaps, the story contains elements which provoke an emotional response rather than a logical response.

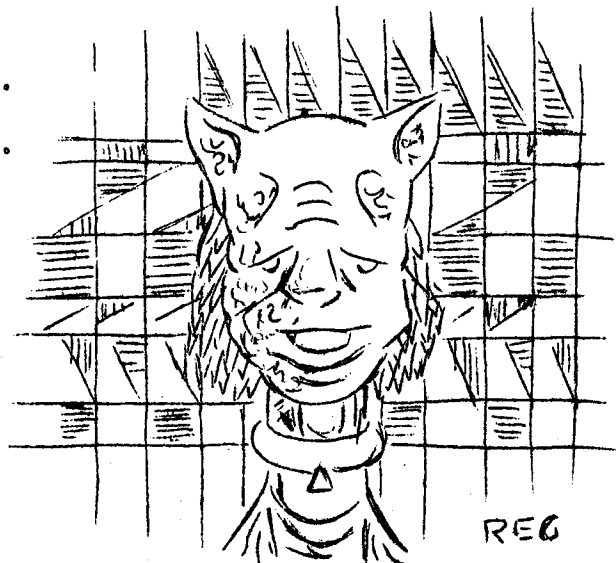
Dealing as it does with such touchy matters as Motherhood, sexual deviation, voyeurism and overt bloodshed, it may be that unconscious attitudes are provoked.

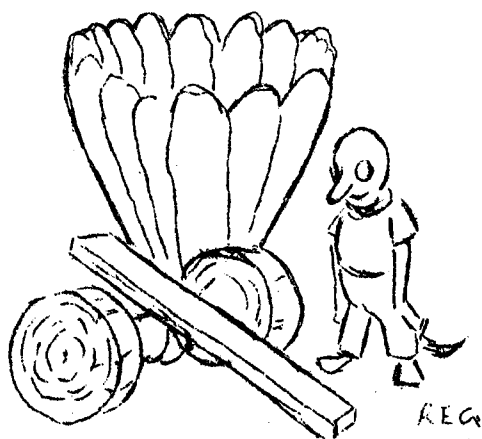
QUESTION: There are a number of theories about the actual sale of PSYCHO to the film company - my own a) is that you sold the film rights to the book outright and do not get anything from the showings of the film since very few writers get a percentage of a film's profits or b) You sold the rights and then went to work in Hollywood on the film or c) You are the "Joseph Stefano" that so many fans think is a fannish pseudonym. Which is correct?

In any case I can sit back as a more or less objective observer. Alternative (a) was correct. I sold the film rights -- sold them blind, not even knowing Hitchcock was the buyer -- and that was that. I'm not Joseph Stefano, and had no hand in the screen play, nor do I share in the profits, alas. My being out here has nothing to do with PSYCHO.

As you correctly remember, I've been resisting the Hollywood idea for years. Last September a writer friend of mine who has long been a fan called me in Weyauwega with a proposal. He was doing television scripts, most successfully, and for several reasons attempted to get me to come out and try my luck. This time he had a different approach: he'd gone to a producer and gotten me a guaranteed assignment. That is to say, I'd be paid to do a script whether they liked the result or not -- if they didn't my friend would make it good to them with one of his own. So all I need do was come out, be his house-guest while working on the script, collect the money, and discover for myself if I enjoyed television writing. The worst that could happen would be that I had a 3-week paid vacation. Under such generous terms how could I refuse?

So out I came, did my script. When I finished the company at once offered me a second assignment. When I completed that, a third. By this time I'd come to the conclusion that I could write for video without too much trouble, if the show was one I liked. So I moved into an apartment, acquired an agent, and did a few more. Under the circumstances it was only natural that I sell a few stories to Hitchcock for his television show; however they were assigned to others for teleplays. I was determined to





remedy this situation. My impulse was prompted by a growing realisation that magazine and book markets in the fantasy and SF field were miserable, and getting no better: suspense wasn't paying off, either. The family agreed that I should stay out and dig in. Then came the TV Writer's Guild strike -- for five months I wasn't permitted to work. But I stuck it out: strike ended in June, and I have since written another half-dozen shows, four of them (I am happy to say) for Hitch. One of the things I had to do was give up fanning for the nonce -- at least for about a year to come, I imagine. But it's

simply a matter of survival. PSYCHO, for example, was voted one of the five best mysteries of last year over here -- has been translated thus far into 10 foreign languages -- and yet the total proceeds from the book (which will take me three years to collect in their measly entirety) are less than I can get from doing three half hour teleplays! You can see now what prompted me to make the plunge? Sheer necessity and common sense.

As to whether I'll be permanently happy in television I don't know: it depends on the kind of shows available. Thus far I've managed to do but one western, and that a mystery, primarily. Prefer the field in which I've worked, but it's not a large one. Meanwhile the fiction is tapering off, though another novel, THE DEAD BEAT, came out in June and another Arkham House collection, PLEASANT DREAMS, will be off the press next week or so.

QUESTION: The elements contained in PSYCHO - those of transvestism, voyeurism etc all seem unusual for you to have included - are they from personal experiences in the past of others or just from the imagination?

It is curious, this tendency to associate an author's choice of subject matter with personality-elements within himself -- curious to me at any rate, as a professional who has come into contact with so many other professionals. Take mystery writers for example: I'm a member of Mystery Writers of America, and as such have met quite a few of the prominent authors in this field. They are, in the main, entirely "ordinary" people with "normal" reactions to violence, bloodshed, illegal activity, etc. The western writers, most particularly those who concoct western television shows, usually lack any background or identification with the western scene. Many comedy writers look like morticians. Still, the legend persists, mainly because the egocentrics make all the noise. The few egocentric writers do use writing as a vehicle for self-projection; their work is unabashedly autobiographical, and in between books they spend most of their time trumpeting about themselves. A few Thomas Wolfe or Sarcyan or Hemingway types manage to present a public image which is then applied to all writers.

Unfortunately (or fortunately, I don't quite know which) I do not seem to fit into this category. When I wrote about vampires and werewolves I had never indulged in vampirism or lycanthropy. Then my first novel, *THE SCARF*, was published, I was at once asked if I'd ever had a school-teacher like the one I invented for my plot. Well, sadly enough, I hadn't: nor had I ever gone around strangling women as did the writer - protagonist of that book. One of my later books, *THE KIDNAPER*, evoked some distaste amongst friends and correspondents: it dealt, in first-person narration, with a detailed account of how a completely heartless kidnaper did away with a small child. Friends evidently could not help confusing the "I" of the book with myself and it shocked them. But I protest, I've never kidnaped anyone and never will. So we come to *PSYCHO* and its transvestism, its shocking attitude towards the Oedipus-situation, etc. Again, I can only plead innocent: my relationship with my own mother was "healthy" and rewarding, and I've never had transvestic leanings.

