

WHITE TRASH



BY TED WHITE

WELCOME TO EGOBOO,
The Fanzine That
Asks The Question,
"What is Happiness"

I suppose it was in-
evitable: you think
up what you proudly
come to regard as A
Good Fanzine Title,

and sooner or later you can no longer re-
sist the urge to use it. EGOBOO came to
me in a flash of something-or-other in
late 1964, and has been waiting ever since
for a fanzine to happen to. Periodically
I'd mention it to a friend. "What do you
think of that?" I'd ask, and most of them
(those who remained friends) would reply,
"Hey, pretty good stuff there, boy!" or
words to that effect.

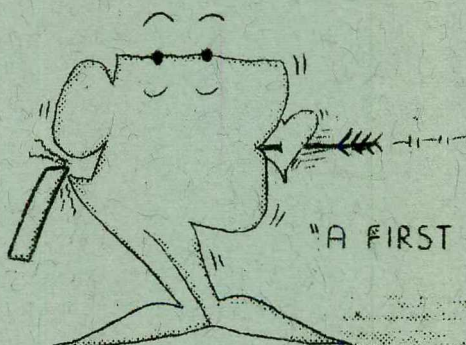
The last fanzine I edited for gener-
al circulation (which is to say, outside
the apas) was MINAC. If you remember MIN-
AC, and you look closely at EGOBOO, you'll see some parallels. But not
all that many. EGOBOO is small, like MINAC, and it has two editors who
write all (or most) of the material, like MINAC, and even the format may
look a little like MINAC, this issue anyway, but EGOBOO is not MINAC.
To begin with, we promise no frequency of schedule whatsoever. EGOBOO
will come out when it's time for you out there to receive some EGOBOO --
no sooner, no later. Secondly, Johnny Berry is not Les Gerber (for bet-
ter or worse) and his half of this sterling fanzine (somewhat devalued)
is simply a continuation (in spirit and in name) of his MAVERICK, which
ran some eight issues on its own. In fact, EGOBOO is really MAVERICK
with me tacked on in front.

Howsomever: EGOBOO will find its own symbiotic style, its own pur-
pose, its own identity, and reap its own egoboo. Which is fitting.

I GO TO A WRITERS' CONFERENCE: If I may brag for a moment, I'd like to
mention the fact that my first sf juven-
ile novel is doing Real Fine, in both sales and reviews (a related phen-
omenon); so well in fact that my publisher, Westminster Press, decided
I deserved a trip to Philadelphia (two hours south of here), where West-
minster resides. The vehicle for this, since my Westminster editor was
a director of the Philadelphia Writers' Conference, was an invitation
to attend said Conference to conduct a Workshop.

That sounds a little snide, but I found the offer egoboosting and
I accepted with but a single reservation: the Conference was to take
place the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the Midwestcon, and I
didn't want to miss any more of the Midwestcon than I had to.

EGOBOO



"A FIRST ISSUE"

Well, my schedule was adjusted so that my workshops occurred between 11:00 and 12:00 noon, so that I could leave immediately after the Friday session for Cincinnati. So I accepted.

But what, I wondered, does one do in conducting a mundane Writers' Conference Workshop? I asked my agent.

"Bull them along," he said. "Most can't write, but they don't want to be told that. Give them fifty-percent honesty and fifty-percent inspiration." Later, when I talked with Barbara Bates, my editor at Westminster, she said the same thing.

Westminster handled the hotel reservations and picked up the tab, as well as treating us to most of our meals. It was a red-carpet treatment, and the first such I've received. All during our three days in Philly I kept thinking to myself, "Say, maybe this Writer Racket is a good thing!"

But we almost didn't go. We were planning to drive down Tuesday evening, so I'd be fresh and raring to go for my Wednesday morning workshop. Westminster had made a reservation for us at the downtown Holliday Inn. But we were a little delayed in leaving, and Robin, with a premonition, suggested I call the Holliday Inn to confirm our reservation. "After all, how long do they hold reservations?" she asked.

The answer turned out to be Not Long. The man I spoke with told me in firm tones that I had no reservation, and that there was no possibility of my having a reservation, since every hotel and motel in Philly was booked solid and had been for weeks, due to a Borough Councilmen convention of some sort. "I suggest you stop at a Holliday Inn halfway down, in New Jersey," the fatuous ass told me.

