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Welcome to ENERGUMEN 12, the approximately quarterly Canadian genzine brought to you by Mike and Susan Glicksohn from 32 Maynard Ave, #205, Toronto 156, Ontario, Canada. As always, ENERGUMEN is available for contribution, arranged trade, substantial loc, or 75¢ per issue, subscriptions 3 for \$2. We do not accept checks or US stamps and reviewers are asked to point this out if reviewing this fanzine. Back issues of #11 are 75¢ each, many previous covers are available at 25¢ each and you can still get the Tim Kirk ecology poster for 50¢ (proceeds to the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust.) The matched covers this issue are collaborations between Jim Shull and Ken Fletcher.

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SUAMI Press Publication #17

Please check your envelope: an 'X' in the box means this is your last issue Unless...

WASHINGTON IN 74 --- AUSTRALIA IN 75 /// WASHINGTON IN 74 --- AUSTRALIA IN 75
WASHINGTON IN 74 --- AUSTRALIA IN 75 /// WASHINGTON IN 74 --- AUSTRALIA IN 75



Feedback From The Mike

TO TRADE, OR NOT TO TRADE... I had initially planned to fill these pages with a description of my excommunication from fannish fandom by the Brooklyn Insurgents, but upon reflection I decided that this would serve little constructive purpose. However, one of the things that apparently annoyed and upset these sensitive fannish fans was my trading policy. Or perhaps 'lack-of-trading' policy would be a better description. And this is a topic worthy of discussion.

In the recent past I've traded ENERGUMEN for very few fanzines, for reasons I feel quite strongly about. Evidently, several of the fannish fans decided that this was a personal insult to them, and a violation of a sacred fannish tradition, and when I attempted to explain the policy, they weren't interested. They'd made up their mind about my motivation, and didn't wish to be confused by my side of the story. Perhaps the rest of you may be willing to hear me out.

When ENERGUMEN was first published, I accepted trades with anybody who'd offer. But gradually I started to notice something. In the first place, faneds with whom I was trading generally stopped all other forms of communication with respect to the fanzine. I located nearly all of their issues, but heard nothing from them in return. And secondly, I found that when faced with a busy schedule and a large pile of fanzines to respond to I'd consciously put aside fanzines I was trading with, thinking "I'll get it anyway, why write a loc?" Thus it seemed to me that trading actually set up a two-way hindrance to personal response and communication; and this is the antithesis of what fanzine publishing is all about.

You see, to me the loc is by far the most personal response you can make to a fanzine. It shows that you think enough of what the faned is doing to read his zine and then take the time to set out your reactions to the material and what he's done with it. Trading your fanzine doesn't do this. It may be a nice gesture and a compliment, but the faned who receives a zine in trade doesn't even know if his own fanzine is being delivered, let alone read.

So I stopped establishing trades in favor of personal correspondence with other fanzine editors. The Brooklyn fans who took my failure to trade as a personal affront

didn't give any consideration to the fact that I've locced just about every issue of every Brooklyn fanzine published in the last year (although I don't believe any of them ever wrote an actual loc to ENERGUMEN.) Their only concern seemed to be that I had deviated from "accepted fannish tradition."

I have nothing against tradition, it's one of the cornerstones of a society. But I do object to slavish acceptance of tradition. If a tradition cannot be questioned, and perhaps rejected, then it is a liability, not an asset.

Take, for example, the reaction of Chris Couch. Chris is a young fan who publishes a very enjoyable personalzine, CIPHER. He seems to be universally liked and described by all who know him as a pleasant and intelligent fan. Yet he was highly upset by my refusal to trade for his fanzine (again, despite the fact that I'd locced every issue I had received.) When I tried to explain my reasons to Chris, as I've outlined them here, at the Lunacon, he just wasn't interested. As far as he was concerned, there could be no justification for my action. In fact, he told me quite bluntly that fandom was a society with an accepted way of doing things and if I wasn't willing to follow the traditions then I shouldn't be in fandom in the first place!

I was flabbergasted. I tried to point out to Chris that there was some contradiction between what he'd just said and the fact that he was standing there with his hair past his shoulder blades, the visual epitome of the "freak" who had rejected the traditions of the society in which he lived. But he couldn't see the double-standard; apparently traditions may be violated at will unless they are traditions that Chris believes in. (He was later to respond to a comment by Rosemary with "Just who the hell do you think you are, not reading fanzines?" Chris does seem to be a pleasant, intelligent person, but on the subject of fannishness he is narrow-minded to the point of intolerance.)

I certainly don't expect everybody to agree with my policies, but I do think it's not unreasonable of me to expect other people to allow me my own thoughts and ideas. If ENERGUMEN's editorial policy is abhorrent to you, tell us to remove you from the mailing list; don't deny us the freedom of individual thought. Nobody is forced to get this fanzine, and nobody ever will be. It's that old question of tolerance again, and I'd have thought that fans, at least, would have allowed each other to march to their own drummers, to coin a cliché.

ENERGUMEN has always been response oriented. This is a point that has appeared again and again in these editorial comments. However, I cannot see adding to the bitterness and resentment in this world over such a relatively minor point. (There is no contradiction, by the way, between defending something strongly and yet recognizing its insignificant nature.) So we are trading with Chris' CIPHER. And with overseas zines whose editors find letter responses difficult. And with newszines and other non-response-oriented fanzines. And we'll trade with any regular, good-quality fanzine once it's established its dependability. (In other words, please don't request a trade until you're sending your third issue: since 95% of fanzines never get that far, any earlier trades seem premature.)

But this is still not quite your "traditional" trade. We'll trade with the fanzines we enjoy, but we'd also like the other faned to notify us in some way every two or three of our issues that (a) ENERGUMEN is still being delivered and (b) he still wants to get it. I don't think that that's too much to ask; if this fanzine isn't worth an 8¢ letter and a few moments of your time every 6 or 8 months, I doubt that you'd miss it if it stopped appearing.

(I'm sure there are going to be people who will react to this as a statement of unmitigated arrogance and swell-headedness. It is not intended that way. If we could discuss the matter personally, I'd be able to avoid the formal stiffness of my prose and possibly present a less pompous appearance. It has never been a question of my

thinking ENERGUMEN was too "good" to trade with other fanzines. I just don't think a simple mindless trade is sufficient response for the incredible amount of time and effort most faneds put into their magazines. And despite our disagreement, Chris, "they" were right; you are a likeable fellow. Peace.)

A TIME OF HUGOS...The official Hugo ballots arrived today, so it's a bit late to bother with recommendations and such, but we would like to thank all of you who were kind enough to nominate us again this year. It sounds trite to say it is an honour, but it is, and we appreciate it.

We had hoped to see Rosemary on the ballot, and were glad that enough fans shared our enthusiasm for her writing. But it was a complete (although delightful) surprise to find Susan on the ballot as well. Neither of us had nominated her, as it happens, and we're extremely grateful for those of you who expressed your high opinion of her writing skill in this way. (Luckily, though, I won't have to choose between my wife and one of my best friends since all those men were also nominated...)

The ballot even inspired Rosemary to write her first-ever loc and I'll quote from it here. "I wanted to...thank all the people who nominated me for a Hugo. For once I can't think of anything to say. It's a bit mind croggling to see one's name up there with all the biggies."

THE ISSUE AT HAND...Just to prove that ENERGUMEN isn't entirely stagnant, there's a slight change in format for this issue. (That's above and beyond the 10% of the copies being run on WARHOON-blue paper, that is.) Observant readers will notice the addition of comments by Susan in the lettercolumn. All editorial comments on the locs are indented to set them off from the actual letters and mine are enclosed by the traditional double brackets; Susan's coments will henceforth be enclosed by double slashes. It'll be easy to remember: Slash for Susan. Got it?

Also this issue we do a little something to alleviate one of fandom's gross oversights, an oversight that we ourselves have been guilty of. This is the age of art-conscious fans, and fan artists are getting more recognition and egoboo than ever before. It is hard to open a fanzine nowadays without reading something complimentary about one of the many excellent artists who are generous enough to contribute their time and talent to fandom. And yet there seems to be one extremely talented artist who is overlooked when the plaudits are distributed. A man as skillful as any artist we have, yet one who has seemed to miss his fair share of praise and acclaim.

To start to remedy our negligence, we present here a folio of drawings by Jim McLeod. We think you'll agree that this fine artist deserves far more attention than he's been getting. (And to think he does it all while drinking Coors! The mind cannot conceive of the artistic wonders he might create if he started drinking IPA!)

THINGS TO COME...When I was young and naive and had just started publishing, I'd often take a few lines to talk about the goodies in the next issue. Now that I am old, I know that nine times out of ten the promised spectacular never materializes. But this time I can promise you in all certainty that the next issue will include an eight-page offset comic strip by Derek Carter. We think it's probably the funniest 'graphic trip' to be offered to fandom in years, and we hope you'll enjoy it.

In addition, next issue should have several other offset pages and some exceptional written material. The extra cost of preparing the issue may force us to treat it as

two issues on a subscription, and charge extra for it at the single copy level. We hope this won't be necessary, but if it is I think we can safely say that you'll find the issue well worth the price.

XXXXX

THAT TAKES THE CAKE...Fandom, like life, seems to have its own system of checks and balances. For every remark or action that puts you down, something happens to bring you back up again.

I'd like to put in print my warmest thanks to the five crazy wonderful people who drove all the way from New York to burst into my bedroom at 6am on my birthday and wake me out of three hours sleep with their raucous and ribald greetings. I simply cannot convey the stunned shock with which I greeted them; my half-conscious brain knew those five people lived 540 miles away, yet there they apparently were, auto-harp and all. After I accepted that I'd been the victim of one of the most perfectly executed surprise parties of all time, we settled back for what was certainly by far the best birthday I've ever had. Bless you, Susan, for organizing it, and Eli, Ginjer, David, Jerry and Suzle for your willingness to make the trek. (And for the IPA, of course!)(And Richard, for coming from Ottawa and Rosemary for getting up at 6am!)

I wish I had more space to tell you of the party, and the cake with its four pink elephants clutching an IPA bottle in their trunks, and the trip to see "Monty Python's: And Now For Something Completely Different" but I think our fine cover collaborators have one last comment to make...



THE POISON MANTLE



A Terribly Serious,
Analysis of the
in Marvel Super-
BY SUSAN GACKSON

Marvel love-relationships follow two patterns. The first retains a major adventure-theme : heroes are vulnerable through their emotions and their women. Twice in recent issues Captain America has faltered in mid-fight, forced into "The deadly choice... Sharon... or S.H.I.E.L.D." Though the enemy, Hydra, relied on his vulnerability ("where his physical prowess never fails him... his heart will!"), Cap, good super-patriot that he is, has always made the 'right' decision to clobber the villain. A brief period of manly rage over Sharon's corpse is followed by reward, since she, of course, lives. Prince Namor's recent adventures on earth, too, stem from grief over his bride Dorma's death (in SUBMARINER #37) and guilt because "I had saved the land-- but I had lost the lady-- forever!" Dorma is described as lying in her glass coffin like Sleeping Beauty, so perhaps she has only been shelved in suspended animation while Submariner faces more active threats than a sedate married life. Of course, superheroes are threatened through other emotional ties-- Spiderman's frail Aunt May and Namor's father, for example (and eventually someone's going to kidnap that obvious prize, Franklin Richards.) The rescue of a comrade is always a strong call to battle and could be a fruitful subject for another essay, one which would draw heavily on Fiedler's "Come Back to the Raft Ag'in, Huck Honey." Nevertheless, Marvel's version of St. George and the Dragon remains the strongest of their stock plots.

Rejection, not rescue, is Marvel's other stock emotional plot. This pattern is exactly opposite to that favoured by the rival house, DC, where Lois Lane has sighed for years over Superman while ignoring Clark Kent. Gwen Stacey, Karen Page and their predecessors (cruel-hearted Marvel girls get dumped by their heroes, while Lois lingers) tend to love the man, hate the costumed crusader. Spiderman always did give Gwen the creeps; now she thinks him responsible for her father's death. Her hatred, part of the misunderstanding and prejudice surrounding superheroes, is shared by most of New York and especially by Peter-Spiderman's boss, J.J. Jameson, who recently financed construction of yet another Spidey-swatting robot. Similarly, the Fantastic Four's landlord keeps threatening eviction, the US Congress denounces Namor as a national enemy (despite efforts to win him amnesty as an ecology symbol), and the entire US army keeps failing to flatten the Hulk.

Emotional tangles with women which increase the hero's sense of alienation also destroy his potential for fighting evil. Remembering lost loves, he is torn between doing his duty, or giving up hazardous heroics after Explaining All to his current lady. This internal conflict is the theme of SPIDERMAN's 100th anniversary issue: "For Peter Parker to really live-- Spider-man must die!" Not that the end is in doubt, as a vision of the dead Captain Stacey tells Peter that he simply doesn't know

AND THE GREAT BITCH

even Constructive,
Roles of Women
Hero Comics... PART TWO
ILLUSTRATED BY TERRY AUSTIN



himself: "You have tortured yourself by trying to live a normal life! But you cannot! You must accept that fact! You are Spider-man! It is your blessing-- and your curse-- forever."

Even if the triangle of man-girl-alter ego can be resolved, it expands readily into a torrid polyhedron. The writers dragged Jarella back to increase the Hulk's alienation from Betty (now she knows he-- sob!-- loves another), who in turn has Major Talbot and Doc Samson to comfort her. Recent issues of SUBMARINER resemble an Atlantean Forsyte Saga: Prince Namor, grieving for Lady Dorma killed by the evil Llyra, former Queen of Lemuria, in the latter's bid to marry Namor and take over Atlantis, returns to Earth where he once loved Betty Dean and Sue Storm, now Richards. Here he is aided by Diane Arliss, who loves him, and (reluctantly) by Walter Newell, who loves Diane. Newell, really Sting-Ray, tries to help Namor when Tiger Shark (formerly Tony Arliss, Diane's brother) teams up with Llyra to kidnap and finally kill Namor's long-lost father. The Submariner, insane with grief, is rescued by Cindy Jones, who becomes Dr. Doom's hostage...

Though Marvel's emotional tangles get as complicated as Spider-man's webs, one thing is clear: love is dangerous! In HULK #144, glamorous Valeria rejects the love of Dr. Doom because of his evil nature; nevertheless, he risks death to save her, wondering as he does: "What is this insanity which makes even Dr. Doom act like a fool?" The writers reply: "The madness, of course, is what men call love, and it has caused Victor Von Doom to commit an irreparable error--!" The Hulk beats him. The message is clear.

Women are associated with emotion, men with action in the comics' world. So what else is new? Misdirected emotion can turn a desirable Maiden into a destructive Bitch. Even Peter Parker recently became so disgusted with Gwen's fickleness that he grumbled to the Torch about "girl trouble". More seriously, the unthinking rhetoric of black revolutionary Lelia in CAPTAIN AMERICA leads to a ghetto fire, a near-takeover by the Red Skull who is manipulating racial hatreds, and worst of all, the breakup of Cap and the Falcon.

Directed emotion, however, is woman's greatest good. Love is the hero's due reward, and in most stories the sight of his battered body overcomes all the heroine's scruples. Valeria the moralist becomes Valeria the earthmother, rushing to cuddle poor bruised Dr. Doom. Emotion is a superpower for Sue Richards, who, in a switch on the hero-vulnerable-through-loved-ones theme in FANTASTIC FOUR # 115 breaks the Overmind's



control of Reed by an appeal to his love for her and the baby. In the same adventure, she enlists the unlikely aid of Dr. Doom by an emotional appeal to his pride. Similarly, Sif's inability to handle a sword makes her an encumbrance in Thor's battles, in which she persistently interferes. She succeeds brilliantly, however, using the woman's weapon, tears. In THOR #189, her pleas prevail even with Hela, Queen of Death, who restores Thor's life.

Warped or ambivalent emotions, on the other hand, are the chief characteristics of the Great Bitch. In SAVAGE TALES, an 'adult' Marvel comic (ie, one with juvenile stories, but with female nipples on display) the Femizons are evil because they enslave, and even kill, men. As a comment on the values of the CONAN universe, the story is unintentionally successful. Scheming Llyra, too, is merely contemptible, a "harriidan" and "vicious shrew" when she tries to supplant Dorma as empress. Vicious Llyra, however, becomes the incarnation of evil when she not only destroys Dorma, but sneers at her pleas for Namor's life: "Ignorant sea-cow! Don't you realize that was my plan all along-- that you two who love each other in so maudlin a fashion-- should perish at the same time, and in the best traditions of melodrama!" Worst of all, her lack of emotional weakness enables her to manage men, her pawns or victims. Namor is initially reluctant to strike a woman, even her; his rage at her murders is hampered by grief, and she escapes easily.