So why did I choose these particular elements? In this, and in previous books and stories? Because I earn my living by giving shock value. And I merely sit down and deliberately devise ideas which will be effective in this direction. I must analyse the taboos and the terrors of our society and then translate them into dramatic form.

QUESTION: Henry Adolf Busch who murdered three women in Hollywood claims to have done this after seeing the film *PSYCHO*. Does this make you an accessory before the fact??



As for the poor unfortunate who confessed he committed a murder after seeing the picture -- it is reported to me that he subsequently recanted and admitted he killed before viewing the film: in fact, his later enlargements and explanations revealed a most disoriented state. I'd certainly hate to think that I, or (to associate myself with much more exalted personages) Edgar Allan Poe or Robert Louis Stevenson or Guy De Maupassant were responsible for setting off a wave of murders. I'd much prefer to believe that our writing provides a comparatively harmless way in which millions of readers can discharge a subconscious aggression. And always, in my writing, I try to give an honest insight into the workings of the tortured mind of the aberrant character: he is never just a "monster", nor is his activity pictured as one which brings him happiness.

To me, the real horror-figure of our society is the apparently completely accepted hero of the western and whodunnit sagas: the lawman or private eye who elects himself judge, jury and executioner and goes around killing his enemies blithely and continuously, without any compunctions at all because he is on the side of "justice". The principle involved -- i.e., that any individual vested with the slightest authority can consciously and conscientiously murder almost at will in weekly episodes or monthly installments -- seems to me to be far more damaging than the presentation of an obviously unbalanced and obviously unhappy criminal type who kills and destroys himself in the process. There is nothing alluring or enticing in my monsters which would cause anyone who is not already mentally ill to emulate them. Whereas the "sane" and "respected" sheriffs, marshals, private detectives, etc., are presented in a fashion where it's easy for the average viewer or reader to identify with them; and to envy them their freedom, their financial rewards, their attractiveness to women, the respect accorded them by other men, and their inevitable final triumphs.

QUESTION: Did you ever see Rod Serling's THE VELVET ALLEY in which the writer goes to Hollywood and then after initial success falls deeply into decay and failure?

Yes, I saw THE VELVET ALLEY. And while most writers out here vehemently deny that this pattern is valid, I am well aware of the number who have faced problems and have been destroyed: an amazing percentage end up on psychiatric couches, and/or become addicted to alcohol or narcotics. On the other hand, I am also well aware -- and have been for over twenty years -- of the personal situations of several hundred non-Hollywood professional writers in the SF and Fantasy field. Nobody writes their stories because they're poor and unknown and what happens to many of them is not "dramatic", merely shabby. But I assure you, the percentage of crackup and failure and personal unhappiness is no less, and probably a damned sight greater. I have weighed my own chances and decided I'd at least like to fail in more comfortable surroundings in my middle years. So be of good cheer and keep well, it was good hearing from you and please extend my regards to those few you may be in contact with.

And there we leave Robert Bloch in Sherman Oaks, California -- no writer deserves more, any of the success he will, I am sure, obtain in the future and if we don't hear from him or see him as much as we used to -- I'm sure you'll understand why -- and just what he is doing. And when you tune your television set in to Alfred Hitchcock's show -- or indeed any of the other half hour series on television plays, take a careful look to see who did write the script for the show -- I'm sure the name will be familiar. Good luck Bob -- and may the years to come bring you all the rewards in your new chosen field that you so rightly deserve.



RETURN^{TO} FANDOME

Created by George Metzger.

This issue of CAMBER marks the return to it's pages for the first time since 1958 of GEORGE METZGER one of fandom's most talented, most unique - and I feel, one of the most neglected. This is not George's fault but the fault of the technical methods we in fandom have at our employ for reproduction purposes. You see, although he is one of the most skilled artists in Califandom - George Metzger's work is so detailed it is virtually impossible to reproduce by the majority of methods available to fanzine editors. This is one of the reasons for the delay in this issue - the solving of the technical problems surrounding this following adventure that was started by George in 1958 and completed this year. I was unable to persuade any artist to cut this work on stencil as George himself cannot - not until Dave Prosser agreed finally to try this very difficult and complex job. Half this article has been completed on electronic stencils which are vastly expensive - the rest is Dave Prosser -- the creator - the one and only GEORGE E. METZGER.



DOCUMENTARY

1 GEORGE METZGER '58

I walked briskly thru swirling mists of London fog, and turned sharply, in- to the Rue De Morgue, drawn by the sounds of riot, orgy and Merseysippi that slushed out of the hazy ends of the street. The echoes of my footbeats tumbled back to me from the walls of the buildings in this quaint English street, tumbled back as if to restrain me from going further into an omnipresent adventure, the scent of which hung heavy in the intensified raw even- ning air. I had sinus trou- ble. The echoes grew more hollow ... I was nearing The FanDome.....

Suddenly I was brought to an abrupt halt. The echoes echoed away, leaving me to face the com- ing fates. I was hit with a deep sinking feeling. I was near The Fan Dome.....



Well, Almost...

And then I was there! (GAD) THE FAN DOME! Unchanged, it glared back into the night, challenging the dis- believer, but beckon- ing to neo-fan, true fan, and paleo-pro- alike. Dull light.....



..filtered thru the cracked glass..A beacon of promised oheer..I took a sauntering step to the door..and was startled to immobili- ty by a deep-pitched roar that shook the paving.