"That tears that," I said in a mood of black disgust. But then I began making phone calls. Eventually I located Barbara Bates at her home. And she explained that the reservation had been switched to the nearby Bellevue Stratford. "They had a written note on it," she said. "They should've read it to you." They didn't. Chalk up another one for efficient hotels.

Due to the delays we finally left NYC after 9:00 pm, arriving in Philly after eleven. It was a Tuesday night, and Broad Street was more lively than I've ever seen it before.

The biggest reason, of course, was all those Borough Councilmen, staunch men and true I have no doubt, who seemed less than one step removed from American Legionnaires. But we turned the Weiss Rak VI over to the doorman, who kept his cool remarkably when we climbed tired and scruffy from a Lincoln, checked into the hotel, went out for a brief walk about, and finally turned in to bed while drunken Borough Councilmen roamed the halls.

Wednesday morning we went across the street to Westminster Press, and had the red carpet and Pepsi rolled out for us. It was a pleasure to meet everyone there, a pleasure to discover my editor was a really fine human being, and a pleasure to be told that my book was already in its third printing and was still selling well. A real pleasure.

A few minutes before 11:00 am, as I was settling into my role as Workshop Leader (Mystery & Suspense), an imposing matron bore heavily down on me. "I'm M.J.R. Arthur, and I'd like to make an appointment with you for a conference," she said.

"Conference?" I echoed.

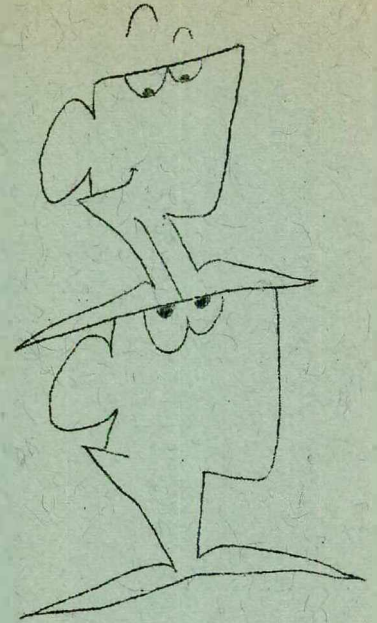
"Just the fifteen-minute free conference," she said. "I don't want the half-hour conference; I don't want to pay extra." Later -- only later -- I found out that I could've made money on that half-hour conference. But I didn't know then. I told her to see me after the session.

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TED HAD THAT gleam in his eye, as he bent over the light-table. He had a stylus in his hand, and a stencil on the table; the single light under the table reflected off the walls and the face of Ted White, grinning madly, while Robin White and I clustered about him on stools. As he stencilled the headings for this issue of EGOBOO, Robin and I could see that finally Ted White--BNF, candidate for the Best Fan Writer Hugo, former worldcon chairman--had caught the fanzine madness again.

He was going to publish a fanzine.

Those of you who open up EGOBOO, glance at it, and mutter, "Oh, another Ted White fanzine," will be right. Or at least half right. This collaboration is essentially Ted and I both doing together what I was doing alone with my own MAVERICK: it's a letter-substitute, and a small fanzine that doesn't take much effort to produce and ought to appear fairly often. We will print letters, when we have enough interesting ones; send them to me, please. Also please send all queries about why you are or are not on the mailing list to me, as I'm handling all such details. If you are getting this issue of EGOBOO, it means we have you on our ~~Little/List~~ mlg list, but to stay on it we suggest that you respond.



MAVERICK

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I'VE COME ACROSS what I think is a new parallel for fanzines. It occurred to me while I was reading Eric Hoffer's The True Believer, when he remarked on the satisfaction that is gained by a craftsman as he sees something being created under his own hands. "The decline of handicrafts in modern times is perhaps one of the causes for the rise of frustration," says Hoffer, and immediately I made the connection with my fanac. Why do I publish fanzines? What is it that I get out of fanning that makes it worth all the frustrations that it also brings me? This is a question that a lot of fans ask themselves, and often the answer is: "Nothing." They then gaffate, either by keeping up friendships but ceasing all fanac, or by going down in a blaze of wrath against fandom's "paper world."