Warped emotion, identified with anti-male aggression, is the chief feature of a typical Great Bitch, the Valkyrie in HULK #142. A striking contrast to gentle Jarella, she conforms to the Bitch physical stereotype. Germaine Greer, examining aggressors like Karnilla, "those extraordinary springing women with slanting eyes and swirling clouds of hair who prowl through thriller comics on the balls of their feet" sees them as half-animal, half-arsenal, "wheeling suddenly upon the hero, talons unsheathed for the kill. Their mouths are large, curved and shining like scimitars; the musculature of their shoulders and thighs is incredible, their breasts like grenades..." Hopeless villainesses are either vicious, all sharp edges, like Karnilla and Llyra, or musclebound butches like the Valkrie; aggressive superheroins are exotic and sexy, like the Black Widow.

The Valkyrie is really only Sam Parrington, a judo-expert teenybopper whose now-ness takes the form of Women's Lib. activities, specifically presented as foolish and misguided. She is chosen by the evil Enchantress "for the instrument of my vengeance upon the inhuman Hulk." The Hulk, of course, has nothing but contempt for her rhetoric (she actually says "Up against the wall, male chauvinist pig!") and her power (with condescending 'chivalry' he refuses to strike her, since "Nothing can harm Hulk-- least of all, the hand of a woman.") The Enchantress' spell soon slips; the good side of the Valkyrie's femininity asserts itself in concern for the Hulk; and as Bruce Banner, he stalks rather churlishly away from the wreckage, leaving a dazed Samantha. Oh, but she has been a fearsome sight, in Hulk-hurling pose on the cover, shouting: "Every male chauvinist pig in the world will tremble-- when he sees the Hulk hurled to his death-- by a woman!" Never mind that most liberated women have liberated themselves from admiring violence, seen as a life-denying male ideal. The

Valkyrie, and other comic villainesses, are Awful Warnings confirming the masculine belief that women may say they want their human rights, but they really yearn to kick men in the balls.

Female aggression and warped emotion are greeted with male contempt in the "femme force" stories beginning in CAPTAIN AMERICA #144. A new wing of S.H.I.E.L.D., the leather-clad Honor Blackmans are introduced battling a pseudo-Hydra as an exercise for the Defence Department. No-one takes the Amazons seriously, though. They're only a reserve force, and their leader, Sharon Carter, complains that "the men haven't left us much to work on" to prove their value. She takes time off from kicking and gouging to hope that a victory will "make you a believer in the women's lib. movement" but Cap is not impressed, and Fury warns her to "knock off the commercials." The force fights well ('liberated' comicworld women are dangerous, remember) but Fury dismisses it with: "Ya did pretty fair... for a ladies' bridge club!" Finally the government officials refuse funds for the more important "life model decoy" project, but express leering approval of the force.

When the force does go into action, in #145, its chief enemy is its femininity. The supposedly dedicated, disciplined women are shown as physically inferior to men, constantly in need of rescue by the mission's real leader, Captain America. His aid is greeted with appropriate wisecracks from the women about how they shouldn't accept such help, which only emphasize how silly and helpless they are. Worse yet, these women are portrayed as helpless slaves of their passions for men, expressed as a predeliction by Sharon and her second-in-command, Val, for destroying their military effectiveness by snarling and spitting at each other in jealousy over Cap. Because of this, they are thirty seconds late for their first muster-- and Fury declares all his opposition to the force is justified: "Blasted broads scream for equality.... and they can't even get here on time for a red alert!"

Then he holds up the mission to chew them out. His contempt is echoed by Cap, who dismisses the women as "hell-cats"; adds to the problem when he ignores Sharon's authority by consulting Val; and then declares he has "something more important on my mind" namely the presence of an undetected traitress. Even the force's enemies regard it with derision. The Supreme Hydra exults that, having forced Fury to use the (inferior) force, "we will crush them with ease". Later he is rejected by his own father because he "let himself be defeated... by a handful of women!"

Fortunately, Sharon achieves redemption by sacrificing herself to a Hydra zap-ray to save Cap. She sprawls passively while he, reasserting his masculinity, challenges the Supreme Hydra who dismisses her as "just another broad": "You devil! She was the woman I loved! And-- if she is dead-- I swear to you-- YOU'RE GOING TO PAY!" Of course, Cap too is, as Val warns, "letting your personal feelings cloud your judgement." His beserk rage over the injury to his emotional property is laudable, manly-- while the femme force's bickerings, though no worse than the flareups between the Fantastic Four, are continually presented as a contemptible female trait.

Warped emotions create most of the Black Widow's



problems. Like the superheroes, she is haunted by emotional problems created by her superpowers-- specifically, "a curse... making me truly what my namesake is accused to be... a killer--of those she loves." In the DAREDEVIL episode described earlier, her emotional turmoil is aggravated by self-blame for the Scorpion's death, followed by public persecution and a murder charge. Thus in confusion and frenzy she lashes out at DD, who is trying to save her, much as Namor, the Hulk and even human heroes are provoked into violence by prejudice and attack. Fortunately, Ivan, her faithful friend/chauffeur/guardian always rescues her from enemies, including herself; and in this appearance, DD easily subdues her into a bewildered girl ready to accept his attentions. Disturbingly sexy, potentially deadly, the Widow embodies a whole culture's uneasy attitudes to dynamic women.

The dual role of woman, and man's ambivalent attitudes to her, is explored with some psychological subtlety in stories of female Hulks-- personalities in which good and evil, the princess and the witch, are halves of one woman. In CONAN #5, the tiger menacing the village is also a lovely lady, an evil enchanter's spell-bound daughter. Her Bitch self subdued by admiration for mighty Conan (Pussy Galore may be, in Dr. Greer's striking phrase, battered by the hero's iron cock into dewy softness and submission, but the Comics Code allows only overtly chaste romance) she disobeys her father's order to kill the hero. As punishment, she falls try-into to defend Conan from a demon who "hurls the snarling she-beast through the air like a broken toy" to lie, metamorphosed, "only a woman... soft, and vulnerable, and lying deathly still." Even villainess Llyra is the evil half of a split ovum; her good twin sister died trying to save Namor. In a common variation on this schizophrenic theme, a villain kidnaps a Poison Maiden and warps her mind so she will attack her rescuing prince; the power of love, however, brings her to her senses.

Only Sue Richards, who combines marriage and motherhood with her role as Invisible Girl, appears to escape from stereotypes. Admittedly, she has gained her identity through men as Johnny Storm's sister and Reed Richard's wife (not to mention Franklin's Mummy. I am convinced that, if Reed perfects a device to enable Crystal to join Johnny in New York, Sue will be re-

tired to provide a little sister for Franklin.) Nevertheless, Sue's powers are at least no more ineffective than her male cohorts'; she also controls positive emotions, and, like Medusa in BLACK BOLT and the Wasp in earlier AVENGERS she smooths over male conflicts. Admittedly, too, she retains her career because the Richards can afford a full-time Nanny and robot housekeeping devices. (Can anyone imagine the femme force negotiating with S.H.I.E.L.D. for day-care facilities?) Yet even Agatha Harkness,



the witch-Nanny with prophetic vision, is valuable to the team. It's comforting to know that some heroes do put their hangups down and their feet up in a "normal" home atmosphere; that love can be requited; and that women can remain active people without becoming mate-destroying bitches. Excelsior!

Excelsior? The current Marvel superhero line boasts its concern for 'relevant' issues: war, racial hatreds, drugs, pollution, alienation of youth. Stan Lee's comments emphasize that he wants readers to think of these issues, not escape into fantasy. Yet he and his staff continually treat one major issue, women's growing demands for human rights, as a nasty joke. While dialogue and editorializing in the comics stress the disastrous effects of prejudice, the rights extended to black, green, silver, teenaged, capitalist, alien and long-haired superheroes are not extended to women. Wenches, bitches or weepy blonde recreation equipment, not people, they are admitted into a man's world only when shaped by the old, old moulds. This is especially evident when, in an attempt to be 'now' and 'liberated' (and increase sales by putting female curves on display?) Marvel creates a degrading "femme force", a warped image of women's creative potential straight out of pornographic fantasies. Certainly, the Valkrie episode in HULK #142 was part of a non-serious put-down of radical chic-- yet this is even more insulting, since it lumps concerned women in with self-seeking hosts of fundraising parties as misguided high-society phonies. Like Marvelite Herb Trimpe's "hilarious comic feature" (Stan Lee's words) in a recent ESQUIRE putting down women's liberation and especially Gloria Steinem (who "bore a suspicious resemblance to the Valkyrie" says Stan) the episode is not particularly funny but does indicate where supposedly-aware males' heads are at with regard to women.

Does it matter? Well, yes, if you agree with Stan Lee that comics and their values affect their readers' minds. If you agree that these comics which, by touting their 'relevance' pretend to reflect reality, in fact shape a specific reality for children becoming aware of adult social and sexual roles. If you are concerned that your son or boyfriend may have his vision of half humanity shaped by the choice between the deadly Black Widow and the unreasonable Gwen Stacey. If you care that your daughter may learn her place in the world from Sue Richards-- or from Conan. If you are tired of playing Aunt Tom, smiling and agreeing that you shouldn't "get so serious" about demeaning stereotypes that make him a hero, you a "wench" or "chick". If it matters-- start the change by writing to Stan Lee, c/o Marvel Comics Group, 2nd Floor, 625 Madison Ave., New York N.Y. 10022. Excelsior!



(Drawings based on characters copyright MARVEL COMICS GROUP)

ONE OF MY YESTERDAYS

by Harry Warner, Jr.



July 1964 572

For most of you the Noreascon has ended. Tony Lewis has finally returned to Unity Avenue. No longer do fans scoot in every direction across the broad acreage of Prudential Center. Even the all-night movies have finally stopped flashing on the ball-room screen in the Sheraton-Boston.

But the convention isn't quite concluded for me. I have unfinished business with it. A multi-layer maze which you can find on page 35 of your program book remains unthreaded. I can't take my Eddie Jones badge to the safe deposit box in the bank or replace the Home, Sweet Home sign on the wall of my bedroom with my fan guest of honour plaque or read the first Progress Report for TORCON 2, until I've done what I can to solve the puzzle created by Bob Tucker when he wrote that page about me for the program book.

Tucker, you see, said near the end of that page that nobody reads such contributions to a highly specialized pigeonhole of the world of letters except the book's editor and the subject, and therefore he'd deliberately put two misstatements into his page, "two errors which Harry will readily recognize. In the coming months I intend to watch the fan press closely to see if anyone else comments on them. If someone does, then I will have to admit someone does read these tributes." Tucker ended with a plea that I should keep track of how many people ask me about these errors.

Now, I immediately suspected that this was a cop-out on Bob's part, because of the terrible blunder that he had committed when he wrote the introduction to ALL OUR YESTERDAYS. He stated accurately that my house is constipated with all my half-digested books, records, fanzines, and such things. He was even right when he claimed that the house contains an unknown number of radios. My father built radios as a hobby when the broadcasting fad was new, I know that several of them are packed away somewhere, and I don't know how many receiving sets he saved because I devote all the time I should spend on looking through boxes and barrels to writing locs.

But Tucker then said of me: "He has one inflexible rule; none of this accumulated treasure is ever piled atop his bed. He also likes to sleep." The second sentence is correct. I like to think that the erroneous first sentence is the result of Tucker's innocence rather than deliberate design to deceive. After all, Bob has lived his entire life in the healthy clean air of the Great Midwest, amid the sons and daughters of pioneers who still live a simple, pious life. He just doesn't understand the unnatural patterns of behaviour that have developed in the almost inaccessible valleys of Appalachia, or the temptations to which a middle-aged bachelor may succumb. Even Rotsler hasn't guessed the whole truth.

But I had gone to Boston determined to do everything which the fan guest of honor status required of me. So I did keep a count of how many fans asked me about those two mistakes. Nine fans mentioned the matter in the course of that convention. I haven't had time to read every fanzine reaching me since September, but I don't recall having seen the puzzle described in print.

Still there was one obligation. I needed to find the two errors in the program book essay, so I could satisfy the curiosity of those nine fans, most of whom incidentally were celebrated fans with long experience in fandom, the very people at the convention whom you'd least expect to be doing a goshwowboyoboy thing like reading the program book.

One error was easy to find. Tucker termed the Noreascon my third convention. He didn't call it my third worldcon, so I assume that he committed that booboo on purpose.

But he didn't term it my third or fifth science fiction convention, so I hardly knew how to correct that statement. Before Boston, I'd been to two Phillycons, one Nycon, and the Discon. But Bob wrote "convention" without resorting to even one adjective or modifying noun. I don't know how many plain, flat, unrestricted conventions I've attended. A hundred, seventy, two hundred perhaps? Remember, I've been a journalist most of my life and my duties have included coverage of every conceivable type of convention. National conventions of cave explorers and circus fans have been held in Hagerstown. I once attended a convention where one of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's sons was ignored because he wasn't a big name in the horse breeding group. I've covered Maryland State Grange conventions, which consisted of interminable successions of being kicked out and coaxed back in again, as sessions alternated between secret rituals and open talks. I've nearly been killed attending firemen's conventions, one church convention after another has vainly tried to convert me, and I outlasted the Maryland State Horticultural Society conventions which were held annually in Hagerstown until this year when everyone except me had become too old to sit in chairs without large wheels on the sides. But I never kept track of how many conventions I attended. Tucker was wrong on the matter but I don't see how he could have been correct.

But where is the other mistake? Tucker described me as born in Chambersburg on December 19, 1922. Did my parents always misrepresent to me my birthdate, hoping that I wouldn't remember how they'd actually shielded me, hidden me from the draft authorities during World War One? Even if they did, I don't see how Tucker could have known.

Or did Tucker lie in the very first line of that page, when he referred to "my introduction to ALL OUR YESTERDAYS"? Was that introduction really written by Sam Moskowitz or by Steve Pickering? Did the people at Advent inadvertently insert the byline they meant to use in Tucker's forthcoming three-volume study of the science fiction stories of Jack Sharkey, and did everyone concerned cover up the fraud until Tucker chose this method of releasing the truth?

Then there's the possibility that I ruined Tucker's ploy. "By the time he reaches Boston in September" he wrote in his little essay. I learned from several sources that many fans were openly predicting that I wouldn't show at the convention. Did my arrival reduce the number of errors in Bob's page to just one?

Of course, the Tucker mind is deep and devious. He's so unscrupulous about such things that I wouldn't be a bit surprised if the second mistake in his program book contribution turned out to be his statement that he had included two mistakes.

And now the Noreascon is finally approaching its conclusion for me. Since I've unburdened myself about that page in the program book, I can regard the worldcon as past history, as soon as I read pages one through 34 and pages 36 through 132 in that volume.



Reflections in a Golden Age Eye

Bill Watson

((In Energumen #10, we published E. Hoffman Price's article on Robert E. Howard, reprinted from Bill Watson's DIABLERIE. When we sent a copy of the issue to Price, he responded quite enthusiastically and sent us Bill's current address. Naturally, we sent him a copy of the issue. There followed a brief but thoroughly enjoyable correspondence and since we found Bill's letters so fascinating, we are reprinting them here, only marginally edited of purely personally intended references. In the classic fannish tradition of letters-into-articles, we think they stand up remarkably well.))

ENERGUMEN 10 is the first fan magazine I have seen since approximately 1948, when I returned home from the army and threw out piles of stuff that had accumulated in my absence. It is thus somewhat interesting, although the only names I recognize are those of Harry Warner and Walt Liebscher, both of whom I published 27 and 28 years ago. I had no idea, of course, whether they were even alive, today.

I published DIABLERIE and SAPPHO and CHAOS and FANTASY AMATEUR and a blizzard of other zines when I was 14 and 15 years old. My cohort, Geo Ebey, sailing then in the merchant marine, helped with the little financing that was needed, although in those days our principal cost seemed to be postage, since a ream of 20# paper cost only 60¢ and a quire of stencils around \$1.35. I bought my second hand mimeo from Joe Fortier when he went off into service.

I had the advantage of working around a print shop for a firm called Allied Publishers, originally as a stock boy, then finally editing their Newsmagazine Digest for the two years before I went into the army. Working around type and an old printer named MacCarthy taught me a good deal about form and balance and the essence of the graphic arts, which is probably why even though DIAB' and the rest were only mimeo'd they had a semblance of the professional touch. I still have them around here today somewhere, although I must admit I haven't looked at them in years.

Terry Carr's remarks are appreciated and peering back into those years I am surprised myself at the time and effort that went into it all. A great part of it stemmed out of the fact that I was a typical San Francisco kid, living in a fourth floor apartment in the Nob Hill area, attending a high school all the way across the city, and when the war commenced most of my buddies, who were Japanese, were sent off to War Relocation Camps. I was somewhat alone and remained that way. Fandom for a couple of years filled what would otherwise have been quite a gap during that formative period.