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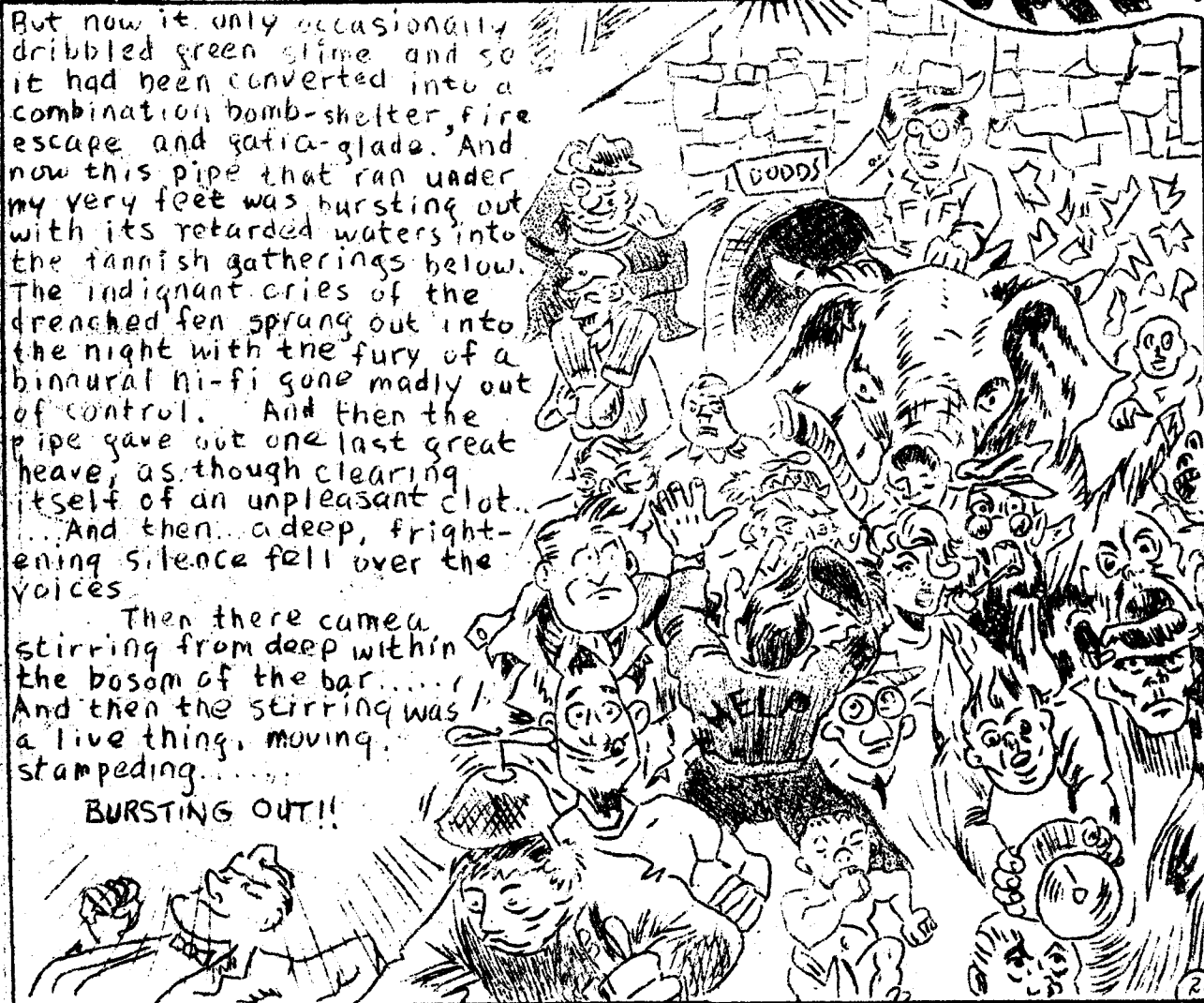
Below the street level an angry torrent screamed for release, plunging and heaving against the confining stones about it. It was the sound of water rushing hell-bent for leather... into the Fan-Dome? Ghu, was Dodd on latrine duty?? No, it's water, pouring in, but from where?? Of course; the old sewer pipe: an abandoned London Sewer System pipe which projected into the bar. It was legended to have originally been connected with the South End Network.

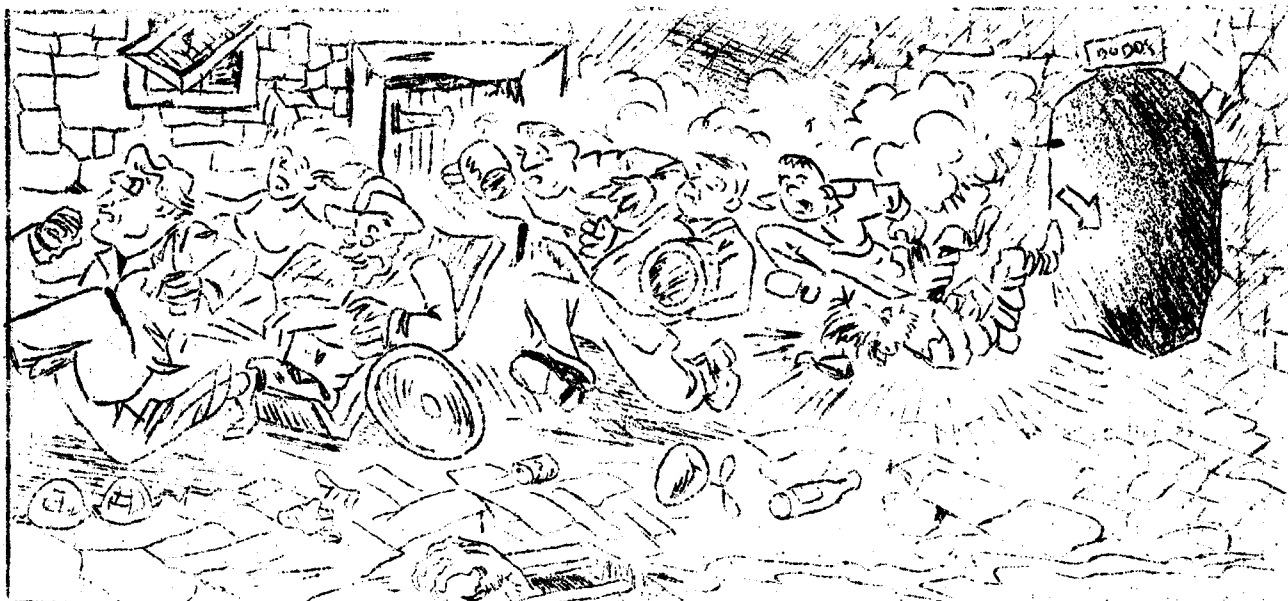


But now it only occasionally dribbled green slime and so it had been converted into a combination bomb-shelter, fire escape and gaffa-glade. And now this pipe that ran under my very feet was bursting out with its retarded waters into the fannish gatherings below. The indignant cries of the drenched fen sprang out into the night with the fury of a binural hi-fi gone madly out of control. And then the pipe gave out one last great heave, as though clearing itself of an unpleasant clot. And then... a deep, frightening silence fell over the voices.

Then there came a stirring from deep within the bosom of the bar. And then the stirring was a live thing, moving, stampeding.

BURSTING OUT!!