In looking over some old fanzines I got from Bruce Pelz, specifically Ted White's GAMBIT 25 and Gregg Calkins's OOPSLA 28/29 and 30, and comparing them to the latest issue of my own FOOLSCAP, I realized how much the appearance of the fanzine means to me. I am much less likely to get fed-up with fandom for an evening if I'm reading a beautiful, neat, pleasing package like Oopsla or Gambit than if I'm poring over the last BADINAGE or even a WARHOON from a few years ago. Packaging has a great effect on me; my surroundings can dictate my mood, and when I get "into" a fanzine, the layout, the typeface, and the artwork are my "surroundings." After I've cleaned up untidy piles of clothes and papers and fanzines around my room, for instance, and have some clear floor-space and my shelves neatly arranged, I am very apt to feel a lot more joyful than if I'm squatting in the middle of a

pigstie. In the same way I am much happier in a fanzine with an attractive, open appearance than in pages and pages of scruffy text.

Then when I'm producing a fanzine, what I'm doing is creating something. I pick the material, I write much of it, I draw or solicit the artwork, I arrange the layout, I even (ghod help me!) generally do the mimeographing and collating. It's all mine; I've created it and sent it out upon the world. And I like recognition for what I've done. That's why I've toyed with the idea of doing what Les Nirenberg did with his PANIC BUTTON several years ago: he eliminated just a few of the ultra-fannishs, keeping the fannish atmosphere, and sold it on newsstands all over Toronto. It was reviewed as "Canada's answer to THE REALIST" (which is practically a fanzine itself). For the same reasons I shy away from the idea of being a professional editor or even publisher of a major magazine, with a vast organization under me doing most of the work; it would take away the element of craftsmanship.

My fanzine is a handicraft; fandom is one of the few places where I actually create things that are relatively worthwhile for a responsive audience. Of course I am never satisfied with the finished product; as soon as a fanzine is on stencil I begin picking nits in it and seeing where it really isn't as good as I thought it was, but after a few months I can look back on it and be proud of what I've created. It's something concrete that I've done, something that I can point to and say, "That's mine. I made it."

It's a good feeling. And maybe that's one reason I'm a fan.

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FANZINE FEVER: QUIP (8; Spring, 1968; bimonthly; 50¢, loc, contrib, trade; mimeo; Arnie Katz, 98 Patton Blvd., New Hyde Park, NY 11040; 42 pp.) With this issue, Quip is fully recovered from the delays of the past year and the fiasco of the USPOD vs. QUIP 7. It is the first of the smaller, more frequent issues; Cindy Van Arnam was co-editor for this issue, but from now on Arnie will edit it alone, with aid and abettance from me and Cindy and the rest of the nedbuous "Quip Gestalt" (copyright 1968; all rights reserved). #8 is the best issue in a long time, with a finely-balanced concentration of Good Stuff by Ted White, Charles Burbee, Lon Atkins, Harry Warner, F.M. Busby, Dick Geis, Dick Lupoff, and Arnie (and a lettercol that consists entirely of a letter from me on Q 6). The zine is becoming increasingly visual, and this issue features generally good layout and a good deal of excellent Joe Staton cartoons. Ted's "Who Was That Neofan I Saw You With Last Night" is an intelligent article on what goes into making a neofan or a BNF. Arnie himself is hitting a peak as a fanwriter with a fine editorial and a very funny little piece on Alan Shaw and Heavy Black Lines, which strikes me as the best of the short humorous items Arnie has been doing lately. The next issue will be out this summer, and when the lettercolumn--the only thing now lacking--begins thriving again, Quip will again rank as one of the best fannish genzines.

--John D. Berry

/WHITE TRASH, Continued from page 2/

A few weeks before the Conference I'd been sent an envelope containing five manuscripts. These had been submitted for my consideration and criticism by prospective members of my workshop.

They were all dreadful. They read like the poorer stories I'd read in F&SF's slush pile. None of them were even salvageable. One had been by Mrs. M.J.R. Arthur, who had played coy about her sex with this impressive row of initials before her name.

During our "conference" she confided to me that she had written five books. She'd not yet sold any of them, but she wrote eight hours a day, and she obviously had great stamina. One of them was a biography of Pearl Buck, as seen through that woman's books. "She's trying to suppress it," Mrs. Arthur told me. I had an instant feeling of *deja vu*. "We were such good friends, but then she had a change of heart and now she refuses to allow it to be published. What can I do?"

I told her to wait until Pearl Buck died.

The first workshop I talked about markets (everyone wanted to write books for paperback publication), contracts and agents. I told them exactly what any writers' magazine could tell them. Periodically I picked up a copy of my *Westminster* book, or of my just-out *Captain America* book (my only work of 'mystery & suspense') to illustrate my points. It was all very fresh and exciting for them.