Eddie Price and Lou Goldstone remain my sole contact with the world of science fantasy today. In my upcoming novel, due on the autumn publishers' lists if I can get all the corrections together in time, the long chapter that quotes the two chief characters' astrological charts is all Eddie's work and research. Called THE OCTEMBU-ARY DIALOGUES, it will also contain several brief snatches of the poetry of George Ebey, from one of his final works "I have a horror of dying on the land" to one of his earliest poems, "To the losers", which I published in 1943. Eddie has remained a faithful correspondent through the years, and a couple of years back we were finally able to get together again over some fine chablis. For me it was five wives later than our previous meeting, so perhaps you can visualize the time lapse.

Going through ENERGUMEN #10 evokes quite a bit of nostalgia, needless to say. But it does seem like rather a lot of effort for what is there. I do not say this in any classic critical sense, but maunderings like Rosemary's, commentaries such as Stooker's, simply leave me cold, possibly because I am no longer concerned with the world of fandom and really regard it as a sort of anachronism.

It is odd how a man's complete life style changes so radically. Had anyone told me, when I was grinding out copies of SAPPHO over a rusty old mimeo, that I would finally arrive to live, and probably die, in a rural community, to manage a nightclub called The Outrigger, to have at age 44 four grandchildren by various means, to teach sporadically graphic arts and creative writing, to have a pleasant wife and a plump mistress and a dog named Gretchen, I would have chuckled and said, "You're mad, man." I had visions then of Los Angeles and New York and success by the pound. I despised animals. And while I was doing a little boozing even at age 15, my morals were about as Victorian as being raised in a Christian Science home could make them.

I did make the success scene for a time, back in 1958-thru-1961. I was an executive with a world-wide investigation firm, managing some 17 offices in the Southwest, always on the run, destined for a vice-presidency and a plush office in Morristown, New Jersey. But one morning I awoke in my Malibu home, had a cup of coffee on the seaporch with my dog and muttered, "Oh Christ, this is all so much garbage." I never went back to the office, mailing in my resignation instead. Fitzgerald had my home sold for me within about three days, I spent a year in Palm Springs, in King's Canyon National Forest, in Santa Cruz getting drunk and laid and catching up on my reading. I threw my wristwatch into the Pacific and have never worn one since.

Today that has changed, somewhat, in the sense that one must do some work in order to live and drink and love. Some of my old fan training has stood me in good stead, I must admit. I do a considerable amount of sign designing, and in fact the new local restaurant will carry and use throughout a typeface I created and copyrighted.



I have put together a package of some 16 various issues of what I did in days long past. It sits now in my studio and is addressed to you, only awaiting, and I am sure you might understand, your assurance that it will be returned to me. You're welcome to look the stuff over, but its return is important because it does give me a reflection of myself when I was so young, so damn dull, so striving for attention, so lost and in so much need of what Frank Wilimczyk used to call "ego-boo", that I simply must have it to pass on to at least my daughter who is a fine artist, understands and knows some six languages, and has always wondered just where the hell she did come from. As she ages, it may someday explain her outlaw old man, who even at age 13 had some sort of that irreverence those of us with any guts must eventually seek out.

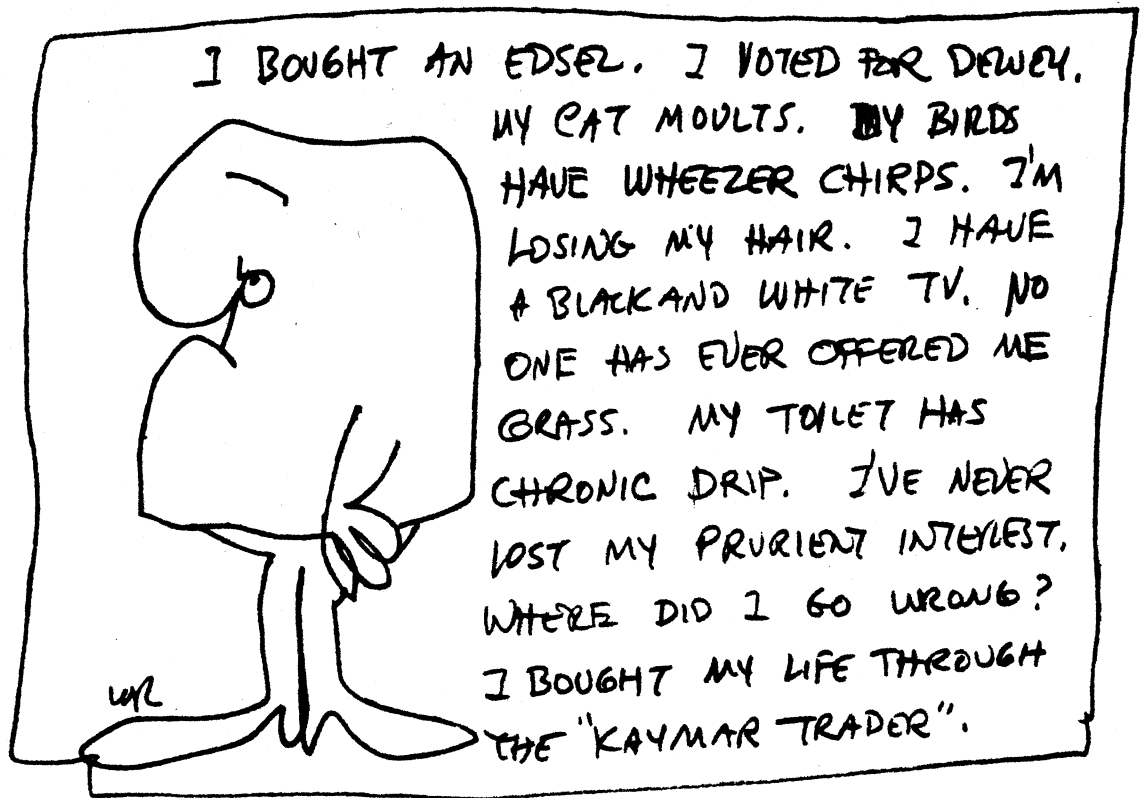
There is much today that I might want to say to fandom, if there is anything left of it. I really do not know. My departure was quiet and intensive. I just did not answer letters any longer, and any 'zine' that arrived via the postman went directly to the waste basket, unopened, undiscovered, lacking for me then what might have been meaning or intent. When one reverses one's coat, it can be for all time.

I was never very much "liked" in fandom because of the fact that even with my teenage, early teenage, manner I had a strong tendency to laugh at the whole package. That was my protection. I thought. Yet to my parent's apartment on California Street trooped Fran Laney, Milt Rothman, Jack Speer, Forrest Ackerman, Jimmy Kepner, George Ebey, Tom Wright, Everett Wyers, Jimmy Cripps, Charles Burbee, Claude Degler, Joe Fortier, Christ I can no longer remember their names. They were all pleasant folk and to this day I can remember Milt Rothman in his army uniform and I eating lobster Cantonese in a tiny restaurant off Grant Avenue, as I can also recall Jimmy Kepner's and my own endless conversations at his O'Farrell Street family's apartment trying to determine the whys and wherefores of homosexuality. At ages 13 and 17 and both uninformed, it might have made some mighty interesting tapes and his poor father would sit at the kitchen table and sip his beer and run his hand thru his hair and puzzle about it all. I was with him. I liked Jimmy but I never went to bed with him: even then I dug Martha Welch's tight little ass and big boobs. But I was willing to listen.

One long holiday weekend in 1944 (or possibly 1943) George had bailed off a merchant ship and had two weeks to either sail out again or be drafted, which he wasn't worried too much about since even at age 17 he was about half blind, I had a week off between the end of high school and the start of summer school, which I always attended because I wanted OUT as soon as feasible, and we caught the Owl out of The Oakland Mole (SPRR) to L.A. We spent about 14 hours with folks thru the San Joaquin valley carting their chickens and their pigs and their children from here to there, and finally arrived in L.A. at the old Union Depot. A cab then to the Los Angeles Science Fantasy clubhouse, and we rented a room in a run down boarding house on Bixel Street, long torn down now for an even uglier high-rise.

Walt Daughterty, I am not spelling his name right, was the official "club greeter" that month. He arrived in a pale blue gabardine suit and with blonde hair looking like something off a Hollywood set, which is what he was probably trying to look like, although as I recall he was pumping gas in a service station at the time. He showed us around, bought us a beer (both George and I were underage, but California was quite liberal through the war years; a different scene now), and I wound up stencilling that month's VoM (4e's VOICE OF THE MAGINATION) and sketching a nekkid girl for the cover. I was 15 or 16 at the time and the only nekkid girl I had ever seen was my cousin, Lorraine, who'd banged me a couple of times simply because there was no one else around at the moment. But I had the memory of her, all of it, right there at the end of the pencil. Little training, however. Either as an artist or a fornicator.

Thing that I remember mostly is that I was bored. In San Francisco, where we had no clubhouse, no real ties back and forth, we generally got drunk when we did get to-



gether and wound up yakking (or 'rapping', today) about records, the latest novels on the lists, a really fine stf story we might have read, or girls. I don't think there were any of us who didn't like to fuck and we all envied Joe Fortier, who always seemed to have some dulcet chick hanging on his arm, feeding him wine. But at the Los Angeles SFS there were creatures like Laura Crozetti, bug-eyed with goiter and smelling like a steel-puddler's linen hamper, cantering about with the grace of a sad hippo and the charm of a boa constrictor. Or some goofy broad of Ackerman's with one of those anagrammatic names, who the hell can remember them, with a face like a bug and chill hands that made your own flesh writhe a little when she touched you. Virgil Partch sat in a chair leaned against the wall in his Army uniform with a Scotch bottle in his lap, passed out most of the time, and I always felt that he was the most sensible one of all. I tried to grab the bottle a couple of times, but he had a clutch on him no little guy should ever have, and altho even then I was 6 feet and more I didn't want to cause hoorahs in an unknown clime.

But we were not bored in San Francisco, or Oakland, or Berkeley, and really most of the guys and gals lived across the bay in those days. Lou and Lorraine Smith would cook up a spaghetti feed every once in a while in their government housing thing in Alameda, and we'd all show up with wine, books, more records, chicks, and get a bit plastered and sing some and really science fiction didn't mean much except as a common meeting ground.

All of which is why most of what I published was not necessarily "fan" oriented. I'd try and give a man a voice on anything, and I solicited from Eddie Price, T. Bruce Yerke, Bob Bloch, and others, articles on almost anything. I always figured that a science fiction fan must do something else, other than breathe fandom, so maybe telling him how to build a decent rum drink, back in the days when rum was about all one could get, would be a service too.

I was official editor of Fantasy Amateur Press Association for a year, just about when I was getting with it with broads and had a hell of a good job for a teenager, plus the fact that the parents were in the Northwest for a year and I had a whole

apartment on Nob Hill to myself and an additional check in the mail every week for the necessities from Mums and Dad. By the time I was 17 I was shacking with a gal 27 named Barbs and I cared about as much about FAPA as a blind armadillo might for a magnificent sunset. But I was still, go back thru the records, the sole OE who ever got the bloody mail out on time and donated more money to the bloody thing to pay postage and envelopes than the whole membership could spit up in dues. I told him, or them, so, the final mail I put together. Christ, that was a long time ago.

I never knew any of the eastern bunch at all. I have talked with Doc Lowndes a couple of times on the phone, back when I was trying to trace down Geo Ebey in 1964, but I never knew the Ivory Tower gang, Cyril Kornbluth, Leslie Perri, Wollheim, etc, at all. I had a three year correspondance with Hans Bok, and still have 3 of his originals on my walls to this day, but never met him, or his albino dolly, whose name has forsaken me. Larry Shaw and I corresponded for a few years, he published an article of mine in "Auto Age" or somesuch when he was editing it, but I haven't seen him or heard of him in 20 years now. As I recall, my retreat from fandom was about the same time that Damon Knight came into some sort of prominence, now I see his name on collections and he is some sort of authority. I can recall when he was from like Coos Bay or some such and wrote oddball plays about people sitting on the ends of piers having lively conversations with lobsters.

Neither did I ever know anyone from Slan Shack. I always thought E.E.Evans was a jack ass and Bob Tucker a helluva talent, and I could never understand from afar why they were friends. I published Walt Liebscher and some artist whose name escapes me, from there, they were always pleasant guys in correspondence but totally lacking in any sort of reliability -- I use the word in the sense of me, waiting for a promised article which never came, then having to fill space with something second rate. I recall the use of the word "Rosebud" by Liebscher which had something to do with screwing, if I remember correctly. It was all quite funny at the time.

So anyway this has all gotten out of hand and probably because of my insomnia and the fact that I am all caught up on all other correspondance. I used to be a prodigious letter writer, now I let it stack up until the spirit moves, or I am tired of stumbling over it all.

As stated, you're welcome to see sets of DIAB' and SAPPHO for perusal, but do want them back. I may not look at them again for another ten years, or twenty, but I did do them and they were hokey but all mine.

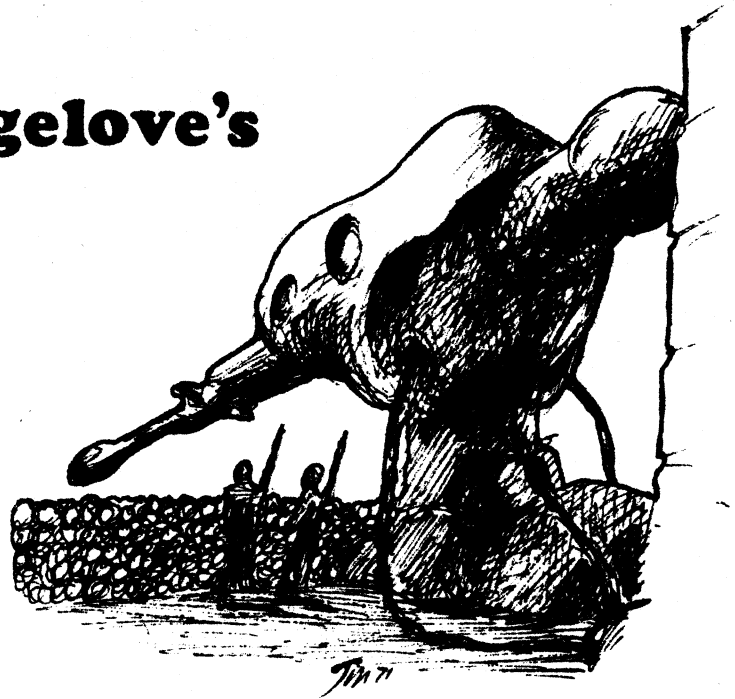
((We heard just once more from Bill, when the postman delivered a tattered but intact bundle of beautiful old fanzines. A brief note informed us "There is now no need to send the stuff back. My situation here has taken a slight change...when I mail this, and a few other "catch-up" items, I will then be gone from this area, with a new identity and so forth."

Included in the package, which we'll gladly hold for Bill, were: five issues of SAPPHO, Bill's poetry magazine, including a copy of #7 with the message "Never released -- all copies destroyed except this 1" in pen across the cover; five digest sized pamphlets, including "The Bedside Fassbeinder"; the first three issues of Lou Goldstone's FANTASIA which Bill says "are probably the only three issues... which are extant today. I do not believe that even Lou has copies of them any longer."; and seven fascinating issues of DIABLERIE, which are evry bit as creatively produced as Terry Carr's introduction in ENERGUMEN 10 indicated.

Multi-coloured mimeography, tipped-in photographs and offset illustrations, silk-screened interior illos, tissue paper protectors for full page drawings, all make these fanzines minor works of art, although the styles are somewhat dated, and major accomplishments of production. Bill Watson must have been one hell of a young fan; and from the sound of it, he's still a unique and fascinating man.))

Stanley Strangelove's Clockwork Odyssey

Don Hutchison



"Every day my brothers, these films were like the same, all kicking and tolchocking and red, red krovvy dripping off litsos and plotts and spattering all over the camera lenses ...And each day the feeling of wanting to die with the sickness and gulliver pains and aches in the zoobies and horrible horrible thirst really grew worse. Until one morning I tried to defeat the bastards by crash crash crashing my gulliver against the wall so that I could tolchock myself unconscious, but all that happened was I felt sick with viddyng that this kind of violence was like the violence in the films, so I was just exhausted and was given the injection and was wheeled off like before.""

--A CLOCKWORK ORANGE by Anthony Burgess

For those of us who go to the movies a lot -- at least those movies where the people line up to get in -- it comes as no surprise that the mass audience is on to a new kick these days.

Carnage.

Maybe it started with Sam Peckinpah's THE WILD BUNCH. That was the one in which the gatling gun blasted hunks of raw flesh across the screen in slow motion. In Sam's new one, STRAW DOGS, we have a 12-gauge shotgun blowing great holes in bodies while drive-in crowds scream in fear/pleasure. And in Stanley Kubrick's long-awaited film, A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, audiences frequently applaud as a young thug murders a kinky middle-aged victim by smashing an immense penile objet d'art into her face.