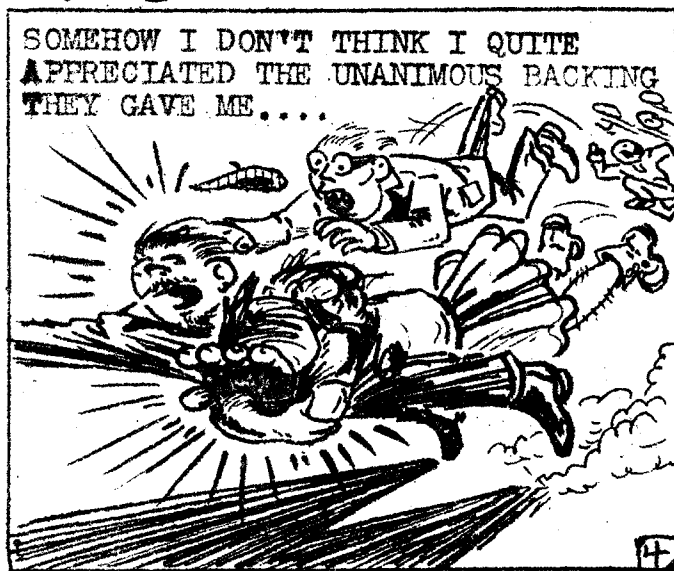
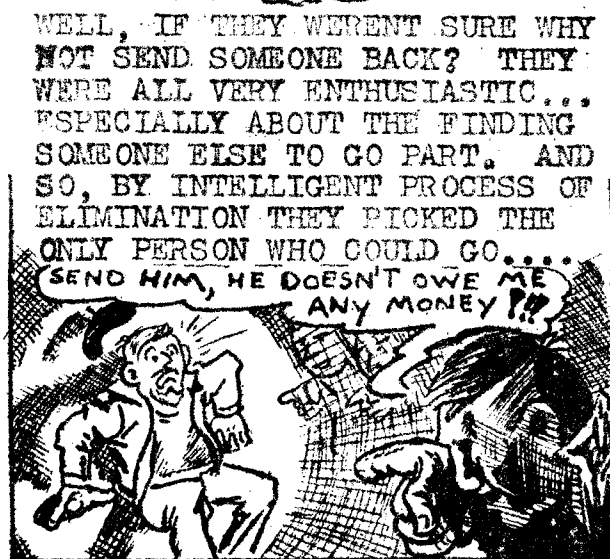
I PICKED MYSELF UP, BIT BY BIT, AND WATCHED THE LAST OF THE FEN RUNNING DOWN THE STREET AWAY FROM THE NOW DESERTED FAN DOME... OR WAS IT DESERTED? THEY HAD SEEN SOMETHING DOWN THERE... AND IT WAS STILL THERE!

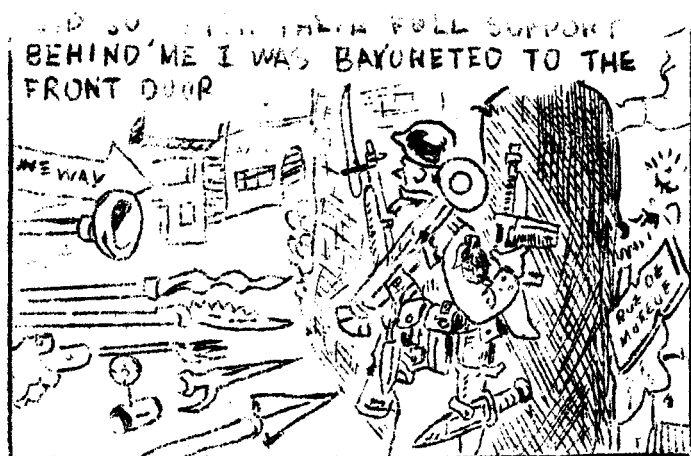
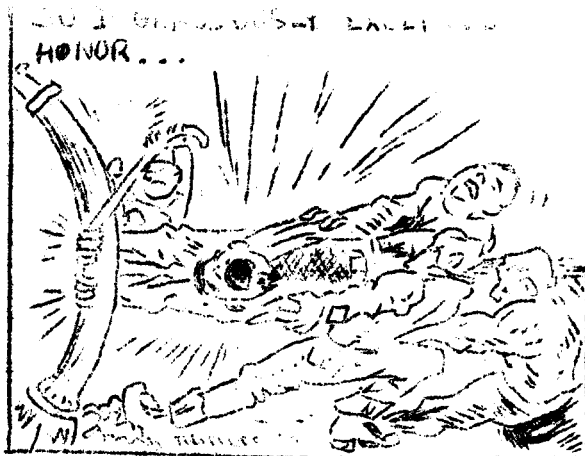


STAGGERING TO MY FEET I FOLLOWED THE EXODUS ON DOWN TO WHERE IT'D FINALLY RUN OUT OF BREATH. DODD WOULD BE THERE. HE MIGHT KNOW WHAT HORROR COULD UNHINGE THESE VETERANS OF MANY A CONVENTION???? BESIDES, DODD HAD A KEG OF BEER!