"Them" were about a dozen little old ladies, a recently divorced younger woman obviously at loose ends, an adolescent boy who'd come all the way from California and hid behind shades, and a police reporter who asked if he could tape me (I said sure). I began with the assumption that none of them had sold a thing (I was going by the manuscripts I'd seen) but several enlightened me by telling me they sold to church publications and confessions magazines. (The latter woman, a sweet little old lady, totally startled me by showing me a manuscript that was completely competent and quite salable. I'm afraid that in my surprise and pleasure I all but wept on her shoulder. But she was gratified.) At the end of the first session another little old lady rose and asked in a quivering voice if she'd blundered into the wrong workshop. "I came here to learn how to write," she cried. My perspectives were restored.

But the next two sessions we did talk about writing. I did most of the talking. I only got to talking of the first manuscript (their authors all were happy to have Their Children discussed in public), but after I was done another woman came up and asked for hers back too. "You answered all my questions, and you told me exactly what was wrong with my story," she said. Which, obliquely, I had.

Thursday night was the reception and banquet. The reception was notable for the way little old ladies can gulp martinis and whiskey sours (I had only two; I needed them), and the banquet for good food (at \$7.50) and an incredible selection of speakers.

Two major speakers were featured, and after the usual self-congratulatory speeches by organization functionaries and some 'blue' remarks at which the ladies laughed uproariously (too uproariously), the first, a surgeon, told us how we should avoid ulcers. Yes, he did: actually and literally.

The second speaker was C. Hall Thompson, an author of westerns (I started one; couldn't read it), who compared himself incessantly with Tom Wolfe and Hemmingway, told us he was an Author, not a Professional Writer (like Hammett), and generally inspired a throbbing in every little old lady's breast. "Well, he's better than Richard Gehman," Barbara Bates told me; "Gehman just got totally sloshed and told a series of dirty jokes last year." I had to admit Thompson was exactly what the

audience wanted to hear, but the next day, in my final session, I made it a point to contradict most of the bilge in his speech.

Reports which have reached me since, say, "the writers say you had the best workshop going;" "best mystery instruction ever;" "one of the most interesting workshops I've ever been in;" "so helpful"...etc. But once was enough.

During the banquet I listened in quiet fascination as various people around our table compared notes on all the latest Writers' Conferences they'd attended. One elderly man, who couldn't make up his mind between George Wallace and Richard Nixon, but wished Kennedy hadn't been shot because he'd have voted for Kennedy, talked of the dozens of Conferences he'd been to in the last few years. It became increasingly obvious to me that these people are trapped in their own strange little fandom: Would-be Writers' Fandom. Most can't write, and will never write. But the "creativity" of the profession attracts them as a flame will moths, and they flutter about the Conferences so as to never burn themselves with the truth of their own ineptitude. Sad, pathetic, and sometimes disgusting. *Sigh*

Once was interesting. It was even fun. But twice would be tiring, and more than that an exercise in futility. I'd like to walk into such a session and, just once, be brutally honest: "Almost all of you cannot write and should not be here. You're wasting your time and my time. Go away." But of course I didn't, and I won't. But I won't go back for seconds.

Friday was Old Newsboys' Day in Philadelphia. A band played under our window during my last workshop. I said goodbye to everyone, collected my check, and we checked out.

While we waited on the sidewalk for the car to be brought around a cab pulled up and Lee Hoffman climbed out. "Good timing, Lee," I said. "Our car will be here in a minute. You get in on the 12:30 bus?"

"No," Lee said. "I got in at noon. It just took this long to get a cab and get over here. Parades everywhere." At least I think that's what she said; the music was pretty loud.

It took twenty minutes for them to bring my car, but finally we were in and off. Cincinnati lay eleven hours and thirty minutes to the west. But that's another story... -Ted White

EGOB00 #1 is co-edited and published by John D. Berry (35 Dusenberry Rd., Bronxville, N.Y., 10708) and Ted White (339, 49th St., Brooklyn, N.Y., 11220) for the intense gratification of their friends, among whom you are numbered. Others may trade, write intriguing letters of comment, or even subscribe (three issues/six 6¢ stamps or \$1.00 cash). This is probably Deimos Publication 32, and it is very certainly a product of the Giant QWERTYUIOPress. We remind you also: ST. LOUIS IN '69! Yes.

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