There can be little doubt that the mass audience loves these new films with their graphic depiction of brutality and horror. To many, there is something almost cheery about violence. News comes that the suicide rate in bomb-blasted Dublin is down by half. And movies like STRAW DOGS, A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, and the perennial James Bond bash invariably open at Christmastime under banners which shrill Holiday Greetings.

It is no surprise then that A CLOCKWORK ORANGE is packing them in. The question is: Is Kubrick's new work some kind of a filmic masterpiece, or is it, as some have sug-

gested -- merely exploitation with a high gloss sheen? Then again, could it be a stylistic potboiler, something to dazzle the New York critics and pay them back for their cool reception to Kubrick's earlier work?

For all its visual bravura, A CLOCKWORK ORANGE is a cold film -- almost inhumanly so. But reactions to it have been anything but unemotional. In his year-end list of the Best and Worst filmfare of 1971, Toronto Star critic Clyde Gilmour championed A CLOCKWORK ORANGE as best film. On the same page, three other prominent Canadian critics, Urjo Kareda, Patrick Scott and Robert Fulford, all listed it as their overwhelming vhoice as WORST movie of the year.

In The Financial Post, Arnold Edinborough's column on the film was headed: "However You Slice A Clockwork Orange It's Pretentious Pulp".

Sun columnist George Anthony stated, "The only thing missing from A CLOCKWORK ORANGE is a reason for making it in the first place."

Marty Knelman of the Globe went further: "My initial dislike grew to loathing as I reflected on it later. I guess it's the worst experience I've had at the movies since HUSBANDS. I remember laughing only once during the movie -- when after a night of terrorism Alex is chided by his mother not to be late for school -- and one line isn't enough to sustain you through two hours and 17 minutes of assault."

While the movie appeared repellently mean-spirited to the majority of Toronto critics, New York critics welcomed it with almost sycophantic glee:

"It can be said without question," The Saturday Review said without question, "that (Kubrick) is this country's most important film maker, fit to stand upon a pedestal beside Europe's best -- Bergman and Fellini."

Said The New York Times: "A CLOCKWORK ORANGE is so beautiful to look at and to hear that it dazzles the senses and the mind even as it turns the old real red vino to ice. A tour-de-force of extraordinary images, music, words and feelings... which is even technically more interesting than 2001."

Why the discrepancy of opinion? Was it a case of the Emperor's New Clothes? And if so, is the emperor dressed in his favorite finery...or nekkid for the world to see?

Earl Pomerantz recently made the observation that the non-movie world is not very nice. There's war in Viet Nam and gum on the seats. In most 'now' movies you sit down and you make gum-contact and you tell yourself: 'All right. I'm on gum! What should I do? I think I'll forget all about it. No gum on the seat's gonna stop me from enjoying the picture!' So you sit back, determined to forget the world and watch the movie and the lights go down and the flick comes on and it's called...Gum On The Seats!

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE is Gum On The Seats. The hero of the story is Alex Delarge, a young thug-about-town whose principal interests (so the ads inform us) are rape, ultra-violence and Beethoven. He is sent to prison for a particularly nasty murder but is given a chance for rehabilitation when he's chosen as the subject for an experimental attempt to reform condemned criminals. But when Alex returns to his former world minus his violent impulses he becomes a futuristic Candide, more sinned against than sinning.

Anyone who has experienced even one Kubrick film knows that the man loves irony. The irony in A CLOCKWORK ORANGE is that because of his 'cure' Alex is no longer equipped to protect himself in a world of violent madness. The happy ending occurs when he is cured of his cure and is able to return to his old life or rape and bashings.

The story has been interpreted as a defense of free will, to the effect that it is probably better to be a violent individual acting out of choice than a peaceful automaton. Purposely or not, the film also implies that our pursuit of free will must not only allow a thug to choose evil, but must in its end result create an entire society in which evil is a majority choice.

Every day now B52s unleash 3000 tons of bombs on Indo-China at a cost of 20 million dollars in money and an incalculable cost in human grief and misery. If the American people are not thoroughly sickened by this slaughter then why indeed should they not be entertained by choreographed gangrape and brutal beatings set to the strains of cheery show tunes? And why should one be offended by a mere film as long as life itself is infinitely more offensive?

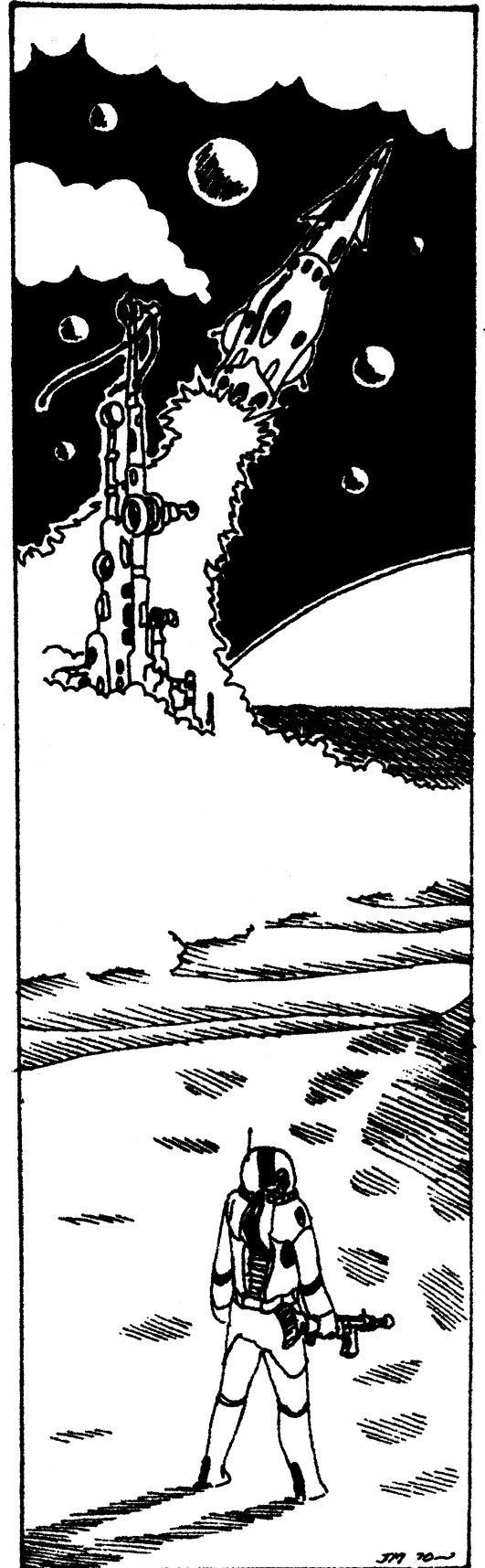
Why indeed? Only if the film is made by America's most important director and only if he fails to live up to the potential of his material.

What concerns this Kubrick fan is not that his new film will be overpraised (for whatever reasons), but that it may be damned for some of the wrong reasons. What's wrong with A CLOCKWORK ORANGE is not that it's sensational or vulgar (it is); what's wrong is not that the film has no point to make (it does); what's wrong is that given its subject and its director it should have been a better film.

With only two science fiction films behind him -- both masterpieces and one almost completely different from the other -- Kubrick seems to have contrived a formula for the fantastic. CLOCKWORK ORANGE is a kind of one-film retrospective, a compilation of tricks and bits of business which he developed fully in STRANGELOVE and 2001. Few of them are as delightful as when they were novel: what was hilarious in STRANGELOVE is sporadically funny now; what was stunning in 2001 often seems inappropriate here.

In 2001 Kubrick exercised a growing feeling for pace and movement, a feeling for subjective time. In A CLOCKWORK ORANGE his slow motion scene seems merely pointless, a trick to lend distinction to an otherwise ordinary sequence. Likewise, his speeded up teeny-bopper bed ballet is in itself a funny 40-second takeoff on skinflicks, but in terms of the film itself is simply excess baggage.

Alex is a "Ludwig van" fan so Kubrick crams his deafening soundtrack with Deutsche Grammophon recordings of Beethoven, Rossini, Purcell and anybody else at hand. What suffers in the long run



is not only the audience but the memory of 2001. Even the film's symbolism is somewhat hackneyed, an insult to the devices of his earlier epics.

In a long-ago review in YANDRO, I commented on the use of Vera Lynn's "We'll Meet Again" over the final, apocalyptic shot in DR. STRANGELOVE. Kubrick's intuitive juxtapositioning of sound and image was so funny you couldn't laugh, so sad you couldn't cry. By contrast, the employment of Gene Kelly's "Singin' In The Rain" over (kick) violence (bash) seems almost gratuitous. And Patrick Magee's grotesque portrayal of the crippled writer is a pointless take-off on Seller's Strangelove. Strangelove himself was a caricature of a stereotype. How can you make a caricature of a caricature of a stereotype? The answer is, you can't.

The most important thing, though, is what's missing: a sense of humanity. Burgess is a novelist of chillingly intellectual powers, but even so it was his human point of view which gave the book its validity. While the movie deals with violent, emotional subjects it is curiously unfeeling. Its rape victims, for instance, elicit no sympathy; they are masturbatory Barbie dolls, as faceless as strippers in a grind review. At least Peckinpah's movies have a raw life of their own. When the wild bunch scattered blood and guts around, it appeared to be real blood and guts. By comparison, Kubrick's ORANGE seems injected with Frostee-Freeze.

Visually and aurally, the film is sensational. John Alcott's cinematography is superb (although there is at least one use of rear projection -- the gang's ride in their Durango-95 -- which sets film effects back to where they were before 2001.) and Kubrick's use of the Dolby noise-reduction system has enabled him to come up with a sound track of outstanding clarity.

It is the first (more violent) part of the film which works best. Here Kubrick has attempted to stylize much of the violent action by organizing it around the Overture to Rossini's Thieving Magpie and turning it into a kind of ballet. It is not until the second half of the movie, "the real weepy and like tragic part of the story, O my brothers", that things really begin to break down.

In his second chapter, Kubrick tosses the "real" world at us and it is a flat and one-dimensional world populated solely by loony caricatures. Alex becomes a hero by default; he is the only human left alive in a world of giant stereotypes.

Supposedly, this part of the film is intended to be satire but as satire it is unbelievably heavy handed. For a man of Kubrick's wit, imagination and intelligence this is not excusable. There is no attempt at verisimilitude. The situations are simply unreal, the characters Op-art cartoons: ugly, demented, moronic. We are supposed to empathize with a repulsive hero because the plot arbitrarily makes his victims out to be even more repulsive. In short, the cards are stacked. This, I submit, is bad fiction and in particular bad science fiction, where an unforced suspension of disbelief has always been mandatory.

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE is audacious all right, but in a conventional, commercial manner. Ultra-violence is what's selling these days and nothing succeeds like excess. By comparison, DR. STRANGELOVE was a thoroughly off-beat film which made other far out films look like Ross Hunter productions. And 2001, A SPACE ODYSSEY was simply incomparable, one of the great feats of cinematic imagination.

In 2001, Stanley Kubrick dreamt of man surpassing his tools. With A CLOCKWORK ORANGE he is back to his preoccupation with the tools themselves. He is fond of giving interviews in which he discusses the technical trivia of the film: his penchant for the hand-held Arriflex, his use of a 9.8mm wide-angle lens to shoot in cramped locations and a fast f 0.95 lens for filming in conditions of less than adequate light.

The title A CLOCKWORK ORANGE refers to Burgess' lobotomized hero, but is a good description of the film too: something cold and mechanical that should have been organic.

I FELL INTO

To begin, a summary of a couple of points from last time.

The emphasis on visual aspects of fanzines in this column has not been accidental, but neither is it here because I'm overly concerned with this to the exclusion of written material. As far as I'm concerned, this aspect of fanzines has been neglected of late, and in at least this one column I'd like to do my best to fill this gap.

All the time, though, I realize that I'm far from the ideal person to be doing it. My experience in fandom is neither long enough nor broad enough to allow me to discuss material fully in the light of past work. Indeed, my own efforts in fanzines in this area are far from perfect (as Ted White pointed out last issue). But I feel it's important enough that someone talks about some of these ideas that I'll risk my inexperience before you to present my thoughts.

OK? Ground rules established, then.

There seems to be some confusion around that implies that if one is interested in the visual aspects of fanzine production, one must therefore not be interested in writing; another version of this seems to place visuals in a corner with expensively printed fanzines and somehow equates looks with money, or consideration of visuals with neoCampbellism. I remember a letter in POTLATCH, Joyce Katz's highly enjoyable fannish production (highlighted by great hand-stencilled Jay Kinney covers), which said:

Most of your sercon zines are trying to make it as big time critics, and think that layout, and art, are what is important. Granted, layout is important in a professional magazine, but fandom is supposed to be fun, and shouldn't try to be professional...

And then when I said in a letter of comment something of the same stuff I wrote in the first column here, the editor answered me:

I, however, will not have fans...with a hundred or more dollars an issue to work with come and sit on me and wave at themselves as lovely examples asking "Why aren't you like me, little crudzine?"

Maybe it's me; maybe I missed something in the argument. I don't think there's necessarily any direct connection between spending money and producing a good-looking fanzine. You can spend well over \$100 on a fancy offset fanzine, and still have it come out looking horrible (as I did, with TOMORROW AND...7). And you can produce an all-mimeo fanzine, with no artwork whatsoever, and come out with a very good-looking product (as Bruce Gillespie regularly does with SF COMMENTARY.) Obviously, I'm not communicating with somebody.

Perhaps it will help if I try to tell you what I really mean by good graphics -- in fact, what I mean when I say "graphics" at all -- what the term means to me. Grant me

BY JERRY LAPIDUS

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a few minutes to go over some things which may seem very simple, but which are rather important to my thinking.

For me, there's a host of things that go into the visual package, that go to make up a magazine's "graphics". Reproduction, obviously, is a basic point -- but you can have good reproduction as easily from a hand mimeo as from photo-reduced offset (if not more easily, I know from sad, expensive experience.) At its best, I happen to like offset, the clarity and sharpness it provides; on the other hand, Alpajpuri prefers the friendliness he finds in mimeo, and wouldn't use offset even if there were no price difference. What I'm concerned with is quality, whatever the medium -- sharpness, readability, clarity, given the medium chosen. Color of ink, color of paper, quality of paper -- all can be important.

Just as important to me is the way an editor uses the format and medium he's decided upon. Each medium has various advantages and disadvantages, and the editor who's really interested in his fanzine will consider these. I can explain this best by example. Ditto, on one hand, allows relatively simple multicolor reproduction; in his all-too-infrequent NOPE, Jay Kinney has used this to good advantage, featuring fine multicolor artwork.

In another case I'm sure you all know, offset is capable of reproducing exceptionally complex art, and allowing for more freedom in headings and layout. But in RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY, Leland Sapiro uses a good-quality offset poorly, hardly ever incorporating decent artwork or non-standard layout. This is all really simple; in a similar vein, how many offset fanzines have you seen? Very few, because the editors realize the offset is not conducive to the tone they intend to project.

Layout is perhaps the most subjective point, and we have many differences here already. As I've told Mike and Susan, I find the layout in ENERGUMEN competent but uninteresting; Mike tells me the layout in TA is cluttered and hard to follow. But there are some things I feel should be present, personal idiosyncracies aside. Clarity -- the ability to easily follow the material, to be certain exactly who's responsible for each piece in the magazine. Freedom from obvious errors -- from things like artwork in the middle of a line of type. And something I care about, if nobody else seems to -- ingenuity and distinctiveness. Has the editor been able to establish a pattern and style distinctively his own? Are individual pages designed to fit the writing and the artwork -- as opposed to the normal pattern of plugging material into the same format page after page after page?

Artwork. One of the biggest reasons I do TA offset is to be able to use as much as I can of the extraordinary artwork fanartists are turning out these days -- and to present it as well as possible. My own artistic ability is practically nonexistent, and my formal training is limited mainly to a few history courses. I'm in no position to try to tell anybody what is "good" or what is "bad"; I'll never argue about whether Austin is better than Barr, Kirk better than Rotsler. The fact remains that artwork from Robert E. Gilbert, Jeff Schalles, and the editor's younger brother is not very good artwork; when I'm looking at magazines, I'm simply going to enjoy more the ones with the best work. However, this by no stretch of the imagination means the more formal work, the most impressive work, the most "arty". I enjoy Jay Kinney and Steve Stiles as much as George and Alicia.

And one more thing, something perhaps I overemphasized in my first column. I feel it's important that the editor consider where and how he uses each piece of artwork. Nothing should be put there at random, or simply because he wants a 3 x 3 illo and this one happens to be that size. Each should, in my eyes, have a purpose in being there, a purpose affecting the page, the article, the entire magazine. This may be simply as an illustration; it may be intended to create a particular mood at that spot in the article -- or to break up the mood of the writing entirely. I can't help feeling that this practice makes for a more coherent overall magazine, makes the

magazine more of an entity, rather than a simple random collection of words and pictures.