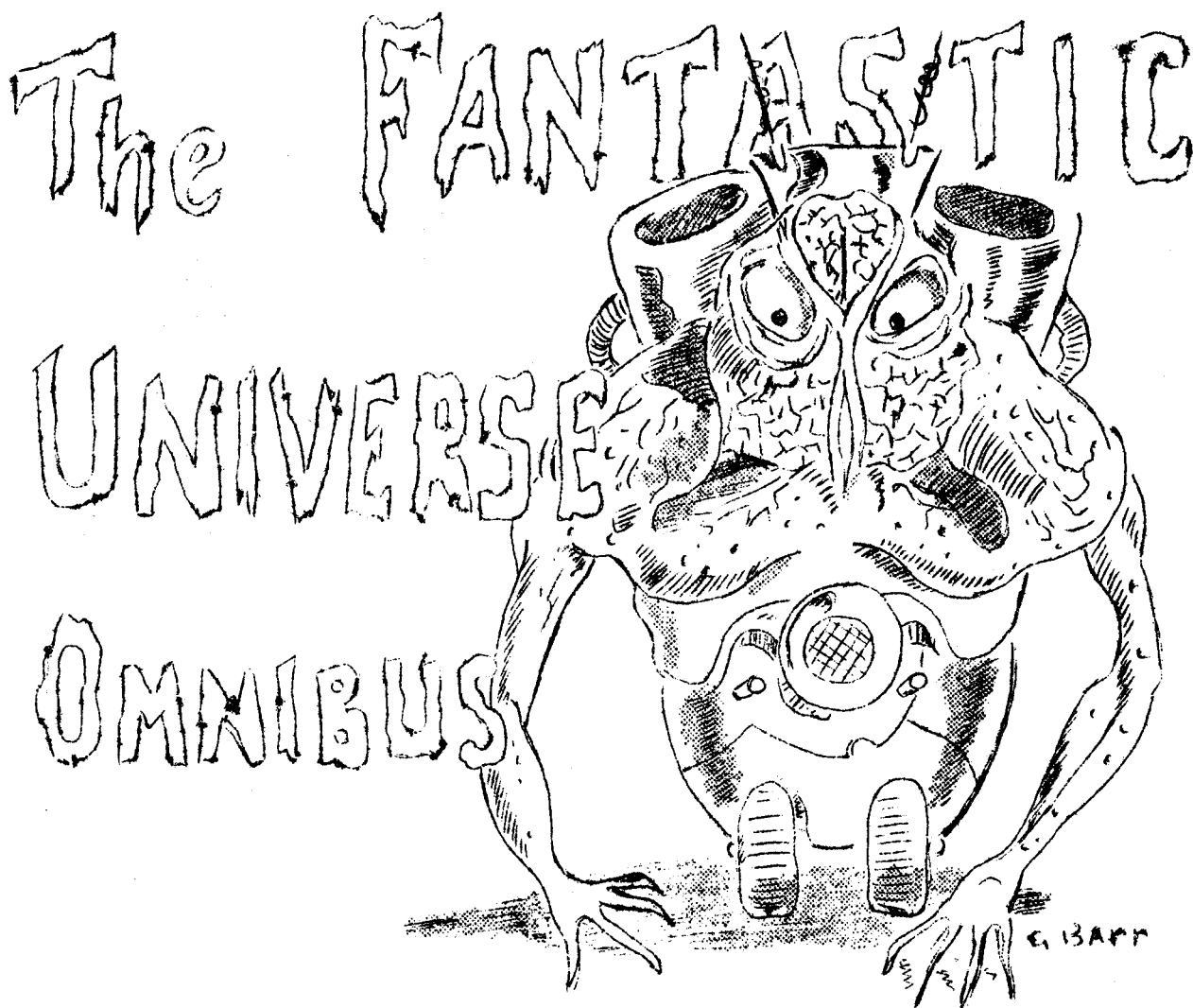
NO, DODD SAID, HE HADN'T SEEN ANYTHING. HE HADN'T HAD TIME. A SUDDEN SURGE OF SWAMPY WATER HAD POURED OUT OF THE PIPE AND HE HAD ONLY HAD TIME TO SAVE HIS BEST KEG OF BEER BEFORE HE WAS CAUGHT UP IN THE HYSTERICAL RUSH UP THE STAIRS. BUT SOME OF THE FEN HAD SEEN THE THINGS FROM THE PIPE, AND NOW THEY WERE HOLDING A MEETING ABOUT IT.











Reviewed by Mike Deckinger.

In case you don't already know - free review copies of THE FANTASTIC UNIVERSE OMNIBUS were given out to quite a number of American fans for review purposes. Buck Coulson didn't get one, Craig Cochran didn't get one and I didn't get one. We are all very annoyed. In fact I haven't had a review copy of any book from a publisher ever. I am doubly annoyed. C'mon out THERE - where's all them free books then you miserbale lotaa perishers - what's up with the English publishers, a touch of the old tighfistedness? C'mon Mr. Scrooge....

THE FANTASTIC UNIVERSE OMNIBUS edited by Hans Stefan Santesson, Prentice Hall, Inc., 70 Fifth Ave., New York 11, N.Y., U.S.A. 270 pages. 3 dollars 95¢ (That's around 28 bob friends of the old country)

Usually I do not get hardcover books as soon as they come out, but since the publishers of this volume were nice enough to send me a reviewer's copy, I feel the least I can do is to give them a nice review of this book. ((And as an editor of a fanzine I think I can do know more than print it because I am all in favour of supporting any publisher that gives free review copies to fans - even if I don't get one. Hint Hint.))

Unfortunately, it would be difficult to give a very glowing account of this anthology, because frankly I can't say that I thought it was the best I've read, or even one of the best, though it isn't on the bottom of the list either.

The first issue of FANTASTIC UNIVERSE appeared in 1953, yet all the stories in this collection were published between 1956 and 1959, which must mean the editor didn't have too high a regard for the quality of the stories in those early days. Only until recently, did the quality of FU increase, with the advent of a new size, and a fanzine review column, before then the magazine was nothing more than a third rate publication, and never a serious contender to the throne of the "Big Three". There is a touch of irony to this also, since this anthology appeared only a little while after the magazine folded.

But let's get on to the stories. There is an even smattering of science fiction as well as fantasy among the roster, and I also believe this marks the first anthologisation of stories by Harlan Ellison and Robert Silverberg.

One story in particular is definitely worthy of mention, Bloch's "A WAY OF LIFE" which should be required reading for any professing to be a faan, or even a fan. It is the story of a future Earth based on fandom with references to many BNFs, as well as many of the top fanzines of the past like HYPHEN, PEON, QUANDRY, etc etc. And what's more it's a good story; the kind Bloch generally does write. In fact, there are more fannish allusions in this story, than in much fanzine faan fiction. A WAY OF LIFE should definitely be an inducement for this collection, and could well become a classic.

Judith Merrill's EXILE FROM SPACE is one of those annoying stories that everyone seems to like but me. The plot is trivial with little twists, and the execution remains minor, but there seems to be something about it that makes it more than it is. Miss Merrill can write good stories, without combining an over abundance of sentimentality. But on the whole, I'd say it was above the general quality of most of the stories.

In an effort to prove there is a positronic robot who will disobey the first law of robotics and cause harm to come to a human being, Isaac Asimov has FIRST LAW, a vignette lengthened tale about a robot who does just that, and even though the reader is supposed

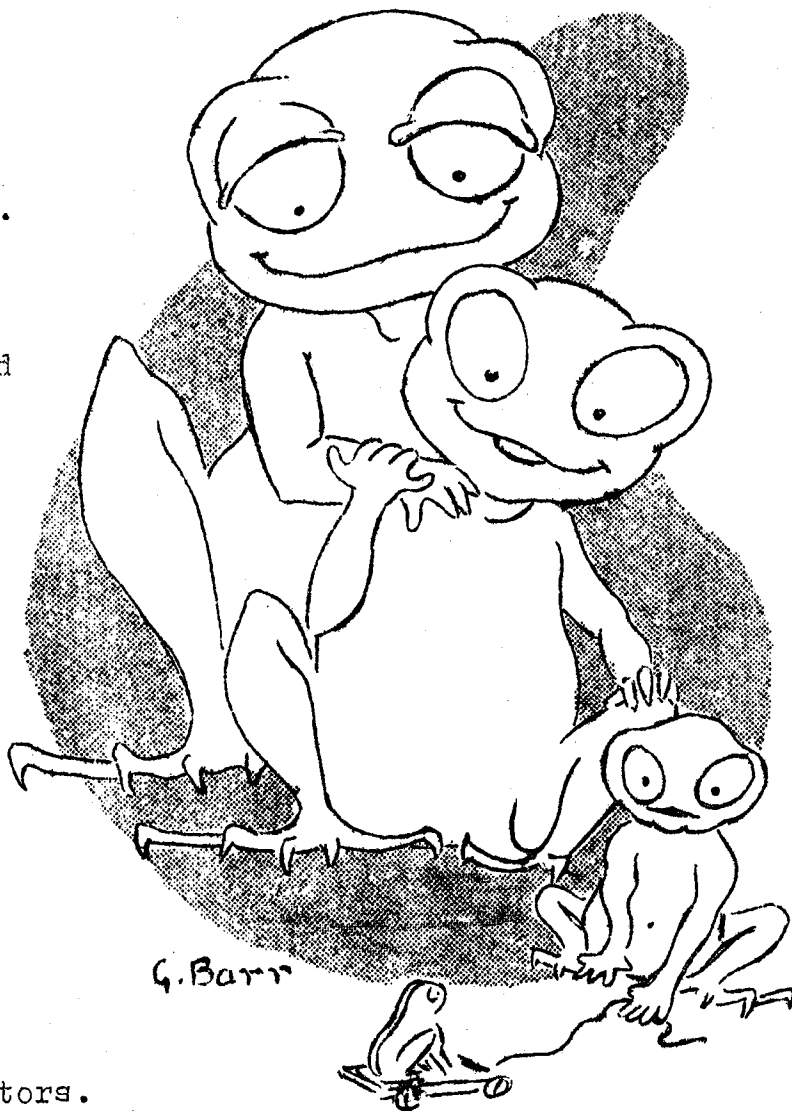
to sit back and say "Of course, that's how he did it," I did not.

Humour isn't bad, but William Tenn has combined it with vampirism to get SHE ONLY GOES OUT AT NIGHT which is supposed to be a light treatment of the efforts of a man to marry a vampire girl, and falls flat on its face without ever regaining its stance, because it seems to me that humour and levity have no place in certain fields, vampirism and gothic horror being among them.

A. Bertram Chandler is represented with FALL OF KNIGHT, which is similar in some respects to the Bloch story, because it's the type of story I wouldn't expect to see published in a prozine, much less anthologised. This little feghoot leads up to one pun, which should be well known to any punster who cares enough about them to come down to basics. The story is banal enough, and the only sustaining element is the ending.

MEX by Larry Harris is a very short, social-commentary type story, this time on racism and racial hatred between whites and Mexicans. Other than that it's totally worthless with little theme and practically no fantasy element to it. I think it was fitted in just to even out the pages.

Henry Slesar, who can write good fiction when he wants, is represented with MY FATHER, THE CAT, and the title pretty well sums up the main theme of this little fantasy. It's very minor, and only slightly amusing. Sam Moskowitz is here too, but his story, THE GOLDEN PYRAMID could just as well have been excluded, it's a typical look-what-we found-on Mars type story, and rather disappointing. If you don't have any of these stories in the original form in FU it might be worthwhile to get this, otherwise - only for collectors.



HELP STAMP OUT ALAN DODD

By ARCHIE MERCER.

John Campbell, Junior, does repair
Hotfoot to Hoddesdon (Herts) by air,
Complete with his divining rod,
To help stamp out Alan Dodd.

When Terry Jeeves takes kids at school
He teaches them this Golden Rule:
"Be kind and good to every bod,
And help stamp out Alan Dodd."

The Science Fiction Club of London
Eschew connections with the mundane.
They cultivate the strange and odd
And help stamp out Alan Dodd.

Manchester fandom weeps because
These days it's never what it was;
"Hail vanished glory, Ichabod,
And help stamp out Alan Dodd".

George Raybin stands before the court.
His presecuting speech is short:
"I do entreat this court, m'Lod,
To help stamp out Alan Dodd".

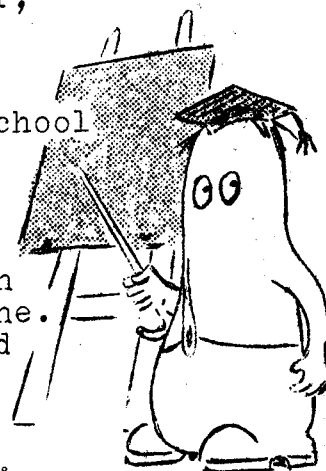
Trufins march in marine parade.
The stately banner here displayed
Between a starfish and a cod
Read:



HELP STAMP OUT ALAN DODD.

Harrison braves the savage legions
To bring The Word to darkest regions
Where white man's foot has never trod:
"Help to stamp out Alan Dodd".

John Berry in the Emerald Isle
Combats crime with stealth and guile,
To make a heaven of Irish sod,
And help to stamp out Alan Dodd.



FOR
STAMPING





Paul Enever in dungarees
Looks for maggots in the peas,
Clears his garden pod by pod,
Helping to stamp out Alan Dodd.

Harry Warner of Hagerstown
As anchorite has wide renown
Meditating on his tod
How best to stamp out Alan Dodd.

Bob Tucker, as we know full well,
Builds the ideal Con Hotel,
Wondering as he hefts his hod:
"How can I stamp out Alan Dodd"

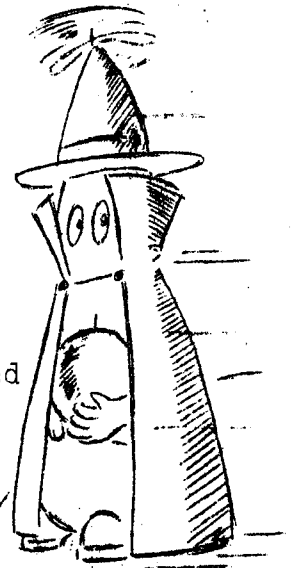
Steve Schultheis of the Middle West
Is never less than smartly dressed.
With feet that are superbly shod
He helps to stamp out Alan Dodd.