Am I right? There is no right or wrong in this; this is the way I feel. I think it's difficult to argue against the belief that the editor should plan how he uses his artwork, but any specifics have to be entirely personal. For my own magazines, I've tried mainly to combine large purely visual features with written material in which artwork is chosen to complement or drawn specifically to illustrate. I certainly neither expect nor ask that everyone do this; in my next issue, in fact, I think I'll probably try a different attack entirely, and use few if any specific illustrations. That's the game I play with you, right?

Like all of us, I sometimes tend to go overboard. I get very excited over things that are different, not always stopping to think, "Are they really better? Or just different?" In a lot of ways, Ted White was right in his comments to me last time: because there are so few fanzines that interest me visually, I sometimes go too far in the praise of those that do, to the point of neglecting other factors. Because I'm concerned, I sometimes try to push my friends, who have less interest in these areas than I, onto paths they don't really want to take. Everyone has his (or her, I must say, lacking a polite neuter pronoun) own tastes, but how quickly they can change! Sometimes it seems as if nothing really lasts.

And sometimes I wonder why I bother with silly fanzines when there are so many more important things to do. But then, would we be able to tackle the important things, were it not for the small ones?





Kumquat May by Rosemary

illustrated by tim kirk

A couple of months ago, my sister Nora announced that her husband Kim was going back to school. He'd been working nine months at a film lab and was thoroughly sick of the place. So he decided that he'd finish up his BA and then maybe go on to teaching. I was pleased. Kim is an intelligent young man and deserves more out of life than a nine to five joe job at a film lab. As his first couple of years of university were at Carleton in Ottawa, he chose to go back to school there. Actually he had damn little choice as the University of Toronto is adverse to letting anyone into their school who wasn't born and bred within hailing distance of Hart House.

Because of this, a small problem arose. Nora is taking a two year course in child care at Toronto's Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. She finished the first year last month (May), and has another year to go. She can't transfer to a school in Ottawa. Kim can't go to school in Toronto. They talked about it for some time, then decided that the best thing for them to do would be to split up for the school year and when Nora was finished at Ryerson she could join Kim in Ottawa, where if she lucked out and got an Opportunity for Youth or Local Initiatives Program grant, she could start up a nursery school cum daycare center. This, however, was not the problem. The problem was that Nora and Kim can't afford to maintain one household, much less two.

Enter kindhearted, easy mark sister. Me. I was living in a one bedroom highrise that I hated. It was full of crotchety old people and had a drunken super who sat around in his dirty undershirt, sweating and drinking beer. I wanted out and I wanted out fast. I suggested to Nora that she find a large old apt, costing no more than \$150 a month, and we could move in together. I assumed she would find us a two bedroom flat in the top of some old house, and when she moved to Ottawa at the end of the school year I could move my rapidly expanding library into the extra bedroom. But Nora has the uncanny habit of finding exactly what you ask for and more. She found a three bedroom apt with a full kitchen and an alcove off the living room which would serve as a library of sorts for me. She would use the third bedroom as a study.

I wandered about in a state of euphoric bliss for a week. No more geriatric swingers rapping on my door at ten in the evening asking me to turn my stereo down. No more drunken landlord hassling my friends when they came to visit. And most important, I could have my cat back. The landlord had threatened to evict me because he claimed he could smell cat urine in the halls. All I could ever smell was cabbage and the Sunday roast burning.

My euphoric state ended suddenly one day with a phone call from my sister. The people who were supposed to move them couldn't, would I mind doing it? "You can rent a van from Dominion U-Drive," Nora suggested brightly, "and move yourself at the same time.



You'll save pots of money." So it was decided that I would move my few belongings and Nora and Kim's mountains of junk the following Monday.

I called Dominion U-Drive (the cheapie car rental people) and arranged to pick up a 14 foot Econoline van at 6:00 Monday afternoon. I arrived at their offices punctually at 6:10 after getting lost on Bloor Street once and Danforth twice. They're the same street, you see, but there's this bridge over the Don Valley Parkway...and I don't really like to think about it.

Anyhow, I finally arrived, gave them the \$25 deposit and had the van pointed out to me. "You can drive it, can't you?" the little man behind the counter queried, looking at me very dubiously. I nodded, not wishing to dignify such a remark with a verbal reply. "Oh, you've driven a van before," he said, looking relieved.

"No, but I've driven a station wagon," I lied. The largest car I've ever driven is a Toyota. He smiled a little weakly and told me that the van was five feet longer than a wagon. I thanked him and went out and got into the van. I had already noticed that it was parked a little weirdly. Like the damn thing was at a 45 degree angle between two gas pumps. I figured to straighten it out and drive off into the smog. I fished about on the floor looking for the seat belt and found it buried under about three inches of dust and dirt, but I put it on anyway. Damn good thing I did.

I scanned the dash looking for the key, found it and then looked down for the accelerator. I couldn't find it. I looked again. It was there all right, but it didn't have a pedal, just this great bar of steel running parallel to the floor. "Well," I thought, "what do you expect for \$3 a day-8¢ a mile?" A van with a pedal on the accelerator!

Well, I started the thing and was cautiously backing it up when I heard this infuriated roar from the office. It never occurred to me that it was me he was yelling at, so I kept right on backing up. "STOP!! STOP!!" the little man screamed. Christ, I thought, there's someone in my blind spot. My blind spot is a radius of ten feet immediately surrounding my vehicle. I braked hard...and bashed my head against the steering wheel. I turned the engine off and sat there shaking and rubbing my head.

The little man tore open the door and sputtered, "You were going to hit the pumps." I looked out the door. I was nowhere near the pumps.

"I don't think I should let you have the van. I don't think you can drive it."

"Of course I can," I said, thinking all the time that I would not shout or swear, I would be a lady. "I just don't back up so good. Besides, the imbecile who filled it with gas shouldn't have parked it so badly. And furthermore, I'm nowhere near your gas pumps."

"You would have been if I hadn't stopped you."

"Nonsense!" I snapped. "But if you're so bloody smart, you back the damned thing out."

Ten sweaty minutes later he had the van pointing at Danforth Avenue. "I still don't think you can drive this and I really shouldn't let you have it," he said as he climbed down.

"But you have to," I said. He stared at me. "My lease expires at midnight," I lied, "and the landlord will throw all my worldly possessions and chattles into the street. And it's going to rain," I wailed. I even managed to force a tear out of my right eye.

"Well..."

"Oh thank you," I lisped, threw myself into the van and took off in a cloud of blue exhaust before he could change his mind. I got the van to Nora and Kim's in relative safety. We loaded it and drove to the new apt.

We got some help from the group across the hall and Nora dragooned one of them into coming back with us for the second load. We loaded the last of their stuff and made our merry way back to Gore Street.

"You'll have to be careful here, Rosemary," Kim said, "the tavern is usually full of people around 10 and there'll be cars on both sides of the street."

"But they're not supposed to park on both sides of the street," I protested, swinging the van around the corner. There was a muffled thud.

"You hit that car," Kim said.

"No I didn't," I snarled. "Besides, he's not supposed to be parked there."

We unloaded the van and sat for a couple of minutes. "Hadn't we better go get your stuff?" Nora asked. I groaned and dragged my poor exhausted bod out of my chair. I had been up since six that morning and it was now close to eleven. Fortunately, my stuff was mostly books and we could fit it all into the van in one load. We drove to my place all right and loaded my stuff into the van while the super's wife sat and glowered at us.

Nora wanted a pizza so I drove down Queen Street to Al's Pizza Place. I had pulled up and parked when Kim said "You can't park here, this is a crosswalk."

"Oh shit!" I swore, starting the van and pulling into the traffic. "Look out for the garbage," said Kim. Toronto was in the middle of a garbage strike and the streets were littered with big green garbage bags. "What garbage?" I asked. There was a great rending of plastic and many loud crashes as tin cans spilled out of the torn bag I had hit. "Jesus fucking Christ!" I swore as we lumbered down the street.

"Aren't you going back?" Nora asked timidly.

"Why?" I snapped.

"Because there's a man back there waving his fist at you," Kim answered.

"Screw 'im!" I said, turning up Roncesvalles.

We got to Gore Street without further incident. The car I had hit on my second trip

was gone, much to my disgust. I would dearly loved to have hit it again. Kim and I unloaded the van while Nora went for a pizza. She got back just as I was carrying the last box down. I was so tired my stomach was upset so I couldn't eat. I had a cup of tea and staggered out to return the van. Kim came with me. I got lost at the Bloor-Danforth cutoff and spent ten minutes circling Saint Jamestown which did nothing for my temper or the state of my nerves. By the time I got the van back and had pocketed the refund, I could hardly stand.

On the subway I could vaguely hear Kim asking me if I could rent the van again next week. What for, I wondered? Well, he had to move his books and stereo up to Ottawa, and I had done such a great job moving him from Vaughn Road to Gore Street that of course I wouldn't mind taking just a few boxes -- no more than ten or twenty -- to Ottawa... would I?



MY 20 WORTH

d.s.

BY SUSAN GLICKSOHN

I have two requests to make of our contributors, artists in particular. We've been having Mailman Troubles since we lost the regular mailman for this route. The daily substitutes, carriers in training or other routes' rejects, consistently ignored our notes pleading that they leave large envelopes flat on the shelf under the row of itty-bitty mailboxes. Since they would arrive anywhere between 10am and 5pm, it was hard to rescue the mail in person. One day when my sixth sense shouted "Mail", I charged downstairs to find that day's oaf shoving a huge bundle of fanzine-sized envelopes into the letter-sized box. One of them contained unprotected art from Gregg Davidson. "Hey, that said 'Art: Do Not Bend' on it; why did you mush it up?!?" I demanded. "Oh, I didn't think it would matter" was the reply!

Fortunately our present, seemingly-permanent man is so conscientious he brings the bulky mail, unmushed, to each apartment. The problem is, envelopes NOT marked "Do Not Bend" are given to him by the P.O. folded, in presorted, precrushed bundles. Parcels, too, are battered -- a cover on artboard in a Jiffy bag and a well-wrapped book both arrived dented. So please, artists, draw on regular paper (anything thicker can't be electrostencilled) but protect your work with cardboard and write "ART: DO NOT BEND" in large letters on the envelope. Any writer who wants a ms returned, please do the same -- and we'll try to package returned work properly.

The second request will involve even less time than proper packaging. Please, if we ask you if you'll do work for us, and for some reason you do not want, or are unable, to do it, TELL US!! All we need is a simple "Can't do it, folks" on a postcard.

We've been getting a lot of criticism of ENERGUMEN's "bland" layout, the lack of "graphic trips" and specifically-illustrated articles. OK, we don't experiment too much, mostly because, not being design experts, we'd probably botch the idea. We've seen too many pages on which failed layouts detracted from both art and text to want to do that. In our defense, though, remember we can only work with what we get -- or don't get.

In twelve issues, we've only had one writer who promised material, then didn't deliver and, worse, didn't warn us before the deadline or explain. The record for artists is more like two per issue. Sometimes a frantic letter or cross-country call brings an 'Oops, I forgot' and some hasty work; usually, though, we hear that the artist is "too busy." Fine. We understand. We're busy ourselves, which is why we like to get material near the deadlines we suggest, so we can design layouts in the limited time we've set aside for the issue. We don't want to bug artists who have demanding jobs, or schoolwork piling up. We wouldn't -- if only you'd tell us. We don't expect art immediately and always, far from it; but are we wrong to expect consideration and courtesy? How long does it take to write "No." on a postcard?

To illustrate our frustrations: In mid-March I wrote to an artist whose work I admired and whose style seemed appropriate for an article for ASPIDISTRA which needed

specific illustrations. Since the artist was not a regular contributor, I enclosed a copy of ASP with a Xerox of the article. I suggested a deadline of May 1st. I also asked that the artist please let me know as soon as possible whether he could do the work, and, if not, to return the copy so I could ask someone else or pick art from the file.

May 1st passed. I was beginning work on ASP, juggling pages around a question mark. I wrote, reminding the artist politely of my request, and asking again that he simply tell me whether or not he could fill it. Two weeks passed. I wrote again. It is now June 5th. No art. No returned article. No message. Did the artist get the zine and letter? (It was sent first class, to the correct address.) Is he busy? Is he annoyed with us, for some unknown, uncommunicated reason? Why didn't the artist, knowing I was holding up the zine on his account, have the simple politeness to tell me he wasn't going to do the work? How long does it take to write "No." on a postcard?



Mike wrote an article for GRANFALLOON last summer. At Noreascon, one of our more famous fan artists promised Linda illustrations. Nine months have passed, and Linda, after writing repeatedly to the artist and publishing three issues without the article, has yet to see the article back, the drawings, or the simplest reply from the artist.

Fan artists are concerned with their status; but is this 'professional' conduct?

Those are outstanding examples, but such discourtesy is routine. We planned a folio for next issue, contacting six artists, two months ago. Only three have replied; two have sent art. Our suggested deadline was several days ago. Will we have a folio at all, will it be worth extending the deadline day by frustrating day, will we have to arrange for offset printing, will we ever hear from the artists...? I realize that fanartists (like editors) are busy people, that they get lots of requests, that they have slumps and down periods and professional commitments. But so do fan writers -- and they are polite enough to write saying "No, I can't write up how my train got derailed in the Rockies for this issue but I'll try for next." Moreover, some of the busiest artists -- Bill Rotsler, Grant Canfield, Tim Kirk for example -- have time for a short note. The first two don't like doing specific illustrations; fine, we won't bother you and thank you for telling us. The last will be too busy with school work to contribute, but acknowledges ENERGUMEN's arrival. Fine, thank you for telling us, we're glad you enjoy the zine. These people don't think it takes too long to write "Yes" or "Too busy" on a postcard.

I also realize that, much as we try to be courteous to artists and writers, problems will arise. Connie Faddis wrote recently, asking when some material we had held for nearly a year, with her permission, would be used. We value her work highly, but because it is distinctive and unusual, it simply won't mesh happily with most material, in most layouts. We don't believe that every piece of art must be an 'illustration' -- on the contrary, it is to be valued for itself. However, we do want to blend art and text to enhance both. We try, anyway. In four issues, Connie's art hadn't meshed with anything; we wanted to use it, but it was too powerful to be used as filler. We explained this to Connie. Instead of faned and fanartist fuming separately, each communicated. To prevent such problems recurring, I'd like to try dating each contribution. Then if in six months we haven't found the perfect place for it but still want to use it, we'll get in touch with you, and ask to keep it longer. Please, in return -- and I'm talking to all readers now -- let us know whether you are still

interested in us. We can't communicate with a vacuum. Let us know, at least, whether the Post Office delivered your copies!

We appreciate the artists who contribute their time and talent to ENERGUMEN. We want to keep them happy. We give them the best repro we can, acknowledge receipt of their art, and return it if requested to do so. (This can create some problems for us: that drawing would match perfectly with this lettraset for a title for this recently arrived article, except the original has been sent back to California; this drawing was great, if only we'd realized the stencil wasn't cut properly before sending the original back. Still, we manage.)

We'd appreciate fanartists even more than we already do -- and they might have less reason to complain of faned's treatment of them -- if they kept the lines of communication open. If you get a fanzine in the mail, containing a polite request for artwork, please realize that the editor(s) have spent a lot of time producing it, to the best of their ability. You are receiving it as a tribute to your skill, and as acknowledgement that as a "fan artist" you have set yourself up as an individual who enjoys contributing to fanzines, as well as to the more prestigious convention art shows. Please, have the politeness to acknowledge the request, even just with a mimeoed letter saying "Sorry, too busy" or "Improve your repro and try again." And please, if you get a request from us that you can't fill, take the time to write "No." on a postcard.



Jim McLeod

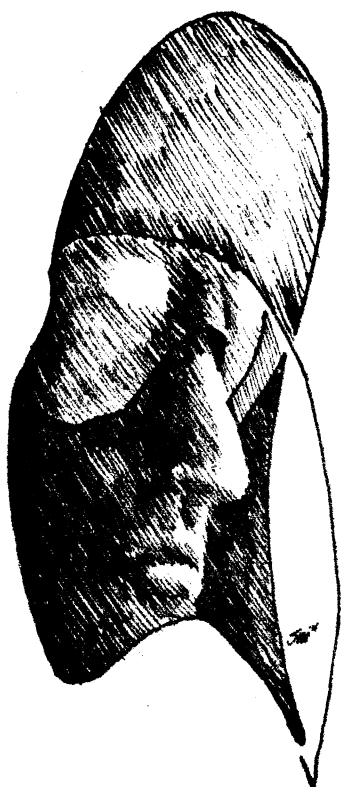
A FOLIO













STATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATICSTATIC

LESLEIGH LUTTRELL About your article, Susan; I really enjoy your writing (and I'll
1108 Locust St. always be grateful to you for introducing me to Dorothy Sayers),
Columbia, Mo. but I can imagine that some people wouldn't appreciate it at all
65201 -- you tend to write about odd subjects and in a rather scholar-
ly tone. I imagine that your subject this time irritated a lot
of people, some because it was about comics and some because you "don't understand"
their favorite comic book. I liked it a lot though. Of course, I was familiar with a
lot of the points from women's lib literature you brought up. Anyway, a few comments:
I tend to think Marie Severin is a good artist. Of course, it's hard to tell since
she seldom seems to work alone, but it's Hank's and my opinion that she does the pen-
cils when she works with John, and I really like their work in the latest King Kull.