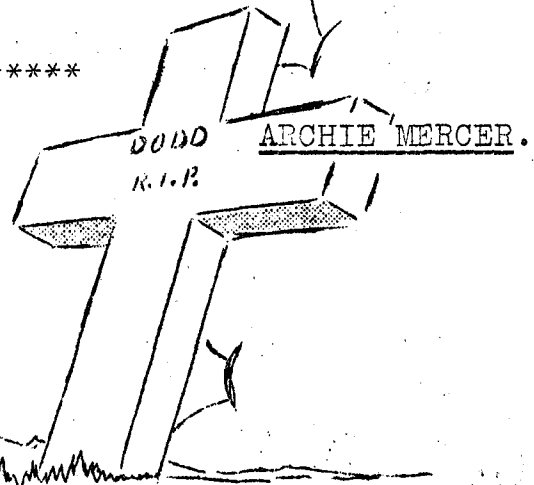
The way is long, the wind is cold,
The minstrel he is frial and old.
As on his weary way he'll plod
He'll help stamp out Alan Dodd.

The shades of night were falling fast
As Pierre Versins through Lausanne passed
Vowing with every Alp he trod
To help stamp out Alan Dodd.

Scotsmen at their Highland Games stuff,
Irishmen at their Ballyjamesduff,
Welshmen at their Eisteddfod,
All help to stamp out Alan Dodd.

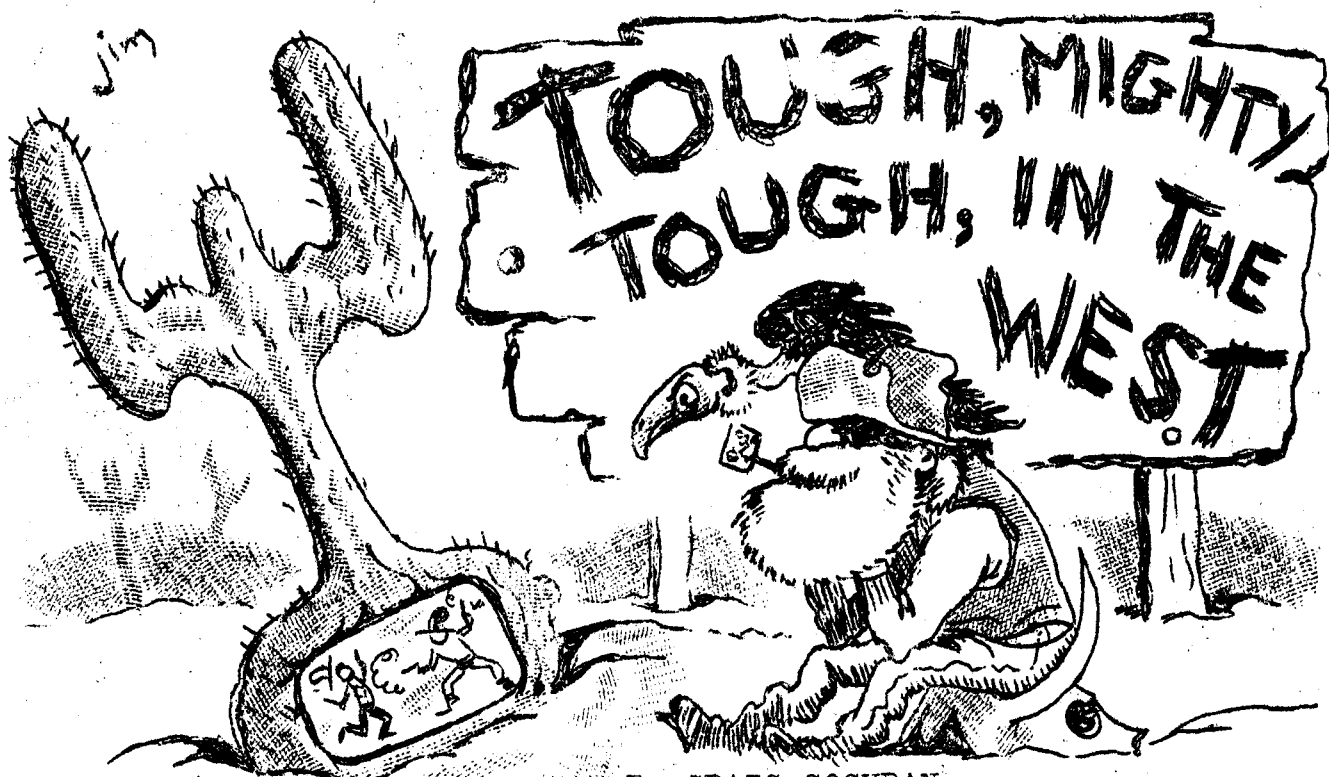
*
BLEEPSKI
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*
(MEANING,
STAMP OUT
DODD)





By CRAIG COCHRAN.

As interviewed by ALAN DODD.

"Scottsdale, Arizona, often called the "West's Most Western Town", is one of the most picturesque communities in Arizona. Board-fronted shops and stores, complete with rustic hitching rails, give the town all the appearance of an old, frontier-type community. And you can spend many delightful hours browsing through the town's interesting streets and stores." So says the guide book. Scottsdale is the home of one of the world's most unique science fiction writers - PHILIP JOSE FARMER. This is his town. But since he is very busy like most successful writers I had to find another citizen of this fine old town to recount to me what the West is like these days. Has the West changed is it still the Wild West? How are the Frontier Days this time of the century. I interviewed many people but it was not until I came across a wizened old prospector buried back in the desert just outside of town that I first learned the secrets of what the West is really like. Perhaps this may help you to understand the background of the place Farmer writes his work. The old prospector, who took a little persuading finally decided to answer a few questions that I put to him. This then, is what I learned from the old fellow:-

QUESTION: The song says - "Out in Arizona where the bad men are.." Aren't there any bad wimmin??

CRAIG: I suppose there were, and still are for that fact, bad wimmin

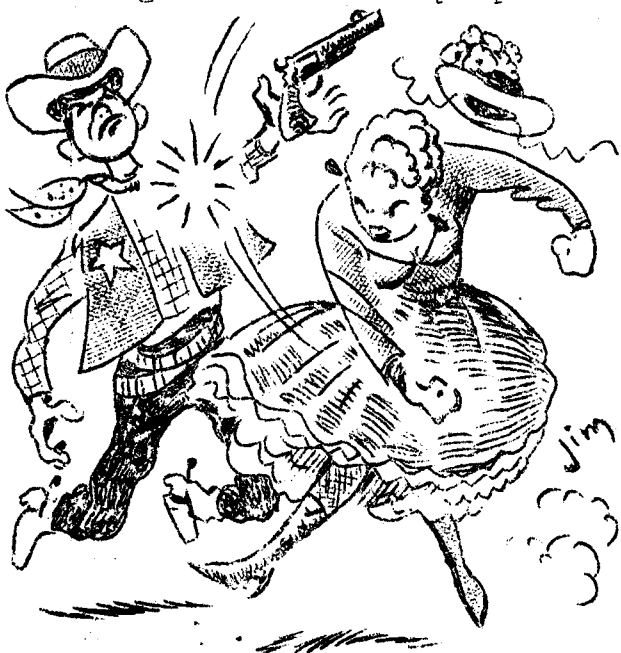
in this Bad Man's State. I don't know any of them personally at this time. ((Aw shucks!)) On many of the Westerns there are bad wimmin but they always let their bad man boyfriend do all the dirty work. When the hero is having a fist fight with her boy friend (the co-villain she will either try to run or else change her ways and try to shoot the hero. When she does this the two men all of a sudden turn around so that she shoots the bad guy instead. If she loves the guy she will rush to his body and kneel down and start crying so that the hero can take the gun away. If she didn't love the guy she will decide to shoot the hero and take off but the hero will always manage to get the gun out of her hand. The last thing they will show will be the woman in the jail. They can't show any more because that's where the people would see the villainous soften the Marshall up, steal his gun when he is standing by the cell talking to her and then she escapes with a "cloud of dust and a high-ho Silver".

QUESTION: In SERGEANT RUTLEDGE John Ford travels back to Arizona to show a little railway station out in the wilds where Constance Towers walks in one dark night, taps the station master on the back and he falls over backwards with a bloodstained Apache arrow protruding from his chest. Now tell me - I don't suppose this has happened to you has it??

CRAIG: You guessed it right. I've never had the privilege of walking into a lonely, little old Arizona railway station, tapping the station master on the back and having him topple over with a blood stained arrow sticking in his chest. Such a pity. Some guys don't have any luck. Yeah, things is pretty much tamed in this here part of our great country. Why, we haven't been attacked by a band of wild Indians for more than a month now. Things is getting dull and borin' around here. All the Indians have gone up to Prescott. They say they have gotten tired of attacking the same old town every day, seeing the same old people every day and living in the same old place

every day but we know that that is just an excuse. The truth is we have scared 'em off and besides they're softies and they can't stand the heat. Oh, boy, but we were lucky to have Cheyenne, Jim Hardie, Major Adams, Bronco Lane and Donald Duck around in the days of the Wild West to keep Geronimo and Cochise in their places.

I suppose there are a few prospectors that live their entire lives out on the desert but most prospectors work for large companies and live in the city. When they go



out prospecting they get a few weeks' supply of food, a portable light, stove, radio etc and a travelling john ((That I would HAVE to see!)) and then they hop in a jeep or some other four wheel drive vehicle go out on the desert, pitch a tent and stay there for a week or so. Nobody ever looks for uranium anymore because the Government is over-stocked and aren't buying any more. Some still look for oil, silver and copper but not many, the big companies got most of it already. A new oil field was discovered up in one of the Indian reservations a few months ago. Some prospectors still search the Superstition Mountains looking for the Lost Dutchman's Mine but I doubt if they will ever find it. Being a prospector is the one thing I never wanted to be somehow. How many prospectors ever make their big strike or ever end up with money. Most of them work hard all their life and never have anything to show for it. ((Except they get old and wizened??))



QUESTION: Near you lies "Paradise Valley" - knowing the habit of people to call desolate areas and the worst part of the country "Paradise" I suspect this is a dried up, bone littered valley. Is true?

CRAIG: I assure you that there are no bones laying about that belonged to people who died of thirst. It's pretty nice out here. Lots of lizards though. There are a few scorpions and spiders about but they don't bother us because there is insecticide sprayed all over. I've never seen a live rattle snake out by this house but the Siamese cat did kill one and bring it up and dump it on the lawn. It scared me when I found myself standing by a rattlesnake. I didn't know it was dead at first. I don't see how the cat could kill it without being bitten but I guess I underestimate the speed of it. There are a none poisonous breed of snakes called King Snakes that eat rattlesnakes. The rattler will bite him but he is immune to their poison.

There are lots of scorpions strolling about and lots of people get stung by them but hardly anyone dies from their sting. Just put ice on it right away and you're safe. ((But where do you find ice in a 114 degree desert?)) If a person is allergic to their poison then they'll die but I don't think anyone is.

Tarantulas can bite you but they are not poisonous. The only thing they can do is scare you half to death. They look so horrible. I about died this summer when I stepped on a large one in my bare feet. It was harmless, but still.... Tarantulas don't come in houses.

How could they get in unless you leave the door open and invite them in? They are great big things about 3 inches in diameter ((Mighod! but they live in a hole about 1 inch in diameter.((No wonder they are so bad tempered.)) Yes, they live in holes. They squeeze in them in some way and put a bit of spider web over the entrance.

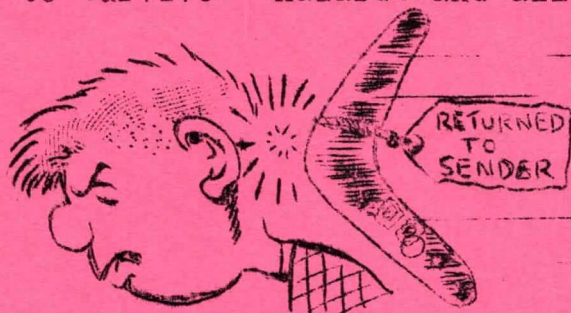
QUESTION: I don't much care for my stationmaster either - do you happen to have genuine Apache arrow around you could let me have just in case?

CRAIG. I don't think I have any Indian arrows in my trunk. Every year we return all of those they fired at the fort back to them because they have forgotten how to make new ones and if we didn't return them they would have to give up fighting and go to farming.

FINAL QUESTION: How can you or Philip Jose Farmer possibly find time to sit around at a typewriter with all those interesting things happening around you?

CRAIG: I have plenty of time to sit around the typewriter. I am an odd ball, I just don't care to go out and see dead mailmen, gila monsters, rattle snakes, scorpions, spiders and all the other beautiful things.

And there we have the Wild West today, as you can see - it isn't exactly the ideal place for a science fiction writer - but some seem to survive - hazards and all.....



*****THE END*****

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