I think that females are treated much more fairly in the funny books. The funny ani-
mals tend to stick pretty closely to stereotypes (i.e. Daisy Duck as compared to Don-
ald and Scrooge, although Barks has created admirable females such as Grandma Duck
and Scrooge's old girlfriend in "Back to the Klondike", Diamond Lil, I believe.) In
Little Lulu, the girls and boys certainly stick close to the cultural accouterments
of their sex (dolls, etc.), but it is obvious that Lulu is the smartest of the group
and that she and Tubby (as well as the other boys and girls) are actually very good
friends and tend to think of each other as equals to compete with, rather than as
different sorts of creatures altogether.

As for Marvel and DC superhero books, I agree with you. I hate to think that they
are actually being read by people who might otherwise escape some of the sexist con-
ditioning of our culture. I suppose we can't really expect comic books to be any more
than a reflection of our culture, but it seems unfair that they try to pretend that
they are actually progressive. I suppose they think they are writing what their aud-
ience wants to read, but I think they could change their readers' tastes if they
tried (and they do try; they apparently decided their readers wanted to read about
teenage problems and drugs without any indication in the letter columns that these
were topics the readers were interested in seeing in their stories.) I would really
hate to try and point their sexism out to the people in the comic field. You printed
an example of one of 'Smilin' Stan's putdowns. I think probably some of the younger
people in the field might be amenable to suggestions along these lines (perhaps
Denny O'Neil.) (Hank has just suggested that you, Maggie Thompson, Juanita Coulson
and I form a women's comic coalition. Considering the effects of comics on our cul-
ture, it might not be such a bad idea.)

//I grew up reading English children's books--in which boys and girls do things together--animal stories, and 'boys' books' such as sf and historicals so I was rather shocked by the sex-role stereotyping in mass culture for children. "Different sorts of creatures" is exactly the right description! As for the comics' claims to relevance, Ted White dismissed them very neatly in reviews in FANTASTIC, August 1971 and June 1972.//

TERRY CARR
11037 Broadway Tce.
Oakland, CA.
94611

Susan's article on Marvel Comics as seen through Women's Lib, darkly, contains some hard truths. I think she may be trying to make too much of them, though: surely if we were to consider any philosophical aspect of these comics we'd find their content just as banal and brainless as their attitudes towards women. I think it would be more interesting to survey the implicit attitudes of various science fiction writers, say, toward women, as expressed in their stories. Harlan Ellison is mentioned in Susan's present article, and he'd be one good subject. Bob Silverberg, D. G. Compton, Poul Anderson and in fact most any major writer would provide some food for study too. I don't mean to sic the women on these writers, it's just that I think if anyone's going to holler about such things in mass entertainment she shouldn't pick such sitting ducks as comic books; pick subjects that have a little stature anyway.

//I picked comics precisely because they have stature where it counts--with kids. By the time they reach sf, their ideas of the world, the deep-down prejudices you get when you scratch a white liberal such as myself, for instance, are already formed. Also, the cries of "relevance" splashed over hoary old stereotypes, producing a lot of jabber about drugs and put-downs of w-lib to grab the 'now generation' really offended me. Fake with-it-ness, ugh!//

Jerry Lapidus does indeed have some trouble expressing himself properly, as in this issue's column where he says "...the only thing I'm asking anyone else to do is to try and be as concerned with the way material in a fanzine is presented as he is with the material itself. All the rest is window dressing..." A most unfortunate choice of words there: "window dressing" is a phrase that connotes the unimportance of how a product is packaged and presented. As for his argument, I'm in sympathy with his fondness for some connection between text and art, whether it's actual illustration or ironic juxtaposition (I loved your placement of Rotsler's cartoon next to those lines of his letter, for instance, but I think Jerry is going on much too long about this. Speaking as a faneditor who frequently gets credited with popularizing the idea of illos tying in with text (via INNUENDO, years ago), I'd say it's nice when it works without strain, but there's no point in making a fetish of it.

Gad, all this talk suddenly about what happens to fanzine art once it's been in print. A revolution has indeed occurred in fanzines concerning the art: in past years it was standard practice for a faned to throw away a drawing once he'd published it. Yes, really. Of course, those weren't such elaborate productions as Austin or Barr covers; this was before electrostenciling became prevalent, and the art consisted mostly of line sketches which took the artist or cartoonist much less time. Some drawings did get kept by the faned or returned to the artist, of course, but that was the exception. Ted White has always kept drawings even after he's published them, because he'd publish them again wherever they seemed appropriate: various Rotsler drawings may have appeared four or five times in Ted's fanzines over the years. (The thought occurs that if every faned returned Bill Rotsler's drawings to him after publication, Bill would be inundated by so much paper that the entire state of California might slide into the sea.)

ENERGUMEN reminds me very much of a famous fanzine from the past, Joel Nydahl's VEGA,

which was also a generalzine of high quality and excellent appearance. VEGA is good company to be remembered in, even if Joel Nydahl was only 13 years old at the time. Talk about Boy Wonders...! (Nydahl was 12, I think, when he sold an sf story and rocked fandom on its heels. The story wasn't much good, but I mean, to sell a story at 12...!)

((Yes indeed; beside that my letter in FANTASTIC FOUR when I was 16 seems rather paltry. Whatever happened to Joel?))

VONDA McINTYRE
3014-135th Ave NE
Bellevue, Wash.
98005

You guys really put out beautiful fanzines. Susan's column was particularly interesting, to me, and I'm looking forward to Part Two. The one perversion I admit to (besides ice-sucking) is comic book reading. I don't really know why I do it, because almost invariably they make me so angry that I throw them across the room -- do you ever have the same reaction, Susan? Sometimes it's because they're so poorly written, trite, cliched (but what can you expect in a comic book?). Sometimes because they're full of cheap thrills (it isn't exciting enough that Spiderman is falling off a building, he has to think "Now I have to twist just right, or it's bye-bye friendly neighbourhood Spiderman!" Any gymnast or judo player will know that if you have to think about it, it's bye-bye anyway) and fake complications (even the reasons people go on drugs in comics are fake). More and more frequently these days it's because of "merry Gerry" Conway's exceedingly purple prose; and often it's for exactly the reasons Susan's column deals with.

//I only came close to the throwing reaction with the 'Femizon' parody of humanity in SAVAGE TALES. I fume, but training prevents my throwing any reading matter!(((Conway's simplistic plots have also gone a long way towards eliminating what originality Marvel comics had; for me, the quality of the books nosedived when he took on the writing chores.))

You must have one of the few solutions to doing anything in print about comics: print it yourself. I've had the urge to write letters to comics, on occasion, and I've always managed to repress the desire --writing Marvel or DC and asking them to change their outlook is like writing Playboy and asking how they can justify ecology-conscious and "liberation" articles on the one hand with their conspicuous-consumerism ads, their "adviser", and their beaver shots on the other. Playboy leaps up on a soapbox and cries "Buckmaster Fuller!" and "The Beauty of the Human Body!" and Stan Lee replies to trivialities, if he bothers to reply at all. To take your example: a request was made for more women in THOR. The response was: but women stayed home during Viking days. (An aside: perhaps mortal women did, but the Goddesses were very active.) Now, write another letter and tell them that Thor had red hair and a beard, that Odin had one eye and a couple of attendant ravens, that Sif had golden (literally) hair, and that Balder was dead (and didn't fight when he was alive), and he'll cry poetic (sic) license, alternate universe, and the right of "mythmakers" (they have a very high opinion of themselves) to make new myths.

Be it PLAYBOY or SPIDERMAN, the editor has all the cookies in his corner; he can chop your letter to idiocy, reply to the nitpicking, ignore the important questions, and in general make you look like a fool. How are you to reply?

The whole mess is really evident in schizophrenic comics of which WONDER WOMAN is the best example. The superficial claim is that she's "liberated", but it's made very obvious that what she really wants (read "needs"?) is A Man. Consequently, they have her fall for any guy she's known for more than ten minutes. And despite the claim, when a Hugh Hefnerish creep decides to hire her as bodyguard (she'll "fit in" with his attendants -- all she has to do is put on a bunny, or whatever, costume), she doesn't tell him where to get off, she works for him: it's a way to get money

for an operation so "I Ching" (gods...) can regain his sight. Of course (we are to believe) there's no one else in the entire world she can work for to obtain this money, and there's no earthly way a fellow of her teacher's talents could get the money himself (if in fact he wanted it). Fake plot, fake concession (she refuses to wear the bunnycostume; big deal). Perhaps the editors think they're changing, but they're still pandering to their own prejudices and to prepubescent males already firmly caught in Tarzan-Jane roles.

Oh, by the way, not to discuss the literary merits of Harlan Ellison's HULK script, but when Harlan was teaching at a workshop in Seattle last summer, he said at his open evening talk (in response to a question) that Roy Thomas was the one responsible for sticking in all the Ellison story titles and that he (Harlan) had been justifiably peeved by it.

TERRY HUGHES Speaking of Jack Gaughan's article on the Goon Show, I enjoyed it!
407 College Ave But I wish to object to Jack saying "It exists. Solely a radio
Columbia, Mo. thing of sound and madness, noise and puns and no sense whatsoever."
65201 Horsefeathers! I never heard the radio show or listened to the re-
 cords, but I saw the movie. It was called THE CASE OF THE MUKINESE
BATTLEHORN. (I may have mentioned this before, Mike, but bear with me.)

It starred the Goon Show folks. It had puns that were visual as well as oral -- like the scene where Spike and Peter are inspecting the scene of the crime. Milligan points to the floor and cries, "Look! An impression of a heel." To which Sellers, without even glancing, replies, "I've no time for your impressions." Or the fabulous duel scene where the heavy pulls out a sword and charges at Sellers, who pulls out his pistol and starts fencing with him! That movie hardly gave me time to climb into my seat after a laughing fit when something else would flash on the screen and I'd be rolling on the floor again, convulsed with laughter.

((And yet, Jack is still quite right; the Goon Show was a radio program. The movie, although brilliant, was a pale imitation of the real thing. I mean, how could you possibly show two men walking down a London street, one disguised as the Eiffel Tower and the other as Nelson's column? Or how would you present a gang of idiots stealing Dartmoor Prison, floating it to France and leaving a cardboard replica in its place?))

I definitely agree that Marvel and comics in general use women as sexual objects. Cheesecake. They do and always have, really. It is a very sexist thing. You mentioned the girls in CONAN. And why do they show scenes of the Black Widow in the shower, etc., and yet never show men in bathtubs? But this is no more so than movies...even less so actually. In most cases women in comics are treated as being not so bright and quite helpless, but not in all cases.

The point I'm making is that I object to your insinuation that comics are brainwashing girls into accepting an inferior place in our society. I don't think they really have that effect. You are giving them too much power, even as Wertham did with the comics-cause-violence schtick. It is more the influence of other things in our society than the comics. The comics only reflect actually. A girl is put in an inferior mold by her parents, other adults, her peers, the society around her. That is where the problems lie. In the minds and attitudes of men and women. Please don't point an accusing finger at comic books and cry "Mindwarper; Imprisoner of Women; Source of our Troubles, etc." Once again, comics are a mirror of our society, our mores, our biases, they are not instigators.

//What I was trying to point out was the gap between the comics pretensions to white-liberal socially-conscious attitudes (and their assumption that they

do have influence) and their actual stereotyped values. Besides, surely an 11-year old boy is influenced by his heroes' actions, as well as social forces, in his ideas of how to treat the girl who sits across the aisle?//

HARRY WARNER
423 Summit Ave
Hagerstown, Md
21740

I'm surprised that Angus Taylor didn't bring up Kafka when he was assembling the components of the typical Sheckley fictional theme. In fact, I'm astonished that Kafka receives so little attention in fanzines both for his fiction and for what he meant to the whole literary world of the past three decades or so.

Greg Benford's two-pager is magnificent: a more detailed, photographic word picture of the subject than emerges from many a full-length biography. My mania for saving everything under the sun causes me to wish that a tape recorder had been present and running at the time. There will come a time when everyone will think longingly about lost opportunities to preserve the voice of the famous fans and pros of the past who haven't happened to give major talks at tape recorded conventions.

Jack Gaughan has probably doomed Joanne Burger to some more work. Some of the Goon Shows are available through the NFFF tape bureau, it's about time for me to place another order for dubbings, and I'll hardly be able to resist some samples after such praise from the discerning. Let's see, I don't suppose Jack was around when the Goon Show caused a minor flap in fandom. The first, the original, the Irish John Berry first gained fannish fame by writing scads of Goon-influenced material, formation of the Goon Defective Agency, creation of titles like This Goon For Hire, and so on. Everyone in the British Isles knew what he was doing, of course, and nobody in the United States had even heard of the BBC series and thought that John had invented all the emphasis on Goon and the general mad air in his writings. Then someone over here finally learned about the BBC series and wrote in the utmost dudgeon a scathing rebuke to poor John for imagining that he could get away with such a sneaking theft of literary properties when there were such perceptive fans in the United States who were bound to catch him up sooner or later.

I don't want to get hurt in the argument over payment for art that has appeared in fanzines. But I can't help thinking that fans and pros in our hobby keep forgetting that "fan" and "pro" are convenient words which don't have many real counterparts in the actual world of science fiction and I also suspect that we're unconsciously showing some influence of the impossible efforts to divide people into amateur and professional that exist in the world of sports and athletics. I'd hate to see people in our hobby get into the same semantic messes over status as fan or pro that are threatening to ruin the olympics and are turning college athletic departments into nesting places of hypocrisy and deceit.

The only serious manifestation of it in our activity, I suppose, has come from the occasional writer for the prozines who refuses to do anything for fanzines and explains his refusal by the old adage that only a crazy person writes for any reason except profit. But there does seem to be a more widespread feeling that artistic and literary creativity is doomed to a certain quantity per month or year and if someone writes six thousand words for a fanzine, he'll automatically write six thousand fewer words for paying markets. It just doesn't work out that way in practice. So I think there should be more tolerance all around: of the fans who slacken their writing for fanzines because they need the money they can get from professional fiction; of the pros who are human enough to want Hugos for the time and effort they've put into creativity for fanzines; and of the artist who isn't mad enough to refuse whatever price people are willing to pay for his original art, no matter where it first appeared.

((As usual, Harry, you are the calm voice of reason. Tolerance is the key, and it must come from all sides. See Susan's editorial for our thoughts.))

DAVE PIPER
7 Cranley Dr
Ruislip
Middx, HA4 6BZ
England

So there I was, wasn't I (?), on the train, going to work and I had NERG 11. I sat in a seat and opposite me was another fella. Reading a paper. The Telegraph. A BIG paper. Y'know? I, lovingly, opened the envelope and gently withdrew (Gawd! this is almost pornographic aint it? I oughta take it up. I'll have a word with Cath just as soon as I've finished this letter. In fact...shall I 'ave a word now? Um...ah...NO, c'mon Dave lad, finish the letter!) Gently withdrew the issue of one of my very favourite fanzines (and what makes it a favourite, you breathlessly and with mounting excitement ask (?),) (well, I dig out an issue every so often and RE-READ it. That's what makes it special.) and I noticed that this straight was clocking it with a supercilious look (at least it struck me as such) on his pukey face. HE was one of those geezers who were going bald and had allowed his (remainin-g) hair to grow to a stupid length and slicked it down to try to cover up the shiny dome. Y'know what I mean? Yeah. A real creep. After about ten or so he sighed and opened his paper. Now, our knees were almost touching, there's not much room in those seats, and when he opened his paper the top portion fell over onto my FANZINE. Ah, your etc. So, I, with consummate and gentile civility shook NERG irritably and his paper fell down. He picked it up again, shook it, creased it down the middle, glared at me, and started reading it again. It happened again. I shook. It fell. He etc. FOUR times he did this. I wasn't 'appy. At All. Point is, not a word was spoken during this fiasco. But he could tell that, especially as by this time I was white lipped, frozen faced and pinkarsed, I wasn't gonna give up and as I was bigger than him...presumably he decided that 'the better part of valour' and all that and folded his paper in half. Now, why am I telling you this? Well, the point is, his flies were undone and you can well imagine the tremendous feeling of satisfaction I got from NOT telling him. I debated whether to tell him and thus embarrass him, or whether it'd be better to not tell him and let him go on with 'em undone until he needed a pee. Yeah, he had buttons not a zip. I decided not to and the gleeful feeling I got kept me warm for about two hours this morning. VERY satisfying.

SANDRA MIESEL
8744 N. Pennsylvania St
Indianapolis, Indiana
46240

My most basic objection to Susan's opus is to ask why anyone would expect any aspect of human nature to be fully and correctly portrayed in comics? I can't comment on the specific failings of Marvel Comics as I've never read one.

I wouldn't so much as inspect these publications on the grocery store's racks lest I set a bad example for children. As C.S. Lewis said: "A taste for comics is excusable only by extreme youth because it involves an acquiescence in hideous draftsmanship and a scarcely human coarseness and flatness of narration."

((Lewis' vision is badly dated. But disregarding the literary and artistic merits of modern comics, allowing a so-called 'expert' to decide one's opinions on any topic accessible to personal investigation is the most insidious form of intellectual snobbery I can imagine and I'm extremely disappointed to find you engaging in it, Sandra. Look for yourself, then decide.))

Having outraged Michael and comic-fan readers, I'll proceed to annoy other segments of the audience. A detailed critique of all your opening premises, Susan, would be far too long for a loc but if one combined the experiential knowledge of early childhood development and contemporary child-rearing practices possessed by you, Vonda McIntyre, lesleigh Luttrell (and Greer and Firesmith for that matter), it would doubtlessly get lost in a thimble.

//Granted that I am abysmally ignorant as to childrearing, it hardly takes great experience or powers of observation to realize that, no matter how adults avoid comics, children read them-- and believe them, and act out the fantasies and roles in them.//

But I will confine my remarks to other areas of personal expertise and rebuke you for taking Poul Anderson's name in vain. Your objections to his SFR column represent a clash between ideology and pragmatism. Surely a fuller understanding of Anderson's views on womankind could be gleaned from his fiction rather than plucking phrases out of a fanzine column?

//I quoted Anderson precisely because of the dichotomy between his fiction, full of intelligent, articulate, courageous women, and his fanzine column, which seemed to be a direct, personal, and surprising revelation of deep biases against intelligent, articulate, and courageous women. Erissa, Alianora, Barbara Cullen, Freda and especially Ginny Matuchek are delightful in art, but have no place in an office? That was the impression I got -- and it shocked me, hence the use of qualifiers, like "otherwise sensitive."//

JOHN LEAVITT "Out of school, it's male-female stereotypes in all the media. Some
Maple Avenue feminists are rewriting fairytales to get rid of the Evil Old Witch,
Newton, N.H. Beautiful Princess and always-Charming Prince, but who gets these
03858 images from Grimm any more?" Where, in fact, did Grimm get them? The
 brothers G. picked them up from the peasants, who had inherited them
from their ancestors stretching back to the first humans who ever told tales. Fairy
tales aren't just stories, they're repositories of the most basic models of human-
ity. The roles they portray aren't stereotypes, they're archetypes. They aren't hu-
man inventions, they're outgrowths of the preconscious state. The best introduction
to all this is Man and His Symbols edited by Carl G. Jung. There is no way to erad-
icate the archetypes the feminists so despise from the human mind without destroying
its essential humanity. The symbols are eternal, and if you somehow managed to com-
pletely eliminate them from all the media for a century, they'd crop up again. What
has to be done isn't the elimination of these archetypes but the modification of our
cultural interpretation of them.

Interpretation is a purely subjective thing. You see Harry Osborne as the victim of Mary Jane, and when I read the same issues I clearly understood that Harry had gotten into the drug thing as a result of his own failure to understand his relationship to her, and that it was his fault, not hers. Neither interpretation is necessarily 'right', since by its very nature interpretation is projective -- you can only find what you bring.

Then you come down on Spidey with an accusation that he's always strung out over money to take Gwen out before she dumps him. Interpretation is subjective, but that is really warped. If you can find any instance where such is the case, I'll eat one of my copies of CONAN #1. The only times he's needed money were for Aunt May, for medicine, or an operation, or to send her to Florida. His problems with Gwen all revolve around his paranoia which is manifested in his inability to tell her his secret and his fear she'll leave him. (Actually that may be feelings of inadequacy rather than paranoia now that I think of it; I've never tried to psychoanalyse a comic book before.)

//Keep the salt and pepper, and send Mike the CONAN #1, John, if you remember these recent issues:

#96, in which continued emphasis on how broke Peter is drives him to take a job with his arch enemy Mr Osborn (The Goblin): "Maybe I can make enough money working here...to go back and find Gwen again."

#85 -- 'A brooding youth finds it hard to concentrate on his studies...'

"Gwendy's birthday is almost here...and I'm as broke as ever! If only I'd been able to nab the Schemer...and claim that reward."

#87 in which he's tempted to steal jewelry for that much-needed present.

#99 in which he risks death in a prison riot and capture in a TV studio for

enough money to take Gwen out to dinner.

And especially #103-104 -- the 'Hidden Land' episode -- in which both he and Gwen risk their lives (and she deliberately sells her bikini-clad body because JJ Jameson wants cheesecake photos to boost circulation) because "It means money -- money we could use to get mar..." --ried, of course.

I agree, though, that money problems are only one aspect of Peter's total incapacity to relate to the girl he says he "loves".//

Our tastes differ on Marie Severin. I've always considered her one of the best artists Marvel has, especially her work on the early SUB-MARINER and her version of Dr Strange back in the good old days of '67. Your interpretation of her presence at Marvel just because she's John's sister is ridiculous.

//Is it? Howcome the only women to be involved in that tight little ingroup are an artist's sister, a writer's wife and a secretary? All I meant is, it's a hard field to break into for men, impossible for women unless by the back door of secretary-ship or relationship.//

Sif wasn't always so ineffectual. Back when Kirby was still around she rarely was without armour, and fought alongside Fandral, Hogun, and Balder. Her present role didn't really develop until Conway took over the writing, at which time she became so different I wrote a furious letter about his blatant sexism. As for Sue Richards ...I detect a pattern here. When Kirby was around she was in things as much as possible, considering her powers are basically defensive, but she's been pushed into the background since. But as for her being tolerated just as sister to the Torch and wife of Reed, I remember several letters early on ordering Marvel to dump her as she was only in the way, shortly after which she developed her force-field power.

DAVID HULVEY In your great independance of evial serconism and awfial faanish-
Rt 1, Box 198 ness you've clearly ensconced yourself in a rather grey orthodoxy
Harrisonburg, VA of the Mod Mod Moderates. Your fandom, your fanzine, your whole
22801 Glicksohn Universe is what I'd expect from a white collar fan.
 You're bourgeois all right. That's nice. I like middle-class peo-
ple. I'd never go around calling them booshwah, or boojwah. Never.

Though I nominated NERG, FP and SFC for the fanzine Hugo, each represents Orthodoxy. NERG, the IPA Theology; FP, the Faanish Trufandom Utopianism; SFC, the reactionary standard bearers Australian-Polish Marxist Romanticism. It all strikes me as petty. These zines are the best each Orthodoxy has to offer. They are superb in their own province, but each becomes myopically provincial and biased when commenting on the opposition. Each is incomplete in itself. I can easily take the valid and necessary concepts of good fan friendship carried in FP, the art consciousness and emphasis on gloire of NERG, and the scholarly seriousness of SFC and give my blessing to all. However, each particular faction falls down in the areas in which the others excel.

((I disagree, Dave; I think you're bringing a far too limited perspective to the whole situation. You've labelled us without checking if the labels fit.))

I wonder, Mike, if you realize the power you have over fandom, especially the middle of the road faction? You are now crowned Prince, the White Knight on the Shining Steed rushing about challenging the venal purveyors of dualism or pluralism. Or so some would like to hypothesize. Already some are foolishly calling you Boy Wonder in a semi-mystical sense. They can't think of you as a human being like the rest of Jest Us Folks, but must make you the paragon of IPAness, funny hatism, fuzzy hairism ...the whole schlocky schtick.

//Perhaps you're the myopic one, Dave, unable to distinguish the human being

under the hat. IPA theology...huh?...//((Several new fans I met for the first time at Lunacon had no problems treating me as human, Dave. Your vision of fandom strikes me as somewhat of a fantasy, from my own experience, anyway.))

I hope you'll reject this silliness for the superficial ego-trip it could become. If you don't, well we'll see another era of Middle of the Road Fandom. It won't have the grand immensity of the SFR Gestalt, or the intimate ingroupishness of the recently defunct faan resurgence, but it will be a Time of Changes. And I don't especially like the changes. Fandom seems to go perpetually through a cyclical spiral, not a linear progression like Christianity or Marxism or Science presuppose. You can probably sustain your dominance of this Era of the Moderate for a couple of years before a new sercon standard reasserts itself, only to be challenged anew by another faan resurgence. And so it goes.

((With all this power I have, Dave, howcum LOCUS wins the awards and polls?))

NERG ll is, I sense, an approach to your personal Rubicon. It is the blandest ish of a major fanzine I've yet seen. Oddly, the properly sercon and conscientiously faan-ish zines never end up bland. They are either damn good, or horrible. By and large, your imitators and now you are bland, bland, bland.

PHILIP PAYNE Just to prove I'm logical, I'll start my biting indictment of
University College modern fanzine society in the middle of your mag, namely at
Oxford, OX1 4BH Jack Gaughan's article on the Goons. As I am not yet 20, the
England Goons had virtually finished in England before I started listen-
 ing. However, with the aid of continual repeat shows and the
infamous Telegoons, I have become an avid fan over the years. And I don't think an
article could have been better written than that by Jack. Are you sure he's not a
cleverly-disguised offspring of the Cruns? It would be impossible to try to fill in
all the details Jack left out, even if I had time, but if either you or he is in-
terested, I can strongly recommend THE LAUGHTERMAKERS by David Nathan. It was pub-
lished here by Peter Owen last year and contains not one but two glorious chapters
on the Goons, with quotations such as:

VOICE: Bad eyesight can also be responsible for the loss of perfectly good
teeth, as this dentist will testify.

SECOMBE: Yes, one of my patients came to me with a violent toothache. I had to
extract eighteen teeth before it stopped. This would never have happened
if I'd had good eyesight.

I think that of all the characters portrayed in the series my favourite was Eccles,
portrayed by the one and only Spike Milligan (and yes, he did do Gladys as well,
Jack.) Spike's zany humour has always amused me greatly -- anyone seen "The Bed
Sitting-Room"? -- and extracts such as the following really crease me up:

"The Goons are crossing the Amazon, but when they reach the other side they
find that Eccles is there already:

'How did you get ashore?'

'Oh, hum, I came across on that log.'

'Log? That's an alligator.'

'Ooh. I wondered why I kept getting shorter.'"

Which brings me, with little change of subject matter, to Angus Taylor's article on
Robert Sheckley. I would not claim to be a mad Sheckley fan but I have read MINDSWAP,
"Dimension of Miracles" and "Shards of Space", all of which I enjoyed immensely.
"Shards of Space" is a collection of eleven short stories, in the main very serious,
though humour is often not far away. Perhaps the best story in the collection is

"Forever". It deals with the supression of inventions, primarily immortality serums, by a group called The Undertakers, and ends with the marvellous sentence "The ingenious way in which Dennison and his colleagues broke out of their seemingly impregnable prison, using only a steel belt-buckle, a tungsten filament, three hens' eggs, and twelve chemicals that can be readily obtained from the human body, is too well known to be repeated here."

MARK MUMPER Susan's article is an example of one type of thing I like to see in
1227 Laurel St fanzines. It starts from a basically serious topic, relates it to
Santa Cruz, CA something having to do with sf or fandom, treats the subject intel-
95060 ligently and entertainingly, injecting generous amounts of humour,
 and in the end unites the whole thing in a relevant piece of comment.

Bob Toomey's experience is similar to a predicament I've found myself in lately involving a story of mine. My troubles are probably not as pressing as his, seeing he is a professional writer trying to make a living and I'm only starting out, but nonetheless I've been quite put out by the goings on of a certain anthology editor who shall remain nameless. I sent him a 6000 word short last January for consideration for a book he's organizing. Ten weeks passed and I had not heard from him, so I sent off a letter inquiring as to the fate of the story. Four weeks passed with no reply, and another letter was sent by registered mail. All this time he has resided less than 100 miles from Santa Cruz, and although I have my suspicions about the Post Office's efficiency, I doubt that three pieces of mail could fail to reach their intended destination. The last letter was accompanied by a return receipt request, and I have visual proof that the editor received it, if I may trust the existence of his signature. Two weeks have passed since that last letter, and now I'm a bit pissed that a man with a decent, nay, respectable reputation such as this person could not find ten minutes to write a brief reply to a query from an unknown fledgling writer. Of course, all this bitterness could be alleviated by a letter from him this week, but I really doubt if he will trouble himself to send one.

I'm beginning to realize that the sf business is not as open and above-board as I've been led to think. If nothing else, articles such as Toomey's serve to warn other writers of similar editor-publisher hassles. The whole situation is not without humor, but it does involve money and mental anguish, and I wish more people would be cooperative where correspondence is concerned. This applies also to Andy Porter's comments on BNFs who are "nothings" to him since they've never seen fit to reply to his letters and gifts of fanzines. We should all try to be as helpful as we can; I reply to every letter and fanzine I receive, and I think others should also. We can't all be as beautiful as Harry Warner, with his endless friendly correspondence, but we could be a bit more considerate.

((We thoroughly agree, and I still try to respond to every letter and zine, but working and putting out this fanzine cut into the time I spend on correspondence. I'm spending 8 to 10 hours a day this week on this issue and I've got many personal letters and over thirty-five fanzines to respond to. I'll eventually get around to them, but some of their senders are probably feeling the same way you are about that story of yours.))

TIM KIRK ENERGUMEN 11 was beautiful, as usual, from cover to cover; the
1530 Armando Dr covers, incidentally, seemed to complement each other. The more I
Long Beach, CA. see of Rotsler's serious work, the better I like it. That thing
90807 grabbing the ship on the first page of his folio looked like a gi-
 ant hairy sweet potato. Great. I find myself in accord with Grant
Canfield and George Barr in their replies to Andy Porter. Alex Eisenstein has pointed

out a danger that faces any creative person throughout his career (i.e., complacency); but I don't think fan art has quite sunk to the depths that he depicts. Alicia's work resembles Beardsley (and George Barr) only at a very superficial level; she's learned things from both of them, but she isn't derivative in any negative sense.

I've been greatly influenced by Carl Barks (who was responsible for Uncle Scrooge and most of the other really well-done Disney comics) and Dr. Seuss, true; N.C. Wyeth and the pre-Raphaelites have also been influences. If I never send anything but cute aliens to fanzines, it isn't because I don't do anything else; I enjoy doing cute aliens. Most fan artists, I think, have sides to their work that fandom may seldom, if ever, see. Would you like a drawing of a bulldozer for ENERGUMEN? How about a portrait of Teddy Roosevelt, or a dust jacket design for a book on English village architecture? I've got 'em.

I'm not sure what Alex means by "structural considerations", but I don't think I "constantly sluff off draftsmanship"....all any artist can hope for is that each drawing or painting (or each novel, statue, movie or whatever) is a little better, a little more fully realized, a little truer to his inner vision than the last.

GREG BURTON 3209 SE Stark St Portland, Ore. 97214	As far as the definition of sf goes, I for one understand the paragraph, and still can't discover what the central characteristics of printed, verbal sf are. The problem with defining on the basis of characteristics is that the characteristics as a group must be present in all works of the type and not present as a group in any other type of writing. Defining is differentiating, and as yet I have found no one central group of characteristics that are <u>necessary and sufficient</u> for the defining of sf.
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'Definition' as an idea implies not only an objective reality, but a (possible) exact correlation between that reality and the language used. We (I hope) are aware that the English language is hopelessly out of touch with many apparent physical realities -- 'sunrise' is a geocentric phrase, 'energy' appears in the place of an object/noun in a sentence, etc. Therefore, while it is not fruitless (necessarily) to spend one's time searching for the definition of sf, there are other things to do that are more likely to yield positive results. (I doubt that this will keep even me from the search for the philosopher's egg, from which we can transmute ANYTHING into sf that we want to.)

Also...the English department at Portland State University (a school dedicated to the propositions that 'Concrete is Art' and 'Any professor who hates students can't be all bad') is attempting to build an sf archive. Being dead broke (individually and departmentally) we can't afford to buy anything, but anything related to fandom or sf that people are willing to donate we will gladly accept. That means current fanzines, back collections and/or issues, prozines and books, art work, manuscripts, and on and on, anon, anon, sir. If you could pass this along, perhaps some of the criticism Greg Benford expresses about 'serious' non-fan, literary-oriented work won't be necessary. Address for the above is: Prof. Samuel Yorks, English Dept., Nueberger Hall, Portland State University, Portland, Oregon. All we can offer in the way of egoboo is a listing of who has donated how much, and possibly the naming of the collection after the first person to make a substantial donation.

WILL STRAW 303 Niagara Blvd Fort Erie Ontario	I hope that the fact that West Coast voters will most influence the Hugo results this year will result in Bill Rotsler finally getting an award -- otherwise, I have a feeling that every year we're going to have new talents like Grant Canfield come along and
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sweep the awards, while Rotsler remains overlooked. I'd like to see the West Coast voters give Tom Digby an award this year, for much the same reason -- that he probably won't get one any time if it isn't this year. He certainly deserves it -- he's as entertaining as any of the other writers currently writing, and much more imaginative than any of them. (The difference between him and the others lies, I think, in the fact that there is a lot of discussion on the merits of most of the writers nominated, whereas anyone who has read a lot of Tom Digby's writing is wholeheartedly in favor of him.)

I don't think **ENERGUMEN**'s Unchanginess is really a bad thing, if you're sticking to a good format as you are. My other favorite zines, like **STARLING** and **POTLATCH**, never change from issue to issue, but they're good because the style they've settled down with is one that really can't be improved upon. How many fanzines don't stay the same after the first few issues anyway?

I'm kind of amazed at the way the British have made themselves masters at two poles-apart types of humor, and how they make both types appeal to the same people. They seem to be just as good at the droll, wry, subtle **type** of thing they're known for as they are at wild zany stuff along the lines of the Goon Show Gaughan is talking about. I've been watching the British comedies that pop up on Channel 29 once a week or so, and generally laughing my head off at them, but I've been just as amused at the much wilder radio shows that the CBC runs every so often.

((US readers have a chance to see a watered-down version of Monty Python's Flying Circus in The Marty Feldman Comedy Machine. The same animators work both shows, and some of the skits approach the level of the British original.))

GLORIA PTACEK
3588 Connecticut
Gary, Ind.
46408

Heard the mailman this morning and parachuted out the window to greet him. He muttered an arcane curse as I landed, entangling him in the chute. "Well?" quoth I. "That's a hole in the ground, I deliver mail," he spat. "Ya got this." It was, oh joy, my favorite Canzine! I ran up the stairs, ripping and snarking.

What should first greet my eyes as I opened my Canzine, but an esoteric letter from Alex Eisenstein! I sighed, dragged out my Dictionary of Baroque Usage and started to read. The drift of the hot debate, I gather, was whether fan art should illustrate the printed word or be entirely independent of it. I agree with Alex, I think. Give the artist latitude if you aren't giving him something tangible to salve his ego. A story may give the artist some far-flung associations and if these inspire him and specifics don't, do well and choose the former.

Many of the letters concerned fan art and feelthy old lucre. It seems to me a matter of fans in different stages of self-confidence. The less sure a fan is of his own output, the more guilty he will be of the crime of giving it away. The more secure he becomes in his craft, the more demanding he will and should become. Nothing wrong with that, is there? What fanartist does not wish to climb the Golden Stair of fame and fortune? His becoming demanding (i.e., confident of his own ability) may be the first sign of a developing healthy ego with regard to his own work. Faneds be damned! Right on, fanartists! Didn't Marshall McLuhan say that "art is anything you can get away with"? Ah, in this world, talent is often secondary to aggressiveness. So become crass and commercial, dear gentle fanartists. Turn Dirty Pro! Do work **OUTSIDE** the field, if necessary. But by all means, gather clout while ye may. If a faned sneers at your work, there are always galleries and art shows. Know your alternatives!!

((Basically I agree with you. A fanartist should have the right to sell his art if he wishes to. But he should also be allowed to give it away, if that's what he wants. Again, it all boils down to tolerance on all sides.))

BARRY SMOTROFF
147-53 71st Rd.
Flushing, NY
11367

The trouble with these blasted white covers is that they get dirty much too easily. I didn't have my copy for two days and already it had a dirt smudge on it (and I wash my hands before I even open the envelope.) Maybe I should stop storing them in old OUTWORLDS envelopes....

I grant your thesis, Susan, that women are not realistically portrayed in comics. But I don't think that automatically makes Stan Lee or anyone else in the industry a male chauvinist pig. Because they also don't portray males, animals, gods or anything else realistically. I'm not saying that that makes it right, but that it's more than just women who are getting the short end of the stick. I think it has to be kept in mind that these are "super hero comics". Please emphasize the "super", because that is how comics are done. They're not interested in Joe Shmo off the street, they're interested in Johnny Storm the human fireball, and in Doc Strange with the incantations and the house in the "village". There ain't no such animal as a realistic person in comics. I would love to see it, but when the good guys always have to win (to get the Comics Code Seal of Approval) it appears to be a way off.

((As Susan has already said, Barry, everyone seems to be aware of the lack of realism and relevance in comics except the people producing them!))

The Goon Show? Monty Python's Flying Circus? Why don't programs like that originate on US TV? The closest thing we've got is the Firesign Theatre. I wonder if it's a problem of environment? I remember someone saying recently that American television hadn't grown up and I tend to think this has a certain validity.

((As a nation, the US has always struck me as having a very simplified sense of humour. US versions of hit British comedy shows are invariably toned down and de-venomed when compared to the originals. English humour is typified by the Goons and Monty Python, American humor by Laugh-In and Soupy Sales.))

MIKE LEWIS
598 Abilene Trail
Cincinnati, Ohio
45215

Your editorial was a bit disappointing for a second annish in that you pointed out things that the rest of us already knew, most of it anyway. As for ENERCUMEN seeming to stretch back through the ages -- it does for me and I've been getting it for less than a year now. I think it's more structural than anything else. Your fanzine is consistent, too, which doesn't help break the memory chain. This in combination with the yellow paper and nice heavy cover stock (why-in-the-hell don't all faneds do it?) make E appear like no other magazine. The interior certainly doesn't follow this seeming regularity at all.

((That nice cover stock costs plenty, Mike; other faneds are reluctant to spend as much as we do. Part of this print run is being done on blue paper. If it's better looking we may switch from the buff.))

I don't know nuthin' about nuthin' how the Canadian TV system works, but did you catch Kurt Vonnegut's "From Time and Timbuktu"? One of the best (if not the) sf television dramatizations I have seen in a couple of years.

((Agreed; well presented and a damn fine satire too.))

Susan, the whole bunch of KOMIX and their kin have stereotyped ever since they have been in existence. Not just women, but every fuckin' person. Terry Austin's art is so right: let's have Natasha (hell, aren't they ever gonna learn about names) kicking Daredevil in the balls. Let's have Gwen poison Peter Parker. On and ON.

The real culprit behind this whole thing is the media. How can Jane break free of

Dick when she's put down at every turn? You couldn't possibly be more correct when you talked of the stereotyping in the school -- the math books, everything. The only suggestion I have is keep on trying. You'll make it someday and I'll support all of you along the way. Keep on writing. ENERGIUM needs you to balance Michael's voracious ego. As one famous person said, "He has more ego in his little finger than the rest of us have in our whole body."

((I'd ask you to explain that last remark, Mike, but I'm too egocentric to admit I didn't understand it. The next letter covers your basic point, though.))

JODIE OFFUTT Susan, you're not going back far enough in your research about 'wo-
Funny Farm men's place.' I'm taking a class in Philosophy this semester -- Social
Haldeman, Ky. Ethics. (It's about the most exciting, stimulating thing I've done in
40329 years. Education is such a wonderful thing, when you're out from under
the pressure of having to have it.) Anyway, we've covered religion,
sex (It fascinates me that college students who think nothing of necking in the
halls outside of class -- and making me a bit uncomfortable -- are very reluctant to
discuss sex inside the classroom), drugs, (Oh, wow, we had a man from MIT -- Huston
Smith -- discuss his article in the textbook having to do with drugs as a means to
achieve mystic experiences. His approach is so rational, neither the propaganda
we're getting from the authorities today, nor, at the other extreme, the Leary pro-
paganda.). I'm sorry to go on so, but I've had, and I'm still having, so much fun
and interesting things come up since I've been enrolled in school.

Well: we've just begun to discuss education. And the first thing that was brought up
had to do with the fact that we're indoctrinated with certain roles and values, be-
ginning with Grade 1, with the first readers.

Whether it is Dick and Jane and Spot, or Mark and Janet, or Betty and Tom and Susan,
the girls all help Mother in the kitchen, and the boys all play ball with Father.
Mother always wears skirts and aprons, Father always wears ties. Girls never help
boys do anything, or even other girls; it is always the boys who have to help the
girls. Mother seldom drives a car or fixes a tricycle; Father mows the grass and
reads the paper. The kids always get along and never fight and if somebody cries
about something, the solution is for Mother to bake a cake, or for Father to give
the child a nickel to go to the candy store.

The boys' toys are airplanes and trucks; the girls' toys are dolls and dishes. They
go to grandmother's house -- she's always just a bit plump and has gray hair --
which is a farm on the day after the kittens have been born or the horse has foaled.
They never get there in time to see any births. And they help a little with the hay,
then have lemonade.

When I got home yesterday my second-grader asked me what I learned in school that
day. (Actually, she didn't -- the first thing I did learn was not to ever ask kids
what they learned in school today; instead I ask if they had a good time.) So I told
her about what we talked about, and she agreed that it was stupid. She pointed out
that they never show men teaching school, either. The thing that she was very ada-
mant about is that the readers show everybody getting along so well; either they al-
ways have enough toys to go around, or somebody is ever-willing to share. She also
pointed out that if the youngest child (which she is) loses a sock or a shoe, nobody
gets mad and everybody helps look for it. Mother never fusses if it turns up some-
place it has no business being. And everybody laughs and laughs when the dog chews
up a shoe and Father drives the whole family to the store to buy another pair.

Well, so the comics pick up where the primers leave off.

//I concentrated on comics because they are a kid-thing familiar to adults, especially fans -- and because once I got started on all the indoctrinating or "socializing" forces, such as readers, arithmetic books, Mattel toy ads, and the Sesame Street BOOK OF PEOPLE, I'd produce a book, not a lengthy article. The SATURDAY REVIEW article I mentioned deals with your very points.//

GEORGE PROCTOR: A very touching piece by Greg Benford. I don't believe I've read a more gentle and "human" piece in a fanzine in a long time. Benford allows his own personal respect and feeling to flow through the whole article giving us a picture of a man as seen through the eyes of another man.

RUTH BERMAN: I can almost match Astrid's 'Austrid' and Mike Deckinger's uni-card problems -- and with a non-computerized error, at that. Ten years ago SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES put out a calendar giving fan's birthdays and listing mine as November 18. Which it wasn't. And isn't. Every year since some dolt or other has put out another calendar and every year I write pointing out the error, but by the time any one calendar-maker has gotten around to putting out another calendar, my letter has been long since round-filed. Obviously, this isn't a problem that causes anyone any harm, but it's a yearly reminder that fan-friendships are mostly a noisy illusion, where any real knowledge of others is irrelevant.

ALJO SVOBODA: I used to think, when I read scattered references in fanzines of ill-repute, that IPA was an organization like the SPCA, though I never could figure out what it stood for. Which reminds me of the familiar riddle, "Why did the neo cross the road?" "Because Mike Glicksohn told him to." "No, Mike Glicksohn only told him to cross half-way." Seemed pretty funny when I first thought of it...

DAN GOODMAN: Andy Porter and George Barr both seem convinced that they're arguing over a matter of great moral importance, and that they are eminently reasonable men. They may be right about the second; but I can't see the first. Seems to me that whether the faneditor or the fanartist keeps a piece of artwork is a matter to be settled between them. On an individual basis. Without bringing general questions into it, and without acrimony.

MOSHE FEDER: Plaudits to Greg Benford for a fine miniature portrait of a great artist (and to another artist -- DiFate -- for a classy logo.) Benford observes with perception and recounts with subtlety. It is hard to write convincingly about a deservedly famous man. Benford handled it just right, avoiding the vertical pronoun yet giving us some of the feeling of "being there."

JEFF SMITH: I borrowed Don Keller's ENERGUMEN and read it with a modicum of enjoyment. NERG seems to be jam-packed with material that some people might like.

DON KELLER: Very fine letter column this time. George Barr gets irascible again, as he did in THE ESSENCE, but his indignation is so rightful that I can't complain. It's interesting that he was criticizing Andy Porter in his role as a fanzine editor, while Andy's letter indicates he was writing from the point of view of an artist.

DAVID STEVER: TED WHITE, DAMN YOUR ASS FOR GIVING FALSE INFORMATION! (Have I got your attention now? Good.) Ted, Binding Fandom is not dead as long as the Cochituate Kid draws a breath! You can bind any size and shape of page to any other, and I've seen a volume of autographs that included a dinner plate bound into the middle of it. (Christ that was weird, but you get the idea.) And I will gladly do anybody's zine for about 5 or 6 bucks. And think of the Egoboo you get outta seeing something you made with your own hands that looks just like the classiest magazine in some big rich library, in any color you like. It don't matter if six issues are six sizes, we can bind them. ((David works for a bindery and does a fine but inexpensive job. If

you're interested in bound copies of any fanzine, contact him at 7 Lake Road, Cohi-tuate, Mass. 01778. Or bound copies of prozines, letters, monogrammed sweatshirts...))

PATRICK MCGUIRE: A Why-is-Sheckley-Ignored article rather similar to Angus Taylor's appeared in EMBELYN 4 (hmm -- bylined to one Leon Taylor; relation, or the same person?) Couldn't see it then, and I don't now: Sheckley's stories just don't sound Significant. But he is, I might point out, immensely popular in the Soviet Union for some reason. An article on American literature in a recent issue of SOVIET LIFE even mentioned him. ((I've never met Leon, but I assure you there couldn't possibly be another person even remotely like Angus anywhere on this globe.))

JAY KAY KLEIN: I'm sure you want to be reassured that I read ENERGUMEN from cover to cover. I also read the edges -- and, frankly, old boy, they're kind of boring. Same damn bland edges issue after issue. In a rut, you know. And a rutting Glicksohn is, well, ah -- you know....

JEFF SCHALLES: I thought THE VIEW FROM TITAN was one of the finest pieces of writing I've yet seen in a fanzine. It has style, it has technique, and it doesn't have a lot of flimsy tricks. It is a lesson (to me, at least) of just what fanwriting can be, presented with the right conditions. Thanks.

BILL ROTSLER: I disagree with Roy Tackett's comment about "graphic arts fanzines." They are not the same as comic books. Comic books are illustrated stories whereas the graphic arts fanzines are art-oriented. They enable one-shot pieces of art to be presented, for instance. I also agree very much with Grant Canfield's comments to Lapidus that surely art must be more than window-dressing for the surrounding text, or however he said it. I really enjoy seeing big blocks of artwork -- either in port-folio form or in entire fanzines full, such as the LASFS Xmas calendars, or my own TATTOOED DRAGON series. It gives me a chance to see development, variety, themes, etc. For years I have wished that Bjo, Kirk, Barr, Austin and Gaughan would put out a fanzine filled with just the stuff they think is good. I've done it in the Dragons, in VOYAGE, in ROTSLER'S ROCKS, etc, even though I know it to be quite an ego trip. But it is different only in degree, not in kind, from sending a faned some art. It is quite nice to be able to send friends and likeable strangers a 20 or 30 page fan-zine with only stuff you are proud of (at that moment), arranged and printed in a way you like. Or nearly so.

ROGER BRYANT: "In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
An unsuspecting rube named John."

ROBERT BLOCH: Many thanks for ENERGUMEN, the hard to spell fanzine, with its quota of Good Stuff. Best of which, in my opinion, being THE POISON MAIDEN AND THE GREAT BITCH -- a truly fascinating analysis which leaves me breathlessly awaiting the next installment, just as Susan snarlingly intended. But I must confess my ignorance -- I know who Woolf was (Leonard Woolf's wife) but who is Plath? ((A female poet who now has achieved some prominence after her suicide several years ago.))

AND WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Maggie Thompson, Paul Docherty, Gregg Davidson, Joan Bowers, Mark Francis, Morris Keesan, Rose Hogue, Mike Glyer, Joe Pearson, Laurine White, John Prenis, Grant Canfield, Alex Eisenstein, Bubbles Broxon, George Flynn, Andy Porter, Laf Miroku and Darrell Schweitzer.

As indicated in my editorial, locs are why we keep this fanzine going (plus the personal satisfaction we get from producing it, of course.) We appreciate every one of them, whether we have the space to print them all or not, and we try to present as many interesting views as we can, whether they come from professional writers or neofans. So don't be reluctant to write and tell us what you think of what we're doing; we'll be delighted to hear from you. Until #13, peace and happiness to you all